

**BRITISH ASSOCIATION**

for the

**STUDY OF RELIGIONS**

**BULLETIN**

No 97 November 2002

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The British Association for the Study of Religions (BASR), formerly the British Association for the History of Religions (founded in 1954), is affiliated to the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR) and to the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), whose object is the promotion of the academic study of religions through international interdisciplinary collaboration. The BASR pursues these aims within the United Kingdom through the arrangement of conferences and symposia, the publication of a Bulletin and an Annual General Meeting. Membership of the BASR is open to scholars whose work has a bearing on the academic study of religions and who are normally resident in the United Kingdom. Those interested in membership may apply directly by writing to the **Hon Secretary** to whom all general correspondence concerning the BASR should be sent: **Dr James L Cox, University of Edinburgh, New College, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LX.**

Correspondence concerning the **Bulletin**, including information and contributions, should be addressed to **Dr George D. Chryssides** at [G.D.Chryssides@wlv.ac.uk](mailto:G.D.Chryssides@wlv.ac.uk) or at **School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science, University of Wolverhampton, Millennium City Building, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 3SB.** Deadlines for submissions are: 15 October for November issue; 15 February for March issue; 15 May for June issue.

Orders for the **Occasional Papers** should be addressed to: **Professor Kim Knott, Dept of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT.**

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### **Editorial: ‘Almost perfect’?**

When I was asked to take over the editorship of the *BASR Bulletin*, the Secretary told me that I was ‘almost perfect’ for the task! My enquiry about the respects I fell short of perfection was met with the reassuring rejoinder that everything in the universe that falls short of perfection. In a recent booklet by Jehovah’s Witnesses, the artist’s depiction of Paradise on Earth contains the detail of a man mending a roof on one of the houses, thus implying that, even in Paradise, there is work still to be done and goals to be achieved. The City Overseer assured me that this not an artist’s error: they carefully research the detail, and the Bible mentions house-building as a paradisaical activity (Isaiah 65:21).

Mercifully, in the world of education we are not called upon to achieve perfection, or to expect it of our students. Instead, recent educational policies have made us more accustomed to considering ‘aims and objectives’ and ‘learning outcomes’. Instead of an unattainable quest for a perfect *BASR Bulletin*—and I feel I can hardly better the endeavours of previous editors, who have performed an excellent task—it is no doubt more profitable for a new editor to consider the Bulletin’s aims and objectives, and to reflect on what the journal seeks to achieve.

The *BASR Bulletin* cannot be another ‘learned journal’. Space does not permit this, and there are many other forums for academic publication. Instead, the journal aims to keep us abreast as professionals in the field of Religious Studies, announcing and reporting on conferences, new publications relevant to teaching and research, and research in progress. In addition, there are issues in teaching and research that can be usefully highlighted, such as research funding and professional ethics.

As the new editor, I am happy to continue to disseminate information on all of these topics. However, the Committee agrees there is scope for more material about research in progress: this is helpful both to the researcher and to the wider academic community. More coverage might profitably be given to research that has been brought to completion, and I hope in future issues to print information about successfully completed PhDs. Publishing tributes to scholars who have recently died is both a token of esteem, but, an opportunity to view a scholar’s finally completed work as a whole, and to appraise his or her achievement in its totality.

No journal is owned by the Editor, or even the BASR Committee. I very much hope that the Bulletin’s readers will tell me what their aims and objectives are in reading this journal, and that together we can continue to bring out a worthwhile publication. It will not be a ‘perfect’ journal—whatever that might be—but if it fulfils its readers’ expectations, I shall be pleased.

**George Chryssides**

### **A Message from the Treasurer—Subscription Reminder**

If you have not yet paid your subscription for 2002/2003 it is *already* overdue. This year no individual reminders will be sent and it is therefore up to you to ensure that payment has been made. The rates are currently £15 for waged members, £8 for students and unwaged and £10 for overseas members. If we do not receive your subscription we will assume that you no longer wish to be a member of the Association and, in that case, this will be the last copy of the Bulletin you will be sent. We don't want to lose you, so please send in your cheque without delay. I am very happy to supply forms for you to send to your bank to set up an annual standing order payment.

**Helen Waterhouse**

The annual subscription for the BASR and Bulletin is £15.00 (£8 for postgraduate students and researchers without full employment). Scholars residing abroad may subscribe to the Bulletin for £10.00 a year. Subscriptions are due in October. The BASR is a registered charity (No 801567), and members are encouraged to pay their subscriptions by Gift Aid (if in taxed employment), by direct debit or annual cheque. Cheques should be made out to the 'British Association for the Study of Religions' and sent to the Treasurer: **Dr Helen Waterhouse, Religious Studies Department, The Open University, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.**

**\*\*Visit our website at [www.basr.org.uk](http://www.basr.org.uk)\*\***

## **BASR OCCASIONAL PAPERS (order from Kim Knott)**

- 1 Miranda Green, *Women and Goddesses in the Celtic World*, 1991
- 2 Christine Trevett, *The Quaker Margaret Fell: Religion and Gender in a C17th Dissenting Group*, 1991
- 3 Ann Bancroft, *Hildegard of Bingen to Meinrad Craighead*, 1991
- 4 Julia Leslie, *Religion, Gender and Dharma: The Case of the Widow Ascetic*, 1991
- 5 Peter Antes, *How to study religious experience in the traditions*, 1992
- 6 Marion Bowman, *Phenomenology, fieldwork and folk religion*, 1992
- 7 George Chryssides, *Unificationism: A study in religious syncretism*, 1993
- 8 Michael Pye, *Syncretism versus synthesis*, 1993
- 9 Ria Kloppenberg, *A Buddhist-Christian encounter in Sri Lanka: Pandura Vada*, 1994
- 10 Peter Donovan, *Maori rituals add magic to contemporary civic life*, 1995
- 11 Ninian Smart, *Sacred nationalism*, 1995
- 12 W.S.F. Pickering, *Locating the sacred: Durkheim and Otto*, 1995
- 13 Terence Thomas, *'The sacred' as a viable concept in the contemporary study of religions*, 1995 (bound together with 12)
- 14 Margaret Chatterjee, *Do we need authority in religious life?*, 1996
- 15 Chris Arthur, *Media, meaning, and method in the study of religion*, 1996
- 16 Gerrie ter Haar, *Chosen people: The concept of diaspora in the modern world*, 1996
- 17 Richard Gombrich, *Religious experience in early Buddhism*, 1997
- 18 James Cox, *Alterity as identity: Innovation in the Academic Study of Religions*, 1998
- 19 Elizabeth Amoah, *African spirituality and religious innovation*, 1998
- 20 Ian Reader, *Religion, conflict and the sacred mission: On understanding the violence of Aum Shinrikyo*, 1999
- 21 Brian Bocking, *Religious Studies: The New Queen of the Sciences*, 2000
- 22 Kim Knott, *The Sense and Nonsense of 'Community': A Consideration of Contemporary Debates about Community and Culture by a Scholar of Religion*, 2002
- 23 Armin Geertz, *Religion and Community in Indigenous Contexts*, 2002
- 24 Guilia Sfamini Gasparro, *Religion and Community in the Ancient World*, 2002

# BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2003  
15-17 September

Chester College of Higher Education

## RELIGIONS IN TRANSITION:

Diachronic and synchronic perspectives

in collaboration with Chester College of Higher Education  
Theology and Religious Studies Department

The topic is intended to investigate the dynamic character of religious change in the broadest possible sense. It could include, for example, analyses of religious syncretism, transplantation, diaspora and emergent religion, or encounters among religious communities from historical perspectives or in contemporary situations.

**Offers of papers and reports of work in progress** should be sent by 1 May 2003 to: Dr Ron Geaves, Department of Theology & Religious Studies, University College Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ.

**Registration:** Bookings (by 15 July 2003) to: Dr Marion Bowman, Religious Studies Department, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA.

|   |
|---|
| Six full student bursaries are available for post-graduates presenting papers or work in progress reports. Contact Marion Bowman for details of how to apply. |
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A full draft programme and registration details will be posted on the BASR web site ([www.basr.org.uk](http://www.basr.org.uk)).

## **BASR Annual Conference Reports**

### **BASR ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT**

**9-11 SEPTEMBER 2002**

**“RELIGION AND THE STATE”**

#### **—from Graham Lever**

As a postgraduate research student whose field is State Provision for Religions in Education, and who is also a full-time R.E. teacher, I was particularly keen to attend a conference with the title ‘Religion and the State’. I am grateful both to the BASR and to my School Management Team for facilitating my attendance at this conference. I gleaned useful insights for my research, and gained a potential network of future contacts outside of the structured sessions. What follows is inevitably a subjective digest of what I have taken on board from the sessions attended. If I have missed the point of anyone’s paper, misrepresented it, or left out anything that they consider important, my apologies. My notes were inevitably influenced by my own agenda, and have been edited in the transcription, for the sake of brevity.

In the plenary session that opened the conference Simon Smith gave an introduction to PRS-LSN and its work, and Gary Bunt spoke about teaching Islam after 9/11. Julia Collar gave some insights on gender stereotyping of charismatic and fundamentalist leaders, whereas Jonathan Wooding’s call to ‘act before the government acts for you’, regarding having widened access to studies in religion, had rueful resonance with this member of the teaching profession.

In the panel ‘Religion, State and the Monarchy’, Anne Rowbottom considered the veneration of the Queen Mother in vernacular civil religion. Parallels were drawn between the mundane and the sacred/symbolic interaction expressed in the manner in which she was presented to her public outside her residence on her birthday. John Wolffe explored the way in which the links between Throne and Altar are, and historically have been, fallible. Moreover, the monarchy has been vulnerable for a long time to a fluctuating position between uncertainty and certainty. Lynne Thomas posed the question, ‘Does the king make the age or the age make the king?’ in reference to Hindu mythology, and suggested that the two are clearly connected.

The BASR Annual Lecture was prefaced by a tribute *in memoriam* to her supervisor, the late Professor J. Wansborough, by Simonetta Calderini. Professor Tariq Modood then spoke about Multiculturalism, Muslims and the British State. Muslims are not considered an ethnic group in the sense that Jews and Sikhs are, and are subject to shifting labels according to circumstance. It takes an issue such as that over *The Satanic Verses* to bring



about a sense of community solidarity. Consequently even liberals criticise Muslims in quasi-racist terms. Support is needed for two concepts of equality: the right to assimilate in the public sphere, and for toleration in the private sphere; and the right to have differences recognized and supported in the public and the private sphere.

