

**EASR Report 2003-2004 by the General Secretary
Santander, September 11, 2004**

Membership Status

EASR Member Associations September 11, 2004 with names of appointed delegates/representatives to the committee.

- BASR, British Association for the Study of Religions (James Cox)
- Ceska Spolecnost Pro Studium Nabozenstvi (The Czech Society for the Study of Religion) (Bretislav Horyna)
- DAHR, Dansk Selskab for Religionshistorie (Danish Association for the History of Religions) (Marianne Q. Fibiger)
- DVRG, Deutsche Vereinigung für Religionsgeschichte (German Association for the History of Religions) (Hubert Seiwert)
- GSSCR Greek Society for the Study of Culture and Religion (Panayotis Pachis)
- Magyar Vallástudományi Tarsaság (Hungarian Association for the Academic Study of Religions) (Mihály Hoppál)
- NGG, Nederlands Genootschap van Godsdiensthistorici (Dutch Association for the History of Religions) (?)
- NRF, Norsk Religionshistorisk Forening (Norwegian Association for the History of Religions) (Knut A. Jacobsen)
- Polskie Towarzystwo Religioznawcze (Polish Association for the Science of Religions) (Halina Grzymala-Moscinska)
- ÖGRW, Österreichische Gesellschaft für Religionswissenschaft (Austrian Association for The Science of Religion) (Johann Figl)
- RAHR, Asociaia romani de istorie a religiilor (Romanian Association for the History of Religions) (Eugen Ciurtin)
- SECR, Sociedad Española de Ciencias de las Religiones (Spanish Association for the Science of Religions) (Santiago Montero)
- SGR/SSSR, Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Religionswissenschaft/Société Suisse pour la Science des Religions (Swiss Association for the Science of Religions) (Maya Burger)
- Società italiana di storia delle religioni (Italian Association for the History of Religions) (Fabio Scialpi)
- Société Ernest-Renan. Société Francaise d'Histoire des Religions (French Association for the History of Religions) (Charles Guittard)
- Société Belgo-Luxembourgeoise d'histoire des religions (Association for the History of Religions of Belgium-Luxembourg) (André Motte)
- SSRF, Svenska Samfundet för Religionshistorisk Forskning (Swedish Association for Research in Comparative Religion) (Catharina Raudvere)
- Suomen Uskontotieteellinen Seura (Finnish Society for the Study of Comparative Religion) (Nils Holm)
- TAHR, Türkiye Dinler Tarihi Dernegi (Turkish Association for the History of Religions)

Individual members

Gustavo Benavides

Gilani Fawzia

Svetlana Gorbunova
Alexandre Krasnikow
Ekaterina Elibakain
Michiaki Okuyama
Evyatar Marienberg
Marianna Shakhnovich

As can be seen from this list of national member-associations, the number of corporate members has once again grown. During the past year, the committee has been delighted to adopt, first, *the Greek Society for the Study of Culture and Religion*, and most recently, at the committee meeting in Santander, *The Turkish Association for the History of Religions*, which at its meeting on the 13th of May 2004 decided to apply for membership of EASR, and, accordingly, mailed its formal application, a list of the names of its Executive Committee as well as its constitution to the General Secretary of EASR. The Committee of the EASR welcome the Turkish Association, which has at the same time applied for affiliation to the IAHR. The committee has been informed by the General Secretary of the IAHR that the executive committee of IAHR at its meeting on the 7th of September this year decided to recommend to the General Assembly of IAHR at its meeting in Tokyo 2005 the affiliation of the Turkish Association.

In regard to individual members, we have lost only those who have become a member of one of the national associations, and we have welcomed one more individual member, prof. Marianna Shakhnovich, Department of the Philosophy of Religion and Religious Studies, State St.Petersburg University, Russia. The Membership Secretary, prof. Kim Knott, reports that she has communicated with several scholars asking about individual membership. Most of these, however, have actually been members by virtue of being members of one of the national member associations.

