

### Susanna Argyri, Greece ERC Chairperson

"I was born and brought up in Athens and studied Greek literature at Athens University. Since last October I have been attending an MA course in Great Britain, at the University of East Anglia.

As a first year student in 1986, I got involved in the Christian Socialist Movement and have participated actively in it since then, while at the same time helping with the youth work in my local parish. From 1989-91 I was the WSCF Contact person for EKIX (one of the Christian Socialist groups in Greece).

My involvement with WSCF began in June 1987 when I joined the preparatory group for the joint ESG-WSCF conference on "Mission", in Wambeck, Germany. Since then I have taken part in several other WSCF activities, such as the Women's Conference on "Women and Spirituality" (Strasbourg, March 1989), the Conference on "Nationalism" (St. Pölten, Austria, November 1990) and finally the ERA (Hirschluch, August 1991) where my (thrilling) election as Chairperson took place.

It was through WSCF that I was given the chance to participate in ecumenical meetings and this has always been for me an exciting and challenging experience. As an Orthodox Greek I have often felt the difficulties of dialogue "on equal terms", because of the Western/Northern and Protestant domination in WSCF, so one of my main preoccupations will be to encourage and promote an active presence of movements that have so far been "marginalised" (movements from Southern and Eastern Europe and Orthodox movements)."

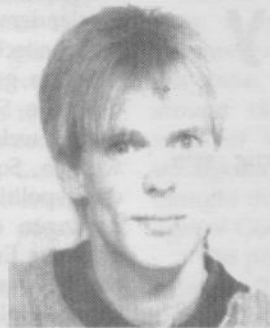
### Anders Wesslund, Sweden Programmatic Coordinator

"In the church where I grew up, the children used to go to Sunday School. We used to put our "charity money" in a box where a doll, a black person, nodded to us children for every little coin inserted. The teacher told us the biblical stories and we learned about Jesus, who condemned the rich and took the part of the poor. I felt frustrated. Without having words for it, I understood that in our church we belonged to the rich, but it seemed to me that my teacher tried to neglect this fact.

I believe this little story tells something about me. I left this fundamen-



Susanna Argyri



Anders Wesslund



Ingrid Voll

# The New Crew

The European Regional Assembly at Hirschluch, Germany, last year elected a new European Regional Committee (ERC). Here, they introduce themselves...

talist church ten years ago, and today, 29 years old, I have made a conscious choice to belong to an ecumenical church (reformed) and to the ecumenical movement. The SCM in Sweden, KRISS, has also played an important role for me. Since 1985 I have been involved in KRISS at every level. For the last two years I have worked as General Secretary for the movement. So, in August 1991, the ERA in Hirschluch showed its confidence in me being a member of the ERC, where I especially want to deal with issues about identity and ideology. (See the later article about the Programmatic Working Group.)

My daily life I spend in Umeå, in the northern part of Sweden, studying psychology. Any spare time I use to go skiing and skating, or just being out in the forest. You see, here in Umeå the winter season is longer than the summer and ... I enjoy it. If you ever see the *aurora borealis*, the northern lights, you will understand ..."

### Ingrid Voll, Norway Executive Committee

"My name is Ingrid, I am 26 years old, and live in Oslo, Norway. I am educated as a social worker, and have worked for two and a half years at this in Oslo. For the last year I have been

studying sociology at the University in Oslo. My plan is to continue to a Masters Degree in Sociology, two years from now.

In the ERA in Hirschluch in Summer '91, I was elected to be one of the two European representatives on the Executive Committee of WSCF. This will be my main task in the ERC, and I am elected for three years. For the last 4-5 years I have been working in the SCM of Norway, with different tasks, on a local level with student work in Oslo, and on a national level, especially in a committee for international questions, where I am still engaged. Within this committee, I have been specially concerned about Middle East issues, and have done work preparing conferences in Norway, a trip to Palestine in Summer '91, and other engagement on this issue in Norwegian SCM. I am also in a group working on human rights issues within the Norwegian Church."

### Michael Feakes, Britain Publications Coordinator

"My role on the ERC is to coordinate the production of *MOZAIK* and WSCF-Europe's Publications Network. *MOZAIK*, as the Region's magazine, is intended to keep people in WSCF-Europe in touch with each other - to

provide a means of communication between the various national movements or SCMs. The Publications Network is a forum for people interested in, or involved with, magazines in their own SCMs, to swap articles, ideas, moral support, etc.

My first involvement in the murky world of student publishing came some time ago with a university newspaper. Eventually I grew tired of the political battles with the editor necessary to get an article published, and decided to become an editor myself. I got involved with a now well-known international humanities magazine, which is currently not being published for operational reasons, and my horizons grew even wider. In true journalistic fashion, I made plans over a long, expenses-paid lunch in an exotic foreign city: the concept grew of a Europe-wide publication, bringing together between two covers the activities of all the European SCMs, reflecting their concerns and interests, their work and events, and sent directly to the members themselves. And so it was, from Vienna to Amsterdam, and finally to Hirschluch. The rest, as they say, is not particularly interesting.

I have been involved in British SCM for the last few years, attending various conferences and meetings, and am now part of the process to try to increase the profile of WSCF within Britain. I live in north-eastern England, in Hull, where I am currently trying to find time to write up an enormously long thesis on international law. I sometimes experiment with flattened thirteenth chords on the guitar or go along to my local SCM group, but often just stay at home trying to keep out of the sun."

### **Cornelia Knoth, Germany Regional Balance**

"What to say about me? - My English is terrible ... I'm Conny, but my parents call me Cornelia. And my boyfriend too - if he has to tell me some serious things. But that's seldom, because I'm really a "good girl". Since 1990 I have been studying theology in Jena. From 1986-1989 I lived in Erfurt. There I became a medical technical assistant for voice and ears. It wasn't easy to get a place at the university in the former GDR ... During that time I started to involve myself in the Student Christian movement. It was something like an "opposition-nest", where we could find people like ourselves. It was a chance to work in a

field of politics. Since that time I'm sure the Church has to show political and social involvement for those who are left in our societies. In 1989 a lot of wonders happened. One of them was that I could join the Big E in Birmingham (first contact with WSCF!!!) - before "the wall" ... During the revolution I had a job in the SCM. It was



**Michael Feakes**



**Cornelia