In the Education panel, Denise Cush dealt with the recent debate about faith schools in England and Wales, by asking ‘Should the State fund schools with a religious character?’ Researched arguments ‘for’ include: maintenance of identity, coherence of values, human rights of parents, that faith schools can be anti-racist and multicultural. Arguments against have been found to include: social divisiveness, mainstream community schools’ need to provide for diversity, that religion should not be part of education, and sundry Islamophobic responses. She concluded that structure is less important than what goes on in the classroom, and that there seems to be a meltdown to the lowest common denominator rather than a true pluralism in non-faith schools. Eleanor Nesbitt raised some stimulating new possibilities regarding religions and publicly funded schools by asking whether we should rethink the boundaries to include insights from New Religious Movements, and, if so, by what methods. This is a process that is already underway in some areas, such as the Kidlington (Oxfordshire) Project described in Frances Farrer’s *A Quiet Revolution*. Pat Pinsent’s paper on ‘Religion and the State in Catholic Children’s Fiction’ gave an insight into Catholic writers as subversive to the state mainstream. Historically, such writers often advocate loyalty to the State up to the limits of conscience, but, beyond that, portray martyrdom as a glorious state.

In the panel ‘Religion and National Identities’, Tope Omoniyi spoke about Religion and the State as identities in conflict, and gave various examples, by process of deconstructing news reports, as to how the encoding of language triggers certain thoughts, and constructs hierarchies of identities. Augur Pearce’s paper on ‘Church and Nation on the Isle of Man’ analysed the relationship between the Tynwald and the Episcopalian clergy. Steve Sutcliffe gave his analysis of ‘Time for Reflection’ in the Scottish Parliament, noting that there was lukewarm interest and frequent poor attendance, and a requirement for a text to be submitted in advance. Time for Reflection seems to be dominated by male Christian professionals, but it constitutes an attempt to represent the multifarious Scotlands, by having non-denominational prayer and a spread, if an uneven one, of religious traditions speaking.

The ‘Social Inclusion and Exclusion’ panel began with Sophie Gillat-Ray speaking on Religion and Social Inclusion in Britain. Using the Millenium Dome faith-provision as an index of who is ‘in’ and who is ‘out’ with New

Labour, the decisions of the Lambeth Group steering committee on faith provision and faith representation, were analysed.

Speaking on the 'Religion, Democracy and Justice' panel, Yanxia Zhao made a comparison between Xunzi's concept of Xi and Christian notions of Justice. In the Chinese Xi model, law and morality are more closely connected, whereas in the Christian model of Justice, something is more likely to be acceptable, provided that it has not broken the law. Thus in the concept of Xi, state hierarchy is related to the moral hierarchy, and there is more emphasis on a (patriarchal) leadership by elders.

The Religion, Morality and the State panel saw Graeme Wilson asking whether the raising of moral standards was a problem for the state or for co-operation of religions. The role of psychiatrists in brainwashing terrorists, the blame-culture, and the erosion of spirituality by materialism were among the subjects under scrutiny. Dermot Tredget then explored whether the Benedictine Rule can provide an ethical framework for the State in the 21st century. Benedict's message that 'virtue is a gift of God learned in daily life by right activity' carries a powerful message to managers in Jung's 'second half of life' who enter retreats at Douai Abbey, seeking work/life balance, and who show a marked loss of faith in institutions to deliver it.

Eileen Barker opened the panel on 'Religion and the State: Contemporary Issues' with an explanation of the work of INFORM, an organisation that studies new religious movements, frequently termed by the popular media as 'cults'. Occasionally, that INFORM's balanced research data seem to be unpopular with parties who wish to hear a different story. Malory Nye's paper on 'Minority Religions and the Politics of Multiculturalism' picked up on issues previously raised by Tariq Modood, Sophie Gilliat-Ray and Eileen Barker, as he described the post-colonial articulation of cultures transposed into differences to be governed and managed. The views of Norman Tebbit, Baroness Young and the Bishop of Ripon were used to indicate a hegemony of normative Anglicanism in the Establishment, which needs to be redressed by counter-hegemonies. Gary Bunt's paper on 'Religious Activism and Authority in Cyber Islamic Environments' gave an illuminating insight into the mixed picture of online Islamic religious-political expressions and activities.

Apologies to my fellow postgraduates Jason Pelplinski, Phil Henry and Ingrid Svensson for omitting reference to their papers on work in progress. I was rather too nervous about giving my own paper, and relieved when I had done it, to make sufficient notes during this panel.

**Graham Lever, Bath Spa University College**

—**from Dominic Corywright**

Approximately sixty scholars and researchers were present at this year's annual British Association for the Study of Religions conference, held at Southlands College, University of Surrey, Roehampton. The conference was stimulating and, as usual, well organised by Marion Bowman, with Helen Waterhouse and Simonetta Calderini.

The timing and title of this year's conference begged response on some of the most pressing issues facing modern societies and religious communities. Papers were presented from a number of perspectives on a great variety of topics, from Yulia Egorova's 'Jews in Modern Indian Discourse' to research papers such as Marcel Boettge's 'Zen in the Art of Politics', which shows the dynamic eclecticism of research in the study of religions. The predominant questions focused on how religions exist within the contemporary multicultural state, legally, ethically and sociologically. Tariq Modood's BASR annual lecture on 'Multiculturalism, Muslims and the British State' provided the right note of concern founded on exact analytical study of data (attacks on Muslims have increased four-fold in the U.K. and thirteen-fold in the U.S. since 9-11) and a rigorous critique of both liberal and conservative theoretical perspectives on multiculturalism. Modood's presentation was also an object lesson in the expression of sophisticated theory without obscurantism or jargon—a theme present in most of this year's papers.

Mary Taylor's 'Steeks and Skaters: Hidden Divisions Undermining Peace in Northern Ireland' provided an insight into social divisions in the troubled province other than those of the sectarian divide. There is a tribal conflict in youth culture between steeks—drinkers, smokers, rap-enthusiasts who tend to be confrontational, protective, xenophobic and inward-looking—and skaters—who are more co-operative, less sectarian and more trustful. Steeks and skaters, do not fall along Protestant/RC lines—they can be found in both traditions. The culture of some churches mirrors the attitudes of these tribal groups with Free Presbyterians a model for steeks and Quakers a model for skaters. However, Mary suggested that more leaders of church and youth groups across traditions were becoming skaters, more adept at skateboarding and developing the agility needed for progress.

Peter Edge gave one of two papers on Manx issues in religion—'Religious Representations in a Democratic Legislature: A Case-Study of Bishops in the Isle of Man'. The other paper, 'The Offshore Establishment of Religion: Church and Nation on the Isle of Man', was given by Augur Pearce, Peter's research associate on a project on the role of Bishops on the Isle of Man. Among the issues raised were: who does the Bishop on the legislature represent? The Manx church? All Christians? All religions? Examples of Bishops speaking on political issues had been roundly condemned in the legislature, but this raised other questions: what

should Bishops speak on? Only technical Church issues? Narrowly defined moral issues?

Simonetta Calderini presented a historical study of the Fatimid *da'î*, which refers to a type of teacher and missionary (either male or female) operating within the Ismaili sect of Shi'i Islam in Egypt during the period between the 10th and 12th centuries C.E. By embodying the twin functions of teacher and missionary, the *da'î*, both possessed knowledge and represented that knowledge in the world. The paper outlined the relation between the government and the mission in which the *da'î*, operated as an agent of the state by having knowledge of jurisprudence and by taking an oath to the Imam, while also travelling as a religious functionary by teaching and spreading knowledge of Islam.

Hugh Goddard analysed four attitudes towards democracy prevalent within Islam. These include the following views: democracy is anathema to Islam because only God can be sovereign; democracy is incompatible with Islam since the only true democracy can occur through the rule of the righteous God and by the obedience of the faithful to that rule; democracy is compatible with Islam since Islamic law is determined through a process of consensus; democracy is essential for Islam since obedience occurs not through coercion but by free surrender to the will of Allah.

David Herbert examined the role of Islam in British society following September 11 in sociological categories, such as inclusion/exclusion, the secularisation thesis and globalisation. He asked how religious diversity can be tolerated within societies dominated by civil religion, which in the United States and Britain (although not Canada) operates as a kind of disembedded form of Christianity. He argued that diversity strengthens democracy, but questioned the commitment of leaders in America and Britain to those who are different from the majority.

George Chryssides' paper 'Jehovah's Witnesses and Civil Disobedience: The Church-State Relationship in the Watchtower Organisation' was illuminating in illustrating the historical ambivalence of the JWs to pacifism. It was also one of several papers usefully illustrated by slides using PowerPoint. George explained that since its inception under C. T. Russell the Watchtower organisation has moved from tacit acceptance of civil rule to more active disobedience under the second Watchtower leader Judge Rutherford. This is most clearly evident in JWs' attitude to war. Russell had suggested that JWs should follow civil law and fight in war but because civil government is not the ideal 'theocratic government' any war would be fought for the wrong reasons so, as George explained, they could fight but should do so inefficiently.

Moojan Momen traced the history of Babi/Baha'i persecution and discussed the question whether it could be considered genocide. He

concluded that it falls short of criteria offered for the concept. However, if persecution resumes the awful prospect of genocide is possible.

Bill Pickering adopted a historical/sociological approach to persecution, drawing on Durkheim. He argued that there are two ‘ideal types’ of state—those that exhibit ‘mechanical solidarity’ and those that display ‘organic solidarity’. The former states are more likely to demand uniformity, and to persecute, whereas the latter are more akin to a biological organism and manifest greater tolerance.

The panel on Religion and National Identity had three papers on the changing senses of identity and different priorities of identity in three different contexts. Tope Omoniyi spoke on identities in the U.K. and Nigeria, Augur Pearce on the Isle of Man and Steve Sutcliffe on the ‘Time for Reflection’ slot in the Scottish parliament. One common theme was the importance of extra-territoriality in discussions of identity, for example, Nigerians in the U.K. and Scots in Canada and Australia. Another common theme was the lively ongoing discussions between religions and the state exemplified by the call to ‘save our Bishop’ by Anglicans and Methodists in the Isle of Man.

Aside from the invaluable informal networking there were a number of formal events organised to exchange ideas and further professional engagement in the field of religion. There was a plenary introductory session with a panel from the PRS-LTSN. Simon Smith introduced colleagues unfamiliar with PRS-LTSN to its main work in fostering learning and teaching across the profession. He was followed by three presentations illustrating the work of scholars who have worked with PRS-LTSN: Gary Bunt, spoke on ‘Teaching Islam after 9/11’; Julia Collar investigated ‘Sexual Terrorism—Responding to sexual stereotypes of charismatic and fundamentalist leaders in Religious Studies’ and Jonathan Wooding reflected on his work in ‘Pedagogical issues in having widened access to studies in religion’. At the BASR AGM it was decided that plenary sessions on the ongoing work of PRS-LTSN would be welcome at each conference. Another useful and now regular formal event was a meeting of the Academic Women’s Network.