During the year the General Secretary has received an inquiry concerning membership from Discern, Institute for Research on the Sign of the Times in Malta. The General Secretary asked the institute in question to take heed of the constitution, according to which group membership requires affiliation to IAHR. Since then he has had no communication with the named institute.

This year, like the year before, the General Secretary as well as other members of the committee have been in fruitful contact with several of the individual members. It is the hope of the committee that EASR may be of use to the individual members from countries with no national associations and few opportunities to meet on a more regular basis with other scholars of religion.

NB: All the national associations are kindly reminded to tell the General Secretary the name of their delegate to the committee for the years 2005-07.

Payment of fee

The period of transition in regard to postponal of payment of fees was terminated by the end of 2002. At its meeting in 2004, the committee, however, once again agreed that this should not prevent associations to apply for and *pay a reduced fee*. The committee is aware that this option is important to less affluent associations, - and, consequently, to the well-being and progress of EASR. The committee, however, strongly urge associations which are in need of paying a reduced fee to do so only after arrangement has been made with the treasurer, and unless specific agreements

have been reached, the reduced fee must be paid in due time, **i.e. no later than May 31** each year.

As the report of the Treasurer most evidently shows, the member associations of EASR are performing extremely well when it comes to payment of fees, and the committee is very grateful for this, also because it reads it as a proof of the interest in the EASR and a sign that the members are satisfied with the achievements so far reached by the EASR. We are sure that those few associations which have not paid their fees at all or regularly have good reasons for this, but the committee has, of course, taken the steps necessary to help solve the problems.

Learning from the members of the committee representing the IAHR that some of the national associations that have paid all their fees to EASR may not have paid all their fees to IAHR, the committee discussed how EASR and IAHR can cooperate in this specific matter as well as in *general*.

Funding of scholars and ph.d./doctoral students in need of financial help.

In Bergen, the committee had good reasons to think that EASR would receive a special grant from a certain beneficiary enabling us to set up a special account to help funding the participation of scholars and/or postgraduate research students in the EASR conferences. A special committee (Halina Grzymala-Moscinska, and James Cox), accordingly, was set up and asked to propose a set of guidelines for such bursaries.

Unfortunately, the special grant did not materialize. Considering the importance of helping scholars and students participate in the activities of EASR, and considering the positive balance on the bottomline of the accounts, the committee allowed the General Secretary to pursue the goal, i.e. find ways to make it known that EASR was ready to spend a certain amount of money to help scholars and students in need, and it was decided to grant applicants money up to a total of 1500 € for the year 2004. Preparing for the Santander conference together with the Spanish hosts, the General Secretary and the Spanish Association agreed that the Spanish Association would do its best to help by way of accepting applications for exemption for registration fee, and likewise it was decided that applicants should first approach their national association. During the spring the General Secretary received 5 applications from ph.d.-students and scholars in need of partial funding, and in collaboration with Halina Grzymala-Moscinska and James Cox and in accordance with a preliminary proposal for guidelines, the General Secretary on behalf of the committee granted money to scholars and postgraduate research students from Hungary, Roumania, Poland, and Great Britain.

At its meeting September 7. 2004 the committee agreed upon a set of guidelines for bursaries (cf. below), and at the same time it was decided to put aside a maximum of 2000 € for the year 2005 for the purpose of helping scholars and postgraduate research students to participate with papers in the conference in Turku Finland, August 2005.

Teachers-Exchange

During the year 2002-03 the committee launched the idea of a pool of scholars interested in participating in teachers-exchange schemes. The General Secretary now has the names of approximately 15 scholars ready to do so, but due to problems in regard to information from and about these scholars, their fields of special interest, possible Socrates-deals already in place in their academic institutions et al, the

General Secretary so far has hesitated to ask the Internet officer to set up a platform at the EASR site.

The General Secretary will keep on working on this matter.

