

Santander conference 2004

EASR President's Report 2004

EASR - Santander Conference September 8- 11. 2004

Report by the President, Professor Giulia Sfameni Gasparro

Dear Colleagues,

before handing over to our Secretary Tim Jensen for his detailed report on the work carried out by the EASR this year, I would like to say a few words. Our presence in Santander today is a clear testimony that the EASR, as a European forum for the discussion of the fundamental issues and themes of History of religions, both from a methodological and substantial perspective, is confirming its great worth. After the first meeting in Krakow (2000) , the Seminar in Messina (2001) , and the three general Conferences in Cambridge (2001), Paris (2002) and Bergen (2003) on fundamental topics of our discipline, we are attending the 4th Conference on a theme, Religious Tolerance and Intolerance, of dramatic contemporary relevance. The numerous contributions announced in the intensive program of the Conference are a clear sign of the importance of an analysis of this theme in a historical-comparative perspective. I would like to express particular thanks to colleague Ramon Teja, to the colleagues of the Honorary, Scientific, and Organizing Committees and to all the members of the Spanish Association for the Science of Religions for organizing this very important scientific Meeting. As members of the EASR on this occasion we are also entrusted with the task of electing the Executive Committee and the President. I am grateful to the colleagues of the current Committee for collaboration and in particular to our Secretary and friend Tim Jensen, who has ensured the complete success of our project by tirelessly liaising between the members of the Committee and the various National Associations. I would also like to thank all those Colleagues who chose to entrust me with such a difficult yet at the same time prestigious role as that of President of the Association in the year of its creation, a role confirmed in Cambridge for the first period of three years. I accepted this role not only and not so much as a personal acknowledgement (since many other colleagues would be more suited than me to hold the position), but rather as an act of homage to the Italian tradition of historico-religious studies, and in particular to the school represented by the teaching of Ugo Bianchi, in turn influenced by the teaching of the great master Raffaele Pettazzoni. I believe my present position in the EASR can justifiably be considered as a continuance of the tradition of these great masters. In this perspective I would like also to express to you all heartfelt thanks for having honoured me with this role. I am grateful for nomination, but I am also ready to return it to you so that it can be entrusted to a new President of our Association, to which I will continue to give my modest contribution, in the hope of ever greater scientific successes.