Apologies to those who presented papers that are not summarised here. These précis are merely vignettes of the extraordinary research being carried out in the study of religions. I would like to express thanks to the University of Surrey for hosting the conference and the BASR for continuing to organise this vital event in our annual calendars.

**Dominic Corrywright, Oxford Brookes University**

# **BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS**

Registered Charity 801567

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

**Held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2002**

**Chapman Hall, Southlands College, University of Surrey, Roehampton**

**1. Apologies for absence** were received from Ron Geaves, Michael Pye, Ursula King, Xinzhong Yao, Brian Bocking and Frank Whaling.

Twenty-three members and two guests were in attendance.

The Honorary President, Peggy Morgan, welcomed all members and guests to the AGM.

**2. The Minutes** from the 2001 Annual General Meeting held at the University of Cambridge on 12 September 2001 and published in Bulletin No 94, November 2001, were approved and signed by the President. No matters from the Minutes were raised.

**3. The Honorary President**, Peggy Morgan, noted that the activities and plans of the BASR are very well reported in the BASR Bulletin, which is 30 years old this year (November 2002). The President observed that the BASR has a very modest membership fee, and that this provides 3 substantial Bulletins a year, and membership in the EASR and IAHR. She thanked all those who support the Association through membership, by providing material for the Bulletin and for showing a willingness to serve the Association in many ways.

The President observed that this has been a difficult year for some colleagues in the field of Religious Studies in the UK, with the wind-down of the Department at Derby and the diminishment of posts at Winchester. However, a review of the Bulletins over the past 30 years shows that Religious Studies departments have gone through similar phases of decline, but also of growth in the past. Despite worries generated by the current decline and the closure of certain departments in the past few years, the BASR continues to be extremely lively, with many new and young members, as evidenced in the current conference.

The President noted that the BASR will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2004. In preparation for this event, she indicated that she will ask the Bulletin Editor to run a series called 'Looking Forward to Looking Back' reprinting Bulletin material of historical interest. The President further

reported that there are plans to lodge the archives of BASR materials in an appropriate venue, probably in Lancaster or Oxford.

**4. The Honorary Secretary,** James Cox, reported that the BASR Executive had met three times since the last AGM: 21 November in Edinburgh; 13 February in Bath; 9 May in Edinburgh.

He announced that the current membership stands at 244, which includes six publishers and five international organisations, leaving the individual membership figure at 233. These numbers are revised regularly throughout the year in consultation with the Treasurer and Bulletin Editor. A new list is published each November in the Bulletin, and now includes research interests and e-mail addresses.

The Secretary noted that he receives regular correspondence from agencies concerned with Higher Education, such as the AHRB, LTSN, the British Academy and AUDTRS. He also receives reports and announcements from the International Association for the History of Religions, The European Association for the Study of Religions, and the African Association for the Study of Religions.

He further reported that the complete records of Minutes and Bulletins since the founding of the BASR have now been put in his care until a site for the archive is determined. These documents will prove vital for reflections on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Association in 2004.

The Secretary reminded those attending that the BASR web site is up and running and is easily accessible at [www.basr.org.uk](http://www.basr.org.uk). This service is provided by the Open University, to which the Association notes its thanks.

**5. The Honorary Treasurer,** Helen Waterhouse, presented a statement of the Income and Expenditure for the BASR from 16 August 2001 to 15 August 2002. (The report can be found at the conclusion of the Minutes.)

The Treasurer explained that the balance shown on the report is a bit eschewed since expenses from the current Roehampton Conference have not yet been paid. This makes the balance appear higher than it actually is.

She noted that during the year the BASR had paid its full dues to the IAHR and the EASR. It also provided five full bursaries for postgraduate students to attend the 2002 Conference. This was made possible because in 2001,

due to the large number of participants, a profit had been made on the conference.

The Treasurer urged members to sign the Gift Aid form and to pay the annual membership fee by Standing Order. She also drew the attention of the meeting to the decision made by the Executive not to write out reminders to those who had not paid their dues, but to use the Bulletin to remind members to pay.

Discussion followed concerning the use of any remaining balance after the bills for the 2002 conference were paid. The Executive was asked to look into this and to report at the next AGM.

Malory Nye proposed that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. It was seconded by Dominic Corrywright and approved by the members.

**6. The Bulletin Editor,** Steven Sutcliffe, announced that he was stepping down as the Bulletin Editor as of this meeting.

He reported that the new item in the Bulletin – the 'Turning Point' slot – had generated considerable interest. Articles on Baird, Douglas, William James have been printed and one on Schleiermacher is forthcoming. He also observed that accumulating greater detail on members for inclusion in the Bulletin had been useful. He reminded members to report changes or updates to the new Bulletin Editor in time for the November Bulletin (deadline 15 October).

Steven Sutcliffe commented that the Bulletin takes a good deal of effort on the part of the Editor, up to 2½ days per issue, and it costs up to £300 to print and post per issue. He urged the Association to consider an electronic version of the Bulletin.

The President thanked Steven Sutcliffe for his hard work on the Bulletin and for the way he had developed its content.

**7. Report of the Editor of the BASR Occasional Papers.** The President announced that Jude Fox had moved to the United States, and that the Executive had invited Mathew Guest to become the new editor of the Occasional Papers, whom the President then introduced, welcomed and asked to report to the meeting.



Mathew Guest announced that three new Occasional Papers had been published in the last year at Leeds. These are the keynote addresses given at the combined BASR-EASR conference held at Cambridge in September 2002 by Armin Geertz, Kim Knott and Giulia Sfamini Gasparro. He reported that these have been given ISBN numbers for the first time and cost £3 per paper.

**8. The BASR representative to AUDTRS,** Denise Cush, reported that although she was unable to attend the AGM of AUDTRS in December 2001, she had reviewed the Minutes of the meeting. She drew attention to the fact that concern had been expressed at the AUDTRS meeting about the closure of Departments of Religious Studies. The end of QAA had also been noted with some representatives of AUDTRS expressing doubts about what had been learned from the exercise. Denise Cush also observed that the results of the RAE had been released on the very day the AUDTRS AGM was held, and that this had generated considerable discussion amongst the members. In addition, a committee on ethics in the academic study of Theology and Religious Studies, headed by George Chryssides, had been established by AUDTRS. Discussion had also been held at the meeting about establishing an AUDTRS archive and that it had been decided to place it in Durham. Finally, Simon Smith had been thanked for taking over the production of the AUDTRS handbook.

In the discussion of the AUDTRS meeting, Peggy Morgan reported that she had communicated with Brian Bocking, President of AUDTRS, who suggested that the materials being placed in Durham do not constitute a proper archive. The Minutes and materials from AUDTRS are being kept in a study by a member of staff in Durham.

The meeting recommended that AUDTRS be urged to consider locating its archive in the same location as other related archives, such as those of the BASR, Shap and the papers of Ninian Smart.

**9. Elections and Appointments.** The President announced that there was one election to be conducted by the AGM, that for President-elect of the BASR to serve as President from 2003-2006. She would also be announcing the appointment of a member to act as Bulletin Editor and two members to act as representatives to the Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN).

The President drew the attention of the meeting to Section 6 (a) of the BASR Constitution: 'A President, ... shall be elected for four years, serving

as President-Elect in the first year concurrently with the existing President'. She noted that the nomination forms for President-Elect had been sent to members in the June issue of the BASR Bulletin. One nomination has been received: James Cox of Edinburgh University, who was nominated by Steven Sutcliffe and seconded by Malory Nye. James Cox has signed the form agreeing for his name to be put forward as President-Elect.

The nomination of James Cox as President-Elect was unanimously approved by the Annual General Meeting and James Cox was duly elected as President-Elect of the British Association for the Study of Religions in accordance with its Constitution.

The President noted that James Cox will continue as Secretary during 2002-2003 and become President during the 2003 AGM.

The President announced that George Chryssides of Wolverhampton University has agreed to become the new BASR Bulletin Editor. The President thanked him for accepting this appointment and introduced him to the meeting.

Peggy Morgan then announced that due to changes in his circumstances, Richard King would no longer be acting as the BASR representative to the Learning and Teaching Support Network. She then announced the appointment of two representatives: Dominic Corrywright of Oxford-Brookes University and Xinzhong Yao of the University of Lampeter in Wales.

**10. European Association for the Study of Religions.** Kim Knott, who is membership secretary of the EASR, reported that interest in the European Association is growing. There are now fifteen associations that have joined. She noted that individual members of national associations are automatically members of the EASR. There are also six individuals who have joined.

James Cox, who is the BASR representative to the EASR, announced that he and Helen Waterhouse would be attending the EASR conference in Paris from 12-15 September, immediately following the BASR conference. He indicated that the theme of the conference is 'Monotheism: Diversity, Exclusivism or Dialogue?' and that it is being organised by the *Société Ernest Renan*. He reported that he had been in contact with Tim Jensen, Secretary of the EASR, about avoiding an overlap between the BASR and the EASR conferences, and that the EASR had been careful to arrange the start of their conference at a time when BASR members could attend after

completing participation in their own conference. The next EASR conference will be held in Bergen, Norway from 8-11 May 2003 on the theme, 'The Globalisation and the Localisation of Religion'. This conference will also have status as a special conference of the International Association for the History of Religions, and be a venue for meetings of the IAHR International Committee and the IAHR Executive Committee.

**11. International Association for the History of Religions.** The President observed that no bulletins of the IAHR had been received in the past year, but that plans were proceeding for the 2005 Congress to be held in Japan. Professor Gerrie ter Haar, of the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague is the programme chair for the Congress. More information on the IAHR Congress is expected following the EASR Conference in Bergen in May.

**12. Conferences and Future Planning.** The President invited comments on the current BASR conference. The meeting expressed its gratitude to Simonetta Calderini for the local arrangements at the University of Surrey at Roehampton. The President commended the University for its interest in the Conference and for the superb hospitality provided. Members had appreciated the theme and the range of papers. Special attention was drawn to the value of the keynote address by Professor Tariq Modood. It was asked if the turnout for the current conference had been lower than normal. Helen Waterhouse noted that the numbers were quite good, with 75 registered. However, the London factor may have influenced attendance since not everyone who registered had stayed for the full conference. Some had delivered a paper, and then left. In addition, there is a problem of the increasing complexity of different starting times for university academic sessions, which could affect attendance.

Discussion then shifted to possible themes for the 2003 BASR conference in Chester. One suggestion was made that several themes might be allowed, or that a conference with a wide remit might be attempted. It was decided in discussion that a specific theme is to be preferred to a range of themes, but that it should be broad enough to encourage wide participation. Suggestions for themes included: 'Key Thinkers in Religious Studies', 'Contemporary Issues in the Study of Religions'; 'Religions in Conversation', 'Religion and Change', 'Ethics in Religion', 'Religion and Secularisation', 'Religious Responses to Secularisation'. The President thanked the members for the suggestions and noted that these would be discussed thoroughly by the Executive.