Discussion-lists

Thanks to the Internet officer, Prof. Michael Pye, and the native speaking experts who are helping him, the 6 discussion-lists, Synkron, Yggdrasil, Dolmen, Most, Tonantzin, and Candide, covering the various regions and languages within the EASR, are – in spite of some spam-mail from time to time - running smoothly, some, however, with more vitality than others. The Internet officer kindly ask members who change emailaddresses to report this by way of unsubscribing and subscribing. As for the maintenance of the website, the Internet-officer no longer has an assistant to help him do this.

Please take a look at the website or contact Michael Pye if you need more information about the lists, how they work and how to join *them*.

Publication of papers

The Publication officer, prof. Giovanni Casadio, as well as prof. Charles Guittard, have informed the committee that papers from the Paris conference in 2002 are expected to be published in the beginning of 2005. Also some of the papers from the Bergen conference are about to be *published*.

EASR information sheet

In Bergen the General Secretary was asked to produce a small pamphlet with information about EASR. The pamphlet has been produced, and, thanks to the Institute of Philosophy and The Study of Religions, University of Southern Denmark, it has been so with no costs for *the EASR*.

Committee-meetings and decisions taken besides those already mentioned

The committee, consisting of the designated and elected officers, the delegates appointed by the national associations and by delegates from the group of individual members, held its annual meeting Tuesday September 7, 2004 in Santander. At the meeting the committee agreed upon the following:

Members of the nominating committee in charge of the nominations this year shall prepare a proposal for guidelines for future nominating committees, maybe with an eye to the relevant by-laws of the IAHR. The reason for this is that the constitution says nothing about the specific tasks of a nominating committee, and it is the opinion the committee that EASR needs some rules to guarantee that the required number of persons are nominated in due time and in a democratic as well as secure manner.

The outgoing and incoming General Secretary were asked to come forward with proposals for a safe way of securing the archives of EASR.

Though the deadline is October 26, 2004, Michiaki Okuyama and the General Secretary, together with Helena Helve and Michael Pye, shall investigate the possibility of drawing up an application to the EU regarding a one year project of scholarly collaboration between EASR and and the Japanese association.

Nominations and elections

The nominating committee (Helena Helve, Kim Knott, Nils G. Holm and Tim Jensen) appointed by the GA to see to it that nominations and elections (of designated officers, and representatives to the committee from the group of individual members) for the period 1.1.05-31.12.07 were initiated and finalized as stipulated in the constitution, drew up a nominating formulae for electronic submission as well regular mail. The call for nominations as well as the formulae mentioned were mailed to all members of the committee and posted on the EASR lists at the same time as the call for the GA, i.e. June 2, 2004.

At the time of the deadline (August 31.2004) for returning nominations as well as final acceptance of electronic nominations, the nominating committee had received nominations for all of the positions of designated officers as well as nominations for the two representatives of the group of individual members. All the nominees have been nominated by at least 2 persons, and all the nominees have explicitly accepted nomination. Each and every nomination is unopposed. Consequently (cf. the constitution Article 7, ii "(...) In cases where a candidate is unopposed there should be no postal ballot."), the nominees may be considered elected and they will continue or take over office from January 1st 2005.

The following scholars have been nominated for the following offices.

President: Giulia Gasparro (Italy); Vice Presidents: Halina Grzymala-Moscinska (Poland) & Helena Helve (Finland); General Secretary: Kim Knott (GB); Deputy General Secretary: Emilio Suarez de la Torre (Spain); Treasurer: Willem Hofstee (The Netherlands); Deputy Treasurer: Philippe Borgeaud (Switzerland); Membership Secretary: Mar Marcos (Spain); Publications Officer: Giovanni Casadio (Italy); Internet Officer: Michael Pye (Germany)

The following scholars have been elected to represent the individual members in the committee:

Gustavo Benavides, and Michiaki Okuyama.

Future conferences

The 5th annual congress takes place in Turku, Finland, August 17-20 ([cf. http://www.abo.fi/instut/di/Congress%202005.htm](http://www.abo.fi/instut/di/Congress%202005.htm)). The theme is Exercising Power: The Role of Religions in Concord and Conflict.

