

Letter from the Class Chair Svend Erik Larsen

December 4 2017

Dear members of Class A1: Humanities

AE has undergone a number of changes over the last few years in order both to do more *for* members and to facilitate activities *by* members. The pace of change has to follow our economy which, in contrast to national academies, is totally depends entirely on the annual donation from members. With this letter at the end of the year I will give a status and look ahead.

But first one piece of news: After Vice-President and Class Chair of the Social Science Class Anne Buttiner, one of the founders of the AE, passed away, the Board has appointed Genoveva Marti, Section Chair of Philosophy, as interim Vice-President, an appointment we hope will be confirmed at the next general assembly.

A) Service for members:

- 1) AE is unique by being the only pan-European academy across all disciplines, based on individual membership. Under this EU Presidency the Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) has been broadened out, and AE is now permanently involved in SAM, latest by hosting EUs initiative on science advice at the AE Cardiff Hub. For Humanities and Social Science in particular, through our collaboration with the recently created European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities (EASSH) we are putting pressure on the various EU research programs to create a larger space for our disciplines (see the latest EASSH document on the coming FP9 <http://www.eassh.eu/position-papers>, also via the AE website: ae-info.org > News). We strive to be the voice of our members where European research policy is made and funding created.
- 2) The AE journal *European Review*, from Cambridge University Press, is available online for members for free and is Thomson Reuter registered. The growing number of submission shows that it reaches out, and in the new contract with CUP it is likely that the annual number of issues will raise from four to six.
- 3) The knowledge hubs in Wroclaw, Barcelona, Cardiff and Bergen give AE a local basis for activities. For our Class, Wroclaw is our closest hub contact, and it is open for activities organized by the sections. The Section for History and Archeology is presently planning an event with this hub.
- 4) The restructuring of the AE, based on a class structure is planned to offer a better framework for membership activities.

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A) Activities by members:

- 1) The Board has decided to downsize the annual meeting, place it at fixed dates every year (3rd week in November) and use the Barcelona Hub as its permanent venue in combination with the annual *Disputatio* organized by the Hub. The aim is to make it more attractive and feasible for the general membership to participate once a year, to slim-line the burden of organizing the meeting, and to save money which then could be transferred to class activities as a way to make the class structure visible and functional for members. The size of possible class budget will of course depend on the general economy of AE.
- 2) The section chairs of our Class A1 discussed possibilities for future class activities at the nomination in July 2017. We will come back to you to develop such activities, once the decision on a class budget has been taken by the Board. We foresee a bi-annual one-day conference, if possible taking place at the Wroclaw Hub, based on a theme with is decided by members and organized in rotation by the sections. It will be important that the theme has an appeal to more than one section. If not to all sections, then a balance between section interests will have to be established over a short period of time. All class activities must be open to all class members, and also to members of other classes, and could be organized as joint ventures between sections and/or classes. – If this is a bi-annual event, then every second year a small seminar may take place in connection with the annual meeting in Barcelona. Moreover, the classes could take over the responsibility for the Burgen Scholars. Depending on the numbers the Board will allocate to each class (the total number has normally been ten), the individual classes will have to ensure that all sections over time receive awardees. A class 'general assembly' should be included to enable members to discuss activities, meetings in particular, in years to come and present ideas, incl. activities beyond the AE but involving members in research projects. Finally, involvement of the Young Academy of Europe (YAE) will have to be part of the activities, both to increase the YAE membership and to create a better balance between disciplines in the YAE.
- 3) The AE website needs an update as part of a communication plan and strategy. Kirsten Drotner, Section 7, is chairing a task force with this aim. This should make the website more user friendly, allow special functions targeting class activities and communication, and also open for various online activities within the class.

With this letter, I wish everybody a merry Christmas and a happy new year – hopefully with a large number of new nominations that can help the AE to carry on and to promote Humanities across Europe.

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Class Chair A1

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