The President announced that the most likely venue for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference in 2004 is Exeter College, Oxford, where the BASR was founded. She reported that she had prepared a discussion paper about how to construct the conference, and that this would be discussed in detail at the next Executive Meeting.

For future planning, some members suggested that the BASR website should be expanded and perhaps be used for announcements and Bulletin matters. It was also asked if the website might be set up to have a link for jobs in the academic study of religions. Attention was drawn to Dolman, managed by Michael Pye, which is the English language discussion site for the EASR. This might provide an excellent resource for sharing job opportunities amongst the European associations and, according to Professor Pye, is at the moment under-used.

The President thanked the members for attending and participating in the AGM.

Since there was no further business, she declared the meeting closed at 7:10 p.m.

James L Cox  
Honorary Secretary

**BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS**  
 affiliated to  
 INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS  
 EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 801567

INLAND REVENUE REF: XN79047

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 16 August 2001 to 15 August 2002

INCOME

EXPENDITURE

**General Fund**

|                                  |             |                                 |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
|                                  |             |                                 |             |
|                                  |             | Printing and postage Bulletin   | 996         |
|                                  |             | Printing and postage Occ Papers | 62          |
|                                  |             | BASR leaflet                    | 43          |
|                                  |             | Committee expenses              | 850         |
|                                  |             | Internet charges                | 68          |
| Balance at 16 August 2001        | 7080        | EASR 2002                       | 213         |
| Subscriptions for 2000/2001      | 2517        | IAHR 1998-2001                  | 500         |
| Sale of publications/insert fees | 52          | Bank charges                    | 29          |
| interest                         | <u>51</u>   | Balance in hand 15 August 2002  | <u>6939</u> |
|                                  | <u>9700</u> |                                 | <u>9700</u> |

**Conference Fund**

|                           |              |                                |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
|                           |              |                                |              |
| Balance at 16 August 2001 | 8345         | 2001 Conference expenses       | 13662        |
| 2001 conference fees      | 9145         | 2002 Conference expenses       | 76           |
| 2002 conference fees      | <u>2805</u>  | stationery/postage from cash   | 47           |
|                           | <u>20295</u> | Balance in hand 15 August 2002 | <u>6510</u>  |
|                           |              |                                | <u>20295</u> |

**FINANCIAL YEAR 16 AUGUST 2001 TO 15 AUGUST 2002**

BALANCE at 15 August 2002

General Fund.....6939  
Conference Fund.....6510  
13449

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

|             |                                   |              |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
|             | Balance at 16 August 2001: 15425  | Total        |
| Income..... | 14570                             |              |
|             | Total Expenditure.....            | 16546        |
|             | Excess of Expenditure over Income | <u>1976</u>  |
|             | Balance at 15 August 2002         | <u>13449</u> |

Accounts prepared by: Dr Helen Waterhouse, Hon. Treasurer, 27 August 2002

**AUDITOR'S REPORT**

I have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of my knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of my audit. I have examined the balance sheet and annexed receipts and payments accounts which are in agreement with the Association's records. In my opinion and to the best of my information, and according to the explanations given to me, the balance sheet gives a true and fair view of the Association's affairs at 15 August 2002, and the receipts and payments account shows properly the transactions for the year expired on that date.

Signed: David Briggs  
Hon. Secretary to the Somerset and West Wiltshire Branch of the Institute of Electrical Engineers.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

- Our finances continue to be healthy. However, as is usual for this time of year, the financial summary is skewed by the fact that expenses for the annual conference were outstanding at the financial year end. These will be settled immediately after the conference.
- We were pleased to award 5 full student bursaries for the 2002 conference totalling £775. This was made possible by income generated by the 2001 conference in Cambridge.
- We have contributed to the EASR based on 2 Euros per full paying member and 1 Euro per student member.
- After several years of withholding our contribution to the IAHR we have now caught up with our payments for the years 1998-2001. These are calculated at \$1 per full member 50 cents for each student member.
- We still await our 2002 Gift Aid refund, amounting to £405, which will be credited to the 2002/03 accounts.

Signed: Helen Waterhouse, Hon. Treasurer  
Date:

## **II RELIGIOUS STUDIES NEWS (U.K., Europe, International)**

### **EASR: European Association for The Study of Religions**

#### **Report on the European Association for the Study of Religions Second Congress 12-14 September 2002, College de France, Paris.**

The European Association for the Study of Religions held its second Congress from 12-14 September in Paris in conjunction with the meeting of the Ernest-Renan Société Française d'Histoire des Religions on the theme 'Monotheism: Diversity, Exclusivism or Dialogue?' The format was similar to the first congress which was held in Cambridge as a joint BASR-EASR conference. Members of the BASR attending the conference in Paris included James Cox, Helen Waterhouse, Michael Pye and Abraham Kovacs. Twenty-eight papers were presented on aspects of the theme by members of the EASR, the majority of which were in French, with others in English, Italian and Spanish. Most sessions took place in the lovely buildings of the College de France, located in the Latin Quarter of Paris, although the closing General Assembly and the lunches were held in the nearby Ecole Normale Supérieure. Receptions for guests were provided at l'Institut de France and at l'Hôtel de Ville de Paris. The conference was organised superbly by Professor Charles Guittard, Secretary of the Société Ernest-Renan.

The conference was opened on the morning of 12 September with a welcome from Professor E. M. Laperrousaz, President of the Société Ernest Renan. This was followed by sessions focusing on theoretical issues relating to the theme, including a paper by Professor M. Meslin of the Sorbonne asking if the theory of original monotheism can be maintained and by Professor Michael Pye of Marburg on polytheism and monotheism as problems for typological classifications of religion. Professor Meslin concluded that the question of an original monotheism posed a question relevant to theology with its assumption of a supernatural revelation, but was not a concern for the history of religions. Professor Pye asserted that the dualism often associated with the terms 'monotheism' and 'polytheism' largely is an invention since historical and comparative observations show that they are not mutually exclusive within any one system.

A particularly interesting paper presented after the morning break was given by Professor Gustavo Benavides of Villanova University in the USA on the theme, 'Monotheism and Agency', in which Professor Benavides argued that issues of divine and human potency were at the centre of understanding the theme of the conference. The concept of a remote or high God, he argued, needs to be

understood in the light of agency or work. The most powerful being is the one who possesses the capacity to exercise power over other agents, human and animal, as well as over the physical world in general. The remainder of the day was devoted largely to religions of antiquity with papers, for example, from Professor Ch. Cannuyer of the Catholic University in Lille on monotheism in ancient Egypt, Professor Ph. Borgeaud of Geneva on ancient Egypt and Greece, Professor J. Scheid of the Collège de France on monotheism and polytheism in the ancient Roman world, and Professor D. Briquel of the Sorbonne on monotheism in the religious conceptions of the Etruscans. Other papers chose to analyse monotheism in the early Christian period, such as that of Fr F. E. Brenk of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome who reviewed the theological significance in terms of monotheistic exclusivism found in the Areopagos speech of Paul, Professor M. Nasta of the Belgium-Luxembourg Society for the History of Religions on the figure of Christ in the monotheism of St Maxime and Professor M. Marcos of the University of Cantabria in Spain on the subtle boundaries between the understandings of polytheism and monotheism among Christians and Pagans of late antiquity.

The emphasis on the history of ancient religions continued during the morning session of 13 September with papers by Dr A. Blomart of Barcelona, who discussed the exclusive attitudes of the first Christians in relation to Mithra, what he called a rhetoric of exclusivism, Professor G. Franchetta of the Institute for the History of Religions in Rome on the monotheism of Zarathustra and its influence on the development of Judaism, and Professor Ch. O. Tommasi Moreschini of the University of Pisa on the collision of cultures which occurred as monotheism engaged with the political power of imperial Rome. Professor G. Gasparro, President of the EASR, delivered a paper during the morning session examining both the polemical arguments and cases of dialogue that occurred between early Christians and pagans around the concepts of a unique God and divine monarchy.

The remainder of the sessions of 13 September were focused on more contemporary studies of monotheism. For example, Professor Vekko Anttonen of Turku in Finland reported on his fieldwork amongst the rural Meadow-Mari people in the former Soviet Union. He concluded that they had developed a form of 'ethnomonotheism', partly as a result of indigenous circumstances, but also in the light of outside influences, including that of Islam. The term 'ethnomonotheism' generated considerable discussion. In his paper, Dr James Cox of Edinburgh, challenged the commonly held idea that Africans everywhere believe in God, by tracing the roots of the idea to interpretations emanating from academics working in Africa who were also Christian missionaries and theologians. Dr K. Mios of Jagiellonian University in Cracow reported on her historical and field research that demonstrated how Christian monotheism had become incorporated into and



synthesised with Slavonic folk traditions. The final paper of the conference was presented by Professor Peter Antes, President of the International Association for the History of Religions, who provided a clear analysis of the argument now raging in Germany around commonly held popular perceptions that monotheism breeds intolerance.

The Second Congress of the EASR demonstrated that the organisation is fostering communication amongst scholars of religion in numerous European universities. The barriers of language, although at times formidable for those coming from English speaking countries, did not prove an insurmountable obstacle as English speakers were forced to listen carefully and to understand without the aid of interpretation. The majority of those presenting papers at the Conference were scholars of the religions, texts and languages of the Ancient Near East or of the Roman world during the early Christian period. These emphases were represented in the papers presented and reflect a contrast to themes, at least of recent years, that have dominated BASR conferences, which have tended to attract many papers devoted to contemporary religious movements and issues. Finally, it was apparent that if the Association enlarges to include more countries from Eastern Europe, funding to assist participation from Eastern European academics will be required. The cultural diversity and academic breadth fostered by such wider participation could only enrich the already diverse and extremely valuable interchange that has been enhanced amongst European scholars of religion since the founding of the European Association for the Study of Religions.

Finally, it should be noted that Professor Einar Thomassen announced at the conclusion of the conference that the third congress of the EASR will be organised by the Norwegian Association for the History of Religions in collaboration with the Department for the History of Religions at the University of Bergen and will be held from 8-11 May 2003 in Bergen on the theme, 'The globalisation and the localisation of religion'. This theme carries a somewhat more contemporary and sociological character than that of 'Monotheism', but Professor Thomassen stressed that contributions exploring historical analogies to contemporary globalisation processes, or diachronic perspectives, would be welcome as well.

**James L Cox, University of Edinburgh**

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS (EASR), SEPTEMBER 14, 2002, AT THE CENTRE D'ÉTUDES ANCIENNES, ÉCOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE, PARIS.