The organizers will postpone the planned deadline for registration and submission of papers, and the organizers will stay in close contact with the outgoing and incoming General Secretary.

As for the congress in 2006, the General Secretary during the year has received offers from Bretislav Horyna on behalf of the Czech Society, from Mihaly Hoppal on behalf of the Hungarian Association as well as from Eugen Ciurtin on behalf of the Rumanian Association to host the congress in 2006.

At its meeting September 7, 2004, the committee decided to initiate negotiations with the Rumanian Association, with the hope that the Rumanian Association would be able to involve a considerable number of scholars also from Hungary, the Czech Republic, and from other Central and Eastern European countries. The theme and the final date is to be further discussed, but the committee suggest a date in late September 2006.

As for the conference in 2007, nothing has been decided, but the committee considered the possibility of asking the German Association to host the 2007 congress.

Concluding remarks

Following the congresses of EASR in Cambridge, September 2001, on Religion and Community, hosted by BASR, the Paris congress of 2002 on Monotheism: Diversity, Exclusivism or Dialogue? hosted by the Societe Ernest Renan, and the 3rd congress in Bergen, Norway, 2003 on The Globalization and Localization of Religions, this 4th congress of EASR in Santander leaves no one in doubt: The annual EASR congresses have by now become the most important annual scholarly event to take place in Europe in regard to the academic study of religion.

This year's congress has been, like the ones before, a tremendous success, and another giant step forward towards strengthening the ties between European scholars of religion from an impressive variety of European countries and national associations. In only four years time, the EASR has managed to activate and engage 19 national associations, - and almost all of them even pay their fees. EASR so far is a success, and if the EASR in the years to come can continue like this, no doubt it will have contributed in a most important manner to the global and general study of religions, and to the aims and well-being of the IAHR as well.

The committee of EASR is deeply in debt to all of the national associations, but this year of course, especially to SECR, the Sociedad Española de Ciencias de las Religiones (Spanish Association for the Science of Religions) and the persons from Santander and the University of Cantabria specifically involved in hosting the conference of 2004. The cooperation of the hosts with EASR has been exemplary, and so has the end-result.

Tim Jensen, General Secretary, Santander September 11, 2004

Appendix:

Guidelines for EASR Bursaries

1. The Treasurer of the EASR shall create a line item within the budget of the Association to account for funds received specifically to assist participation in EASR conferences through the awarding of **bursaries**.
2. Individual bursaries normally are partial and not intended to cover the total costs for attendance at an EASR conference. The number of bursaries varies each year depending on **available** funds.
3. Funds for bursaries will be secured from voluntary donations provided by member associations of the EASR and from individual contributors. Each year an appeal will be made by the EASR general secretary and treasurer to member associations and through them to individual **contributors**.
4. Funds will be made available to academic members of staff and to postgraduate research students under the following conditions:
 - a) The applicant must be a member of a national association for the study of religions affiliated to the European Association for the Study of Religions.
 - b) The applicant must show evidence of having sought funding from other available associations, such as the applicant's home university or national funding organisations.
 - c) The applicant must present a paper at the conference.

d) The applicant must present a CV and a letter of recommendation from an official within the relevant national association.

e) Preference will be given to those who have not received a bursary in previous years.

5. The number of bursaries and the conditions for applying for them will be announced no later than 6 months before an annual conference.

6. The deadline for applications normally will be 4 months before the EASR conference.

7. Decisions of awards will be made by consultation between the President, Secretary and Treasurer, or by their deputies as agreed by the Committee

8. Awards will be announced no later than 3 months prior to the relevant EASR conference.

These guidelines were adopted by the Committee, Santander 7. 2004. At the same meeting it was also decided to set aside for the year 2005 an amount of 2000 € to be earmarked for bursaries.

Tim Jensen, General Secretary, Santander, September 11, 2004