

Present: Andrew Bartlett (Board), Ian Dennis (Secretary-Treasurer), Eric Gans (Board), Roman Katsman (Member), Adam Katz (Board) Marina Ludwigs (Board), Stacey Meeker (Board), Matthew Schneider (Board), Richard van Oort (President), Magdalena Złocka-Dąbrowska (Member), Zach Baker (Guest)

Some other attendees of the 2021 GASC Conference

Meeting **called to order** via Zoom at 21:35 IDT. Richard van Oort chaired.

Via Zoom

1. President’s Welcome – Richard van Oort

Richard called the meeting to order, welcomed participants, and offered the Society’s heartfelt thanks to Roman Katsman and the other members of the 2021 Conference organizing committee for their work. He praised the conference and was seconded in his remarks by several other members.

2. GASC 2021 Assessment

There was a wide-ranging discussion of the conference, and the current situation and future prospects of the Society.

Roman informed the Meeting that recordings of all the 2021 sessions would be made available on Bar-Ilan University’s YouTube channel, and that an announcement would be made to this effect when they were ready.

About the just-concluded 2021 Conference a number of points were made. It was widely agreed that the conference was a great success, and that although it remained fairly small in numbers, the quality and especially diversity of papers was steadily improving. In particular, the range of views, including contrasting political views, was noted.

The formats of the different sessions were discussed, and it was felt that the innovative structures, including the debate and three-person panel, were successful and should be considered for future conferences. Some members noted that the traditional 20-minute paper format was still viable, and it was generally agreed that a mixture of kinds of sessions was good.

Sessions focussed on a given GA concept or issue, such as “firstness” or “resentment” ought to be considered for future conferences.

2. GASC 2021 Assessment - Continued

It was suggested that circulating papers a few days in advance of the conference might be advantageous.

Present and future relations with the Girardian community and the Colloquium on Violence and Religion were discussed. It was suggested that, given the relative failure to increase numbers at our events, GASC conferences might be staged only on alternate years, and that in the non-conference years Society members could instead attend COV&R with a view to making contacts and attracting Girardian scholars to GA and the GASC conferences. This idea was discussed at some length, with opinion expressed on both sides of the question. Among the points made were that members who wished to attend only one conference a year could, for example, go in person to COV&R, but attend GASC online, if GASC made an online presence an ongoing feature of its format. It was also suggested that online recruitment of those interested in mimetic theory might also work well, and that many participants at COV&R conferences were not likely to be any more receptive to GA than hitherto.

Concern was expressed at the time and effort required to mount GASC conferences, given the relatively small membership of the Society, and it was noted that this was one reason for some of the more modest conferences, some even as small as mere seminars and requiring relatively limited overhead.

Other ways of increasing the GA profile and participation were discussed, and various ideas advanced.

The idea of making contributions to online publications such as *Strelka* was proposed by Adam Katz, who also introduced Zach Baker to the meeting. Zach offered his assistance in promoting or “evangelizing” GA.

A regular, perhaps biannual column of news and GA updates to be published in *Anthropoetics* was suggested, and Adam volunteered to produce this. Ian suggested that such columns could then be linked to the News page on the GA Society Website.

Various possible outreach or educational initiatives were also proposed.

3. Future Conferences – Ian Dennis

It was agreed that the 2022 conference in Ottawa would go ahead, with Ian as organizer. Ian discussed options for this conference, which he envisioned as being fairly small-scale, roughly similar to GASC 2019 in New York City. He would not be taking on the time-consuming task of applying for large-scale funding but anticipated using some facilities at the University of Ottawa.

3. Future Conferences – Continued

The possibility of making the 2022 conference a hybrid in-person and online conference was discussed. Ian noted this could take the form of making only selected sessions available online (as was done, for example, at High Point and UCLA in the past), or it could be a matter of making the whole conference available online in the new “bimodal” manner that the University of Ottawa would be adopting for many classes in the fall of 2021. The latter method could make participants more fully involved in the discussions, with a camera that followed the in-person speaker. Bimodal delivery would probably require a (student) technician present at each session, and Ian will investigate the cost of this. He estimated, however, that GASC financial resources might cover such a service without any substantial increase in the conference registration fees for participants.

Ian will make a request for assistance in planning the conference and creating a theme and CFP later this summer and suggested that Board Zoom meetings could be used for this purpose.

Possibilities for 2023 and beyond were then discussed. It was noted that there is some uncertainty about the possibility of Japan in 2023, and Andrew offered the possibility of hosting a conference in Vancouver that year, or afterwards.

4. Treasurer’s Report – Ian Dennis

Ian noted that an annual financial statement had been circulated. Due to the lack of conference expenses and the absence of a student award winner this year, the financial situation remained quite strong, with a current balance of just over \$CDN 4200.

5. Board Membership – Richard van Oort

Richard noted that the GASC constitution indicated that the presidency should change every two to three years and that he was in the third year of his term. It was agreed that he would continue till 2022 but that next year a new president should be elected.

Board membership was also discussed. It was noted that membership on the Board had become rather informal and that it was perhaps time to clarify the memberships and use the constitutional process. Ian will therefore shortly circulate a ballot to the full Society to confirm the memberships of Magdalena and Matthew Taylor. He will seek to confirm John O’Carroll’s resignation from the Board and the Society will revert to making conference organizers temporary, de-facto members only, unless they are or wish to be elected Board Members. Ian will remove Roman, for example, from the list of Board Members on the Society website now that the 2021 conference has concluded.

Richard **adjourned the meeting** at 23:30 IDT.