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Adoption of final agenda**

It was established that no proposals for the agenda had been received before the deadline (August 24<sup>th</sup>). Furthermore it was established that the General Assembly had been called in due time according to the constitution (article 5) and that the quorum was achieved: 32 members were present.

### **2. Reports by the president and the General Secretary**

The reports, soon available at the website ([www.easr.de](http://www.easr.de)), read by the President and by the General Secretary were approved by the General Assembly.

### **3. Treasurers report**

The credit on 01.01.2002 was 2,497.64 Euro. However, an amount of 933.4 Euro is a loan from IAHR, that has to be paid back as soon as possible. The real credit then is 1,564.24 Euro. The report was approved by the General Assembly.

### **4. Proposals. Amendments to the statutes:**

The amendments proposed to Articles 6i (b), 7ii and 7.iii were voted and approved separately with 1 abstention each. A revised edition of the constitution, including the corrections made in 2001, will soon be available at the website ([www.easr.de](http://www.easr.de))

### **5. Any other business**

Some proposals put forward also at the committee-meeting held in Paris on September 11 and mentioned in the report by the General Secretary, were discussed: (a) a bibliographical data-bank standard (b) the turning of the Internet Journal of Religion, incl. Diskus and Marburg Journal of Religion, into a single EASR internet journal. (c) the use of the Roumanian Archeus as a means of publication and EASR-Newsletter (d) to help scholars from EASR to enter into e.g. Socrates-programs for exchange of teachers by means of establishing a pool of scholars interested.

As for (a) it was decided to appeal to the national associations of the EASR to gather and forward relevant information. However, the problem is that at this moment we have not the means to create such a data-bank. As for (b) the Assembly

accepted the intention of the committee and the internet-officer to move forward in the proposed direction. As for (c) the Assembly did not approve of the creation of a single ‘official’ journal for possible publications, and as regards a newsletter it was decided that so far the website of EASR plus the information given by the national associations sufficed. As for (d) the General Secretary will make an appeal to members interested in joining such a pool.

Indications and informations were given about the forthcoming conferences. The General Secretary as well as Einar Thomassen informed about the forthcoming conference in Bergen, May 8-11 (cf. also the announcement on the website of EASR). The Deputy General Secretary and Dr. Mar Marcos (from the University of Cantabria) informed about the Santander conference in 2004, to be held in the first half of September. An offer from the Finnish association to host the conference in september 2005, in Turku or Helsinki, was welcomed by the Assembly, and the President of IAHR, Peter Antes, added that the IAHR quinquennial conference was to be held in Japan same year but in the spring. The conference in 2006 then, preferably could take place in the East of Europe. Also, the publication officer, G. Casadio, informed about relevant publications, and Ch. Guittard informed about the publication to follow the Paris-conference.

Finally the President and the General Secretary extended their thanks to Société Ernest Renan, Ch. Guittard and the rest of the staff responsible for the conference.

Sign.: Emilio SUÁREZ DE LA TORRE  
Deputy General Secretary

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## **EASR General Assembly , Paris, 14 September 2002 Report 2001-2002 by the General Secretary**

### **1. Membership Status**

The total number of national associations now corporate members of EASR amounts to 15:

- 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)
- NGG, Nederlands Genootschap van Godsdiensthistorici (Dutch Association for the History of Religions) (Herman Beck)

- 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)
- 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 Française 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) (Britt-Mari Näsström)
- Suomen Uskontotieteellinen Seura (Finnish Society for the Study of Comparative Religion) (Nils Holm)

Compared to the list, as of September 2001, this list shows that we have been honoured to welcome two more associations during the last year, namely the Société Belgo-Luxembourgeoise d'Histoire des Religions (Association for the History of Religions of Belgium-Luxembourg) (André Motte), and the RAHR, Asociaia romani de istorie a religiilor (Romanian Association for the History of Religions) (Eugen Ciurtin). We are indeed very happy that they have joined.

During the past year, the general secretary has been in electronic contact with Ukrainian and Russian scholars, and he has—following up on rumours—tried to contact the Austrian Association in order to encourage the Austrian colleagues to join. While he has so far had no response from Austria, the president has received the good news that the Austrians have decided to join EASR, and hopefully it is just a matter of time before they can be formally accepted as members.

A Russian colleague has communicated that several Russian scholars are gathering in September to establish an association which may then join EASR, and in case they did not succeed, he and some other scholars would probably join as individual members.

The communication with the Ukrainian scholars has been on and off, but so far no definite response from their side has been received. Unfortunately, the financial situation is also very tight for many a colleague in Ukraine that even a reduced fee may cause a problem. We have tried to encourage them to apply for a special

arrangement concerning membership fees. The general secretary will keep on trying to communicate this message.

The Greek colleagues, who were in the process of establishing a Greek national association last year, so far have not succeeded but the general secretary and Prof P. Pachis have agreed to stay in close contact in the coming year.

We do not have precise information about the total number of members of all the affiliated national associations but the membership secretary in cooperation with the treasurer is working to provide this information.

An increase in membership fortunately shows also when it comes to individual members. At the moment the Association has registered the following individual members: P. Pachis, G. Lease, Gustavo Benavides, Gilani Fawsia and Svetlana Gorbunova. Unfortunately the treasurer has not received a fee from each and everybody, but this is probably due to the fact that we have considered 2001-2002 a period of transition.

Besides this, we have Peter Antes and Armin W. Geertz as members of the committee as representatives of IAHR.

## *2. Conferences planned*

Following the GA and the proposals put forward at the GA in Cambridge, the committee agreed upon a plan for the coming two conferences. The EASR Conference 2003 will take place in Bergen on May 8-11, simultaneously with a meeting in the International Committee of IAHR. It will be arranged in cooperation with IAHR, the Department for the History of Religions at the University of Bergen and the Norwegian Association for the History of Religions. The theme—as already announced at our website—is 'The Globalization and the Localization of Religion'. Another announcement and a final deadline for the proposal of papers will be announced in a short while. The conference in 2004 will, in accordance with our wish to move around in Europe, and thanks to our Spanish colleagues, take place in September 2004 in Santander in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Spanish association. The preliminary theme is 'Tolerance and Intolerance of Religion(s)'.

## *3. Website, discussion lists, newsletters and publications*

Thanks to our Internet officer Michael Pye, and his webmaster Richard Boehme, our website is up and working, in my opinion, excellently. Thanks to Michael Pye, and the colleagues joining the discussions, the six discussion lists are also up and running. Some with more vigour than others of course, but still Dolem has 48 participants, Candide 34, Yggdrasil 156, most 56, Tonantzin 81 and Synkron 76, all in all 451. We are very grateful for the help received from members to make these lists run.

Plans for further development of the electronic sites and communication within EASR have been discussed at the committee meeting on 11 September in Paris. The proposals concerned (a) a bibliographical data-bank standard (b) the turning of the Internet Journal of Religion, including *Diskus* and *Marburg Journal of Religion*, into a single EASR Internet journal. (c) the use of the Roumanian Archeus as a means of publication and EASR Newsletter

As for (a) it was decided to see slowly how the idea might be developed. The Internet officer can take any step he finds appropriate. As for (b), the proposal was accepted, and the Internet-officer was asked to move forward in the proposed direction. As for (c) the committee warmly thanked the Roumanian association for its generous offer. However, the committee did not approve of the creation of a single 'official' journal for possible publications, and as regards a newsletter it was decided that so far the website of EASR plus the information given by the national associations sufficed.

#### *4. Other business*

During the year the general secretary has received several other proposals: (1) to use EASR as a platform for exchange of scholars within the frames of e.g. the Socrates scheme; (2) to provide funding for postgraduate students to attend EASR-conferences, especially from the poorer European countries; (3) to develop an EASR Bulletin; (4) to consider the possibility of having special sections at future conferences where subjects which the committee considers of special interest to EASR might be discussed parallel to the main theme of the conference.

The committee has discussed the above mentioned proposals and agreed upon the following. The general secretary will make an announcement as regards item (1) in order to invite scholars with an interest in exchange with other European universities to join a list of such. The list then will be distributed to all the member associations. As to (2), the committee decided to ask each and every association in charge of the annual conferences to do their best to see if they may provide special funding for not only post-graduate students but for scholars as well from less affluent European countries and member associations. Also, associations which have some extra money are kindly asked to consider whether they may make a special contribution. As for (3), it was decided to go on in the direction mentioned above concerning the establishment of a special EASR electronic journal, and besides that to depend on the web site, the lists and the national associations for distributing news from EASR. As to (4), the committee agreed that it would be most useful to try to use EASR to enhance certain areas of research as well as to open up new areas. However, the association in charge of the annual conference must have a relatively free hand in deciding upon the theme and arranging the conference. The committee,

however, recommendeds that the conference's host decide upon the theme in collaboration with EASR, and that it tries to provide space for parallel sessions, sessions for work in progress and the like.

One more issue has been discussed in the committee, namely the question of conference language(s). It is the aim of EASR to help strenghten the academic study of religions in Europe at large and in the various European countries. The need for cooperation is evident and so is the need for mutual understanding. This, however, implies recognition of and respect for difference, in academic tradition and language. Consequently, the committee decided that the associations hosting the annual conferences are kindly asked to see to it that more than one language may be used at the conferences.

Finally: Mention should be made of the fact that the General Secretary on behalf of the committee of EASR has asked Donnerska Institutet in Aabo, Finland, to support its activities by way of a donation. We have reason to hope that our application will be well received.

#### *Concluding remarks*

The second year of EASR certainly has proved that EASR is here to stay. We are now on our feet and, having used the first two years to establish the association, it is now time to take more than the one step we take each and every year by way of the annual conference and the annual general assembly.

The annual coming together of scholars from many of the member associations, the gathering around the various themes and the publication of the papers—or some of them—is extremely important and useful in our effort to further the aims of EASR, i.e. promoting the academic study of religions amongst scholars in Europe. Consequently, we are extremely happy and grateful that the member associations are ready to host the annual conferences, and we want to use this opportunity to thank the British Association for the great work done to make the conference last year possible. Likewise, we want to thank the Société Ernest Renan for hosting us this year.

We do, however, think that it is now our task to try to do more than that, and more than is done already by way of our web site and the discussion lists. Consequently, it is our intention to see to it that some of the above mentioned proposals are realized in the years to come in case the General Assembly approves of them.

**Tim Jensen, General Secretary, Paris, September 2002**

## **Call for Papers**

### **‘Religiosity in the secularized world’**

**12th annual conference of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft objektive Hermeneutik e.V.**

**21 to 23 March 2003,**

**Frankfurt am Main/Germany**

In contemporary sociology of religion, there is a vivid controversy about the thesis of secularization. While there seems to be agreement about the existence of a ‘functional differentiation’ or an autonomization of spheres of conduct in the course of the universal process of rationalization or modernization, the thesis of an irresistible secularization has for some time been contested: One group of scholars interprets contemporary religious phenomena as expressions of a continued secularization, others consider these phenomena proof of the irrelevance of this thesis. Considering the increased pressure on individuals in modern societies to find unique answers for questions concerning their conduct of life, the individual’s conduct has been an important issue in this debate.

This conference will provide a platform for these issues with respect to the following questions: If there is such a thing as a process of secularization, is this process restricted to the state, the society, and its institutions—or does this process not also extend to the individual’s life conduct? It is impossible to separate the thesis of secularization and questions relating to the development of the major world religions. Considering the process of rationalization as described by Max Weber and others following him, is it possible to locate different religions on different levels within the process of secularization? How does one grasp the emergence of, for example, Islamic fundamentalism which seems to be a reaction to the confrontation with ‘Western culture’? Numerous questions also arise with respect to the development of law. Finally, the thesis of secularization bears implications for the relationship between state and religion.

We invite sociologists as well as scholars in other fields who are working on issues of secularization and modern religiosity to participate in this conference. Conference languages will be German (with english translation) as well as English. For information about the Arbeitsgemeinschaft objektive Hermeneutik e.V. see: [www.objektivehermeneutik.de](http://www.objektivehermeneutik.de)

Deadline for the submission of manuscripts or abstracts is October 31, 2002.

Conference organizers: Manuel Franzmann, Christel Gärtner, Nicole Köck

Please direct questions to Christel Gaertner <ch.gaertner@soz.uni-frankfurt.de>



**British Sociological Association  
Sociology of Religion Study Group  
Annual Conference**

**Plater College, Oxford  
9-12 April 2003**

**‘Texts and Religious Contexts’ — Call for Papers**

This Conference seeks to draw together established scholars and research students from a variety of disciplines who are interested in the relationship between religion and texts, defined broadly.

Papers should be 30 minutes in length, with 15 minutes for discussion. Presentations on work in progress will be given 20 minutes with 10 minutes for discussion.

Please let us know if you intend to submit a poster display—space will be provided.

We look forward to receiving papers which attempt to answer questions like these:

- To what extent are sacred texts cultural resources?
- What are the functions of music in religious faith and practice?
- How and why do some texts become canonic?
- Why are written texts central to some religions and absent from others?
- In what ways are sacred texts legitimated?
- Can we classify religious texts and the uses to which they are put?
- How are pictures and diagrams used in religious faith and practice?
- What relationships exist between sacred and secular texts?
- What of spells, curses, the ouija board, ephemera, words as things?
- How are sacred texts constructed?
- How are sacred texts represented on the internet?
- In what ways are sacred texts contested?
- How do we ‘read’ sacred artefacts, architecture, etc.?

**Please submit a 150 word abstract, together with your full address details, before 31st January 2003, to:**

Dr Elisabeth Arweck, Institute of Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CVV4 7AL, e-mail: [elisabeth.arweck@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:elisabeth.arweck@kcl.ac.uk)

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual International Conference on  
An Inter-faith Perspective on Globalisation**

**Ethics, Spirituality and Religions:  
Transforming Globalisation for the Common Good**

**St. Petersburg, Russia  
25-30 April 2003**

in association with  
St. Petersburg State University, Faculties of Philosophy, History, Geography,  
Geocology and the Russian Academy of Sciences

In these global and too often troubled times, we need new perspectives and models so that we can find humane answers to the challenges of globalisation, based on a deep respect for the diversity of cultures and religions in our world community. There is a desperate need for new and practical ways of reintroducing spirituality, ethics and faith into the debate on globalisation.

Papers, panels, and round-table submissions are invited from observers, commentators, academics and NGOs to address issues related to globalisation within the identified theme of the conference. Specifically welcome would be papers from economists, philosophers, theologians, historians, political scientists/international relations, sociologists, psychologists, environmentalists and geographers. You are invited to send a one page abstract which should include a working title, the author's discipline and field, address, institutional affiliation and email address by 15 December 2002 to either of the conference convenors. Should your proposal be accepted you will be notified by mid-January 2003 about the conference programme, registration, social and cultural activities, costs and other particulars. The conference will take place at Znamenka Palace conference centre, the former summer residence of the Russian Royal family.

Dr. Kamran Mofid, Plater College, Pullens Lane, Oxford, OX3 0DT, England.  
Email: [k.mofid@plater.ac.uk](mailto:k.mofid@plater.ac.uk)

Dr. Tatiana Roskoshnaya, Land & Public Welfare Foundation, P.O. Box 195426, St Petersburg, Russia. Email: [lpwf@mail.wplus.net](mailto:lpwf@mail.wplus.net)

For frequently updated information on the conference please visit the website  
<http://commongood.info>

ANNOUNCING

**European Association for the Study of Religions  
3<sup>rd</sup> Congress**

**The Globalisation and the Localisation of Religion**

**8-11 May 2003**

**in association with the Norwegian Association for the History of Religions**

**in collaboration with the  
Department of History of Religions in  
The University of Bergen, Norway**

In the context of the study of religion, **globalisation** refers to the effects rapid means of communication, as well as economical, political and cultural forces of integration are having on the interaction of religious traditions, on the internal developments of these traditions, and on the emergence of new religious forms. **Localisation** refers to the accommodation, and creative reinterpretation, of larger religious traditions and trends within local contexts.

Papers should address both theoretical aspects and empirical cases relevant to the theme. Contributions exploring historical analogies to contemporary globalisations processes are also welcome.

Proposals for papers and for panel sessions may be sent to Einar Thomassen, IKRR-Religion, Oisteinsgate 3, N-5007, Bergen, Norway.

**E-mail:** [ainer.thomassen@krr.uib.no](mailto:ainer.thomassen@krr.uib.no)

**For information on accommodation, fees and practical matters see the EASR website at [www.easr.de](http://www.easr.de) or consult the BASR website at [www.basr.org.uk](http://www.basr.org.uk) and click on the EASR link.**



**CALL FOR PAPERS**  
**Alternative Spiritualities and New Age Studies**  
**[www.asanas.org.uk](http://www.asanas.org.uk)**

A major international conference on Alternative Spiritualities and New Age Studies is to take place from Friday May 30 to Sunday 1 June 2003, in association with the 11th Annual Contemporary and New Age Religions conference of the Belief Beyond Boundaries Research Group at the Department of Religious Studies, The Open University, Milton Keynes, England.

The joint conference will review the emergence of New Age Studies as a specialised field, and act as a catalyst for further development as a discipline. Confirmed speakers include: Christoph Bochinger, Wouter Hanegraaff, Paul Heelas and Michael York. It is anticipated that one result of the conference will be the development of an Association for Alternative Spiritualities and New Age Studies (ASANAS).

Offers of papers, and of co-ordinating multi-paper sessions, for the conference are requested on the following themes:

- definition, theory and method in New Age studies
- New Age and mainstream Western culture, globalisation, September 11th
- New Age and Christianity
- New Age and other world religions
- New Age and marginal cultures  
(including indigenous, neopagan, astrological, UFO)
- contemporary New Age groups and communities
- historical New Age groups and communities

Proposals for papers: a title and abstract of 200 words is required by 30 November 2002. Please respond to:

James R. Lewis, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, WI 54481, USA

E-mail: <[jlewis@uwsp.edu](mailto:jlewis@uwsp.edu)> Tel: 715-346-3803 Fax: 715-346-4215

**Booking details will be available shortly via [www.asanas.org.uk](http://www.asanas.org.uk)**

**‘AFRICAN AND AFRICAN-DERIVED RELIGIONS’**

**at**

**Bath Spa University College**

**8 – 11 SEPTEMBER 2003**

**Keynote Speakers**

**Professor Rosalind Hackett**  
**(University of Tennessee)**

**‘Religious Conflict, with Special Reference to Nigeria’**

**Professor Gerrie ter Haar**  
**(Institute of Social Studies, The Hague)**  
*‘African Religion and Human Rights’*

**Dr James Cox**  
**(University of Edinburgh)**  
**‘Issues in the Academic Study of African Religions’**

**Dr Elom Dovo**  
**(University of Ghana, Legon)**  
**‘Renewal Movements in African Traditional Religion’**

**Proposed Panels:** African Religions in the History of Religions; Methodology in the Study of African Religions; African Traditional Religion(s); African New Religious Movements; Afro-Latin Religions; Afro-American Religions; African Christianity; African Islam and Islam in Africa; Ritual, Muthi and Sacrifice; African Religions and Gender; African Religions, Ethics and Nature; African Religions in Religious Education; African Religions in the Diaspora; African Religions, Modernism and post-Modernism.

Proposals for papers and registration information should be sent to Dr Richard Hoskins: Conference on African and African-derived Religions, Study of Religions Department, Bath Spa University College, Newton Park, Newton St Loe Bath BA2 9BN

By e-mail: [r.hoskins@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:r.hoskins@bathspa.ac.uk)

**From Vernacular Religion to Contemporary Spirituality:  
Locating Religion in European Ethnology: 10-11 January 2003**

*Hosted by the Belief Beyond Boundaries Research Group @ The Open University*

This is the fourth in the current ESRC European Ethnology seminar series and it will bring together European scholars working in a variety of disciplines who have research interests in vernacular religion (religion as it is lived) and contemporary spirituality.

We anticipate two lively and stimulating days. Offers of 30 minute papers, with titles and abstract, by September 15th 2002 to:

Dr. Marion Bowman, European Ethnology Conference, Religious Studies,  
The Open University, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, or email [c.hancon@open.ac.uk](mailto:c.hancon@open.ac.uk)

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**Subscribing to Dolmen, the English language discussion list of the  
European Association for the Study of Religions**

**Dolmen** is part of an interlocking network of electronic discussion lists sponsored by the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR). It is one of six lists which are operated under the umbrella of EASR. As a member of BASR you are also a member of the EASR and the list is there for you to use. At the moment the list is not very active and your inbox is therefore unlikely to be deluged by messages. One reason for the low level of activity is that there are only around 45 people subscribed to the list at this time. This represents something of a missed opportunity. You can use the list to get information on EASR activities, to publicise conferences and other events that you may be organising, to advertise job vacancies, to discuss points of common interest and to keep in touch more generally with colleagues. The list is entirely free of charge and is moderated, thus preventing misuse.

**Dolmen** is the English language list. There is nothing to prevent you signing up to any of the other five lists although you may find that messages are duplicated. You can get details of the other lists at [<www.easr.de/networks.html>](http://www.easr.de/networks.html)

To subscribe to Dolmen, address an e-mail to: [majordomo@lists.uni-marburg.de](mailto:majordomo@lists.uni-marburg.de) (leave subject line empty) in message area, write: subscribe Dolmen <your e-mail address>

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### **III: RESEARCH IN PROGRESS REPORT**

#### **Engaged Buddhism in the U.K.: Humanitarian and Political Reconciliation, a Buddhist Dilemma**

The intention of this study is to investigate the concept of engaged Buddhism in the UK, and in keeping with Weber's description of Buddhism as an 'other-worldly mysticism', to examine modernity's stereotype to determine how a 'this-worldly', socially orientated Buddhist ethic challenges it. This takes account of the work of those who challenge the notion of Buddhism as mystical or other-worldly, like Schopen, Sharf and King. The investigation will explore a conceptual map of engaged Buddhism, determining links between engaged Buddhism and non-dualism using textual analysis, and explore the theory of Buddhist practice at grass roots level akin to theories involved in the development of 'Liberation Theology'. Finally, I shall explore the possibility of an emerging social theory for Engaged Buddhism, hitherto suggested but remaining largely underdeveloped.

The research is multidisciplinary and ethnographic/qualitative, adopting specific questionnaires in a quantitative analysis within each case study group. The case study groups involved are the Amida Trust, the Community of Interbeing, the Network of Engaged Buddhists (NEB), Rokpa UK/International (Samye Ling), the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO) Right Livelihood Businesses, Karuna Trust, Nipponzan Myohoji, Buddhist Hospice Trust and International Buddhist Relief Organisation (IBRO).

The ethnographic style draws on social anthropology and adopts the role of the participant observer. I have been in the field since January 2002 and intend to remain there until January 2004. The ethnographic style is in sessions of between two and five days' duration, dependent largely on the group activity or commitment. The information is being assessed and analysed around an interpretative view of knowledge using a phenomenological approach in combination with the ethnographic style. Accepting that the ethnography is orientated in anthropology, my personal thrust is from sociology of religion. By grounding my methodological approach in Weber's sociology of religion and interpretative sociology, it allows for a working harmony in ethnographic phenomenological styles which are conducive to the study.

Engaged Buddhist practice is a diverse phenomenon in Buddhism today, emerging essentially only in the last forty years. It has however been little known outside small numbers of like-minded Buddhists and social activists until the last twenty years. In terms of its academic recognition in the U.K. there has been little

written in contemporary Buddhism prior to Sandra Bell's 1997 survey, not published until 2000, in Queen's anthology, *Engaged Buddhism in the West*.

Historically, Engaged Buddhism might be seen as offering a retrospective claim to individual charismatic figures of the nineteenth century, as forerunners of an engaged ethic. Queen and King (1996) claim Colonel Henry Olcott who arrived in Ceylon in 1880, and the Sinhalese Anagarika Dharmapala, together with Dr B. R. Ambedkar, co-author of the Indian Constitution after Independence in 1948. There is no doubt that all three were significant reformers in their own time; however, the fact that they have been claimed as exemplars for engaged Buddhists is not beyond doubt. The contemporary notion of engaged Buddhism does not appear before Olcott and Dharmapala, because it is not until that point in history that Queen's 'missing ingredient' was added. Queen is referring to the influence of European and American religious political thought, including western methods of public communication and institutional development on the evolutionary process of Buddhism.

If these men were the forerunners to 'Engaged Buddhism' today, it is only since the mid-1960s that the phrase was coined and proliferated. The self-immolation of Thich Quang Duc (a Vietnamese Buddhist monk) and others on a Saigon street in 1963 was televised worldwide and sent out a message for peace that was necessarily impossible to ignore. Thich Nhat Hanh was at the time a young Buddhist monk in Vietnam whose tireless efforts to deal with the displaced of the war and campaigning for peace has since been well documented. His collaborations with Dr Martin Luther King Jr resulted in the world being awakened to the plight of the Vietnamese.

I am currently involved with the Sanghas from Norwich, Cambridge, Nottingham and Birmingham, and am extending my research to all groups before the conclusion of the study. The case studies thus far have revealed an enormous amount of information, most of which has never been brought into the academic arena before. These organizations mentioned above form part of an evolution in Buddhism, on a scale unprecedented in the west, and breaking considerable fresh ground. There are emerging systems of organisation relative to the societal basis of the groups, where overlapping and divergent structures appear. The textual rationale for Engaged Buddhism can be seen in a Buddhist hermeneutic towards a social philosophy, a matter that will occupy a great deal of time during the research period. It is too early to draw conclusions, therefore I offer this paper as a reflection of the greater research endeavour.

**Philip Henry, University of Derby**



## **Award of Ph.D.: Opinderjit Kaur Takhar**

Congratulations to Opinderjit Kaur Takhar, who successfully completed her Ph.D. at the University of Wales College, Newport in October 2001. Her title was 'Sikh Groups in Britain and their Implications for Criteria Related to Sikh Identity'.

We plan to include details of successfully completed research, as well as work in progress, in further editions of the *BASR Bulletin*. Please send relevant information to the Editor.

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To subscribe to Dolmen, address an e-mail to: [maiordomo@lists.uni-marburg.de](mailto:maiordomo@lists.uni-marburg.de) (leave subject line empty) in message area, write: subscribe Dolmen <your e-mail address>

## IV: BOOK REVIEWS

Clive Erricker and Jane Erricker (eds.), *Contemporary Spiritualities*. Continuum, 2001. ISBN 0 8264 4847 6 (hbk.) 0 8264 4948 4 (pbk.) £18.99

This is a very varied book with fifteen chapters in two sections written by eleven people. The two sections focus on *Influential Writers and Thinkers* and *Faith Communities*. BASR members looking at this review might enjoy, before reading further, mapping out which six thinkers and which seven faith communities they would choose for a book with this title and how these might be used as exemplars of contemporary spiritualities in their social and religious contexts. We would each choose differently, and are therefore likely to be critical of anyone else's decisions. With reference to the book under review I would like to have seen an artist, novelist or musician included (see Wuthnow's recent *Creative Spirituality* for the rich potential in this area-and here perhaps the gap of something on Judaism might have been closed); a focus on contemporary film or the Rowling/Pullman stories; a contemporary movement such as the *Sea of Faith* examined or a local interfaith group analysed).

In the event the editors chose predominantly Christian people and groups. These are Teilhard de Chardin (Ursula King); Bede Griffiths (Shirley de Boulay); Thomas Merton (Danny Sullivan); Jiddu Krishnamurti (Clive Erricker); The Dalai Lama (Geshe Thubten Jinpa) and Carol Christ (Ruth Mantin). The faith communities chosen (three Christian, one Buddhist, one Hindu, one Muslim and one secular) are The Thai Forest Retreat Order (Clive Erricker); ISKCON (Anna King); The Amish (Richard Stevick); African American Pentecostals (David Daniels III); Taize (Liam Gearon); Khoja Shi'a Ithnasheeries in Diaspora (Clive Erricker) and a Street Community (Jane Erricker).

The choice of individuals, most of whom are dead, and only one of which is a woman, is perplexing in a volume emphasising the contemporary, and that despite the editorial attempt to give a contemporary contextualisation to people running 'far ahead of the pack'. The *Introduction* does acknowledge that the first section is retrospective, not fitting easily 'into the historical distinction of pre-modern; modern and post-modern', but focusing on people who have 'present and future influence'. Some contributors (Ursula King and Shirley de Boulay) have already written extensively about their subjects and give excellent summaries. Thubten Jinpa is a writer from within the tradition represented by the Dalai Lama and has been his principal interpreter for fifteen years. He draws on his inside knowledge and the Dalai Lama's written work to present a clear and focused account of his contemporary importance as a world spiritual teacher. Ruth Mantin writes the only

essay focusing on a woman and very ably shows how this respected scholar in the feminist study of religion writes a 'feminist theology out of the story of her life' embodying 'the impact of the women's movement on new understandings of spirituality' and 'embodied thinking' and suggests that fiction and poetry written by women might become the sacred text of a new feminist consciousness. The chapters on Merton and Krishnamurti bring out well the personal complexity of these two figures and how rooted each is in personal religious experience.

As in the chapters on the important figures, the outlines of the faith communities tend to be historical and descriptive, with a strong sense of their change and adaptation (or lack of) to their contexts. I felt when reading about the Amish, that I learned more about others' views of them than I engaged with their spirituality. One might also ask whether many more contemporary spiritualities exist outside 'faith' communities, something that the inclusion of the important final narrative case study of a street community does seek to highlight, but without the depth that I think such a subject needs. However there is no mention of any 'new age', indigenous or pagan groups, surely just some examples of many that are an important part of the contemporary scene. Each chapter has useful footnotes and bibliographical references and the book includes a brief paragraph about each author and a final full bibliography, a name and a subject index. Altogether the collection gives a useful introduction to various figures and movements, and acts as a starting point, though it does not live up to its rather large title and needs to be complemented by the many other important volumes being written in this area.

**Peggy Morgan, Mansfield College, Oxford**

Ninian Smart (ed.). *Atlas of The World's Religions*. Oxford, 1999. ISBN 0 19 866235 1 (hbk.) £30

One way of studying religious traditions (often referred to in Smart's overviews) is to focus on geographical areas and some University courses attempt this e.g. Indian religions; Chinese Religions; Religions in Europe. This way brings out rich questions of what is original to that geographical area, of historical change, of how traditions originating in another geographical and cultural context have transplanted themselves within it and how diasporas have in their turn taken traditions beyond their original boundaries in the (especially modern) movements of globalisation. This would be an interesting way of organising an Atlas of the World's Religions and some parts of the book under review *are* focused in this way e.g. East Asian Traditions; The Pacific; the Ancient Near East and Europe and Africa, but there is a lack of overall organisational consistency, which I feel is confusing, some sections being focused on area, others on religious traditions. For example India is not the

title of a chapter but one section looks at The Hindu World, including temple Hinduism in Indonesia, but not at the transplantation of Hinduism to North America and Europe. Buddhism has a section of its own, which begins in India and looks at the spread to Tibet and Southeast Asia and then at Buddhism Today which includes the west. There follows three sections which are focused on geographical areas:

East Asia (which includes Chinese Buddhism); The Pacific (which includes Christianity in the Pacific); The Ancient Near East and Europe. The text then goes back to chapters on specific religions: Judaism, Christianity and then Islam. These include an element of geography, e.g. Judaism in the Americas; Christian missions in the Americas; Islam in Africa, but they are not cross-referenced and linked to the other appropriate geographical sections. The text then gives another geographical focus on Africa (which includes Islam and the spread of Sufi orders) before finishing with the theme of Indigenous Religions. These are not related to what is meant by the primal religions of Oceania or traditional religion in the Southwest Pacific or healing cults in Africa or to a section in the very first chapter of the Atlas (Religion Today) called traditional primal religions and minority world religions today. The rise and spread of Sufism is dealt with without cross-reference on pages 178 and 208 by two different authors.

The reader may respond with the comment that the religious scene is complex and that we do our subject a disservice if we simplify or place traditions into a mono-organisational framework. One may also say that a diversity of authors bring richness, even if some inconsistency, to a volume, and authors are writing about what they know in the way they know. But cross-referencing is one way, for example of noting complexity and alerting the reader to different perspectives, organisational, methodological and factual.

The team of scholars who contribute to the spreads are: Frank Whaling on Religion Today and The Historical Geography of Religion; Daud Ali on The Hindu World; Stephen Hodge on Buddhism; Wendy Dossett on East Asian Traditions; Niel Gunson on The Pacific; Thomas O'Loughlin on Ancient Near East and Ancient Europe; Dan Cohn-Sherbok on Judaism; Michael Walsh on Christianity; Simonetta Calderini on Islam; Louis Brenner on Africa and Paul Heelas on Indigenous Religions.

In the end this beautifully presented volume provides an interesting work of reference rather than an alternative way of studying religious traditions. I liked the variety of map projections, for example of India on pages 39 and 59 which suddenly enable the reader to see the world in a different way. Most of the pictures, however small, have helpful captions, but the superb page spreads on pages 10-11; 32-35 and 68-69 are not labelled and do not, therefore help the study in hand. I think that the reader needs to know quite a lot already before he or she can really appreciate the

detail of the maps, diagrams and charts, as well as the complex organisation of the text. The stunning cover may attract buyers, who may then find it difficult to use. If anyone such as an undergraduate student is starting from scratch the presentation and organisation is confusing in its complexity. The book ends with a helpful glossary of terms and bibliography which are linked to the individual chapters and a full index.

**Peggy Morgan, Mansfield College, Oxford**

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## **V: TURNING POINT**

*On Religion: Speeches to its cultured despisers* by Friedrich Schleiermacher

When I read the *Speeches* as a student I found them liberating and inspiring. Some years later as I left the University of Hull my colleagues gave me a framed photograph of the great man: I had clearly communicated to them how important he was in my teaching. The *Speeches* are a classic work, not in the sense of a book acknowledged but never read, but in the sense that it is of continuing influence even amongst those who do not realise it. Five aspects are of special significance.

*1. Religion as a phenomenon.* The *Speeches* begin with these famous words: ‘From of old faith has not been every man’s affair. At all times but few have discerned religion itself, while millions, in various ways, have been satisfied to juggle with its trappings.’ Here is the beginning of phenomenology of religion *avant le mot*. Religion, religions, provide us with an endless series of special places, times, artefacts, institutions, authorities, rituals, beliefs, taboos, prescriptions, garments. They are interesting, intriguing, alarming, incredible, embarrassing. Schleiermacher, in a rather abrasive mode, distinguishes between ‘faith’ and ‘trappings’. Elsewhere he distinguishes the kernel from the shell, the original sound from the echo, the Holy of Holies from the outer court. I found it liberating that religion itself, as a phenomenon, was not identical with its manifestations, indeed is sometimes ill-served by them.

*2. Religion and human nature* As a student I had read Barth on Schleiermacher and was drawn to the latter: religion arises within human experience. But I was struck by Schleiermacher’s audacious claim. ‘Man can just as little be thought of without capacity for morality or endeavour after government as without capacity for religion.’ Schleiermacher was challenging his fellow Romantics: they would not fulfil their lives if they thought they had gone beyond religion. Of course

Schleiermacher could be indifferent to their alienation from the manifestations of religion. But religion as a phenomenon transcends its objectifications, just as being human transcends the merely biological.

3. *Religion is sui generis* One of the points of contention in the science versus religion debates of the 19th century was that religion had hitherto been regarded as a source of knowledge about the natural world, its age and the method of its origination. Schleiermacher had anticipated this mistake. Religion as a phenomenon gives us no information on such matters. Alternatively, as the metaphysical claims of religion lost their credibility many people were unwilling to lose the traditional basis of morality. Nietzsche was to claim that the death of God removes the foundations of truth, morality and aesthetics. But Schleiermacher had avoided this deconstruction. Religion is not morality with a loud voice, nor is it beauty ritualised and remembered in tranquility. Religion is not a knowing or a doing, not morality or art. Religion as a phenomenon can be manifest in any of these ways but it is not them. It is *sui generis*.

4. *Religion and the ordinary* .One of the aspects of Schleiermacher's work which I found most attractive was that religion arises in the living of life and not in its rejection or contradiction. Religion is rooted not in knowing or doing, but in experience. Rudolf Otto was much influenced by Schleiermacher—but not enough. He too presents religion as a phenomenon, *sui generis*, arising from an experience. And that is the difference it is *an* experience. He pursues the same experience of the numinous through various religions. If you have not had *that* experience you are not religious. Religion then becomes something peculiar, arbitrary, alienated from ordinary life. Not so with Schleiermacher: 'there is no sensation that is not pious.' Religion as the transcending of the merely objective, the merely biological, can occur unexpectedly in any human experience. Everyone has this capacity, regardless of how they understand or objectify it. It will be understood in different ways in different cultures, at different periods of history, at different stages in the life of the same person.

5. *Religion and love*. In all of these respects I found Schleiermacher's work liberating. But I also found it inspiring because I not only found religion interesting and intriguing, I loved it. Just as well. 'Religion ... in its own original, characteristic form, is not accustomed to appear openly, but is only seen in secret by those who love it.' Of course the manifestations are there to be observed by anyone for whatever reason. But to appreciate what it is that they manifest requires something more of the observer. To provide an aesthetic interpretation of an icon is

art appreciation. To see and see through the icon requires a religious appreciation. Schleiermacher claimed that this was a condition of appreciation generally, that you must love your subject. As I read the *Speeches* I was about to make a decision about whether to follow a career in university teaching. I certainly should not have dedicated so much of my life to the study of something I did not love. But I imagine the same is true of every other subject in the university.

Even the casual reader will have noticed that each of these points corresponds to an issue which is currently debated in that newest of New Religious Movements, i.e. methodology. Schleiermacher wrote for the cultured Despisers of Religion. They were proud to be outside of religion, criticising it from inappropriate perspectives. Today the Despisers of Religion are teaching the subject.

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**Professor of Religious Studies**  
**New College, University of Edinburgh**

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## **VII: TRIBUTES**

### **Eric H. Pyle (1918-2001)**

When I entered the University of Glasgow in the early 1960s, Eric Pyle was lecturer in 'Principles of Religion'. As an aspiring 'Divinity' student at that time, my Advisor of Studies dissuaded me from becoming one of Eric's students, advising me that his material would be well and truly covered within the Divinity Faculty. This was not in fact the case: neither I nor my non-specialist 'Advisor' realized at the time that Eric was responsible for the development of the study of world religions, in contrast with the Divinity Faculty, whose focus was almost exclusively on Christianity at that time. Eric ran the subject single-handed until the late 1960s, when an assistant was appointed. His *Introducing Christianity*, co-authored with Sidney Williamson, was published by Penguin Books in 1961.

Being a one-man subject area, Eric was resourceful in building bridges with other disciplines. One of the highlights of my week as a philosophy undergraduate was a Friday lunch time seminar, in which principles of religion students met at the Chaplaincy with the philosophers. Attendees included Keith Ward, who had just embarked on his first lecturing post.

The seminars proved so popular that they developed into a residential weekend in Perthshire, where Eric ably demonstrate that he was more than an inspiring teacher:

he was a vicious croquet player, and could amaze students with card tricks. Eric was also a keen member of MENSA. He will be sadly missed.

**George D. Chryssides**

### **Harold W. Turner (1911-2002)**

Harold W. Turner's work on new religious movements was immense, and predated the studies of scholars who gained a higher profile in the field. Harold came from New Zealand, where he became a Presbyterian minister, and his main interest was the way in which Christian mission had interacted with primal cultures, giving rise to new religions, which he always regarded as a global phenomenon. Rightly disliking the media terms 'cult' and 'sect', he saw a need to devise a more objective piece of terminology, and it is he who must take the credit for devising the term 'new religious movement' or 'NRM'.

Harold's main work related to African religions, on which he published extensively. He worked in Sierra Leone and Nigeria in the late 1950s and 1960s before going to Leicester. When the Leicester Department closed, in the early 1970s, he moved to Aberdeen, where he set up his research centre on new religious movements. At Aberdeen, he taught the phenomenology of religion in the Religious Studies programme, with a focus on space and time as religious phenomena. He 'retired' to Birmingham, Selly Oak, in the late 1970s, where he founded the Centre for New Religious Movements (CENERM).

The Centre's work brought Harold in contact with a number of new religious groups, not least the Unification Church. Although he had no particular wish to become involved in controversy, he always maintained a sense of fairness, and was prepared to defend them against unjust attack, even to extent of supporting them in the court room.

Harold returned to New Zealand in 1989, and became keenly involved in the 'Gospel and Culture' programme, inspired by his friendship with Lesslie Newbigin, whom he first met in Birmingham. This programme sought to find a form of expression for Christian mission for one's own western-style culture.

Harold always sent a Christmas letter to his friends. In his last, he recognized his considerable age and failing health, and expressed a somewhat prophetic hope for a 'good death'. His good life lives on in Harold's immense contribution and inspiration to scholars and church leaders who study new and primal religions.

**George D. Chryssides and James L. Cox**



## VI RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY BASR MEMBERS

(Please send in your details via email where possible.)

### **Chryssides, George D.**

2000 'Healing and Curing: Spiritual Healing, New and Old'; in Bowman, M. (ed.) (2000) *Healing and Religion*. Enfield Lock, Middlesex: Hisarlik Press. pp. 59-68.

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2002 'New Religions, Unitarians and the Millennium', parts 16-20 of a series in *The Inquirer*, nos. 7540 (January), 7544 (March), 7550 (June), 7554 (August), 7558 (October): one page per issue.

### **Geaves, R. A.**

2001 'The Haqqani Naqshbandis: A case study of apocalyptic millennialism within Islam', *Faith in the Millenium*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

*Religious Experience in Islam*, 2nd Series Occasional Paper 29, Religious Experience Research Centre, Lampeter: University of Wales.

with Chohan, S (2001), 'The search for Khalistan and its roots in Sikh history: the religious dimension', *International Journal of Punjabi Studies*, Vol. 8:1.

2002 'The Dynamics of Sikh Fundamentalism'; in *Fundamentalisms*, ed Partridge C., Carlisle: Paternoster Press

*The Continuum Glossary of Religious Studies*. London: Continuum

### **McKenzie, Peter**

(2002). 'Hail Orisha! defended: A response to James Cox. *Journal of Religion in Africa* 32:1, pp.110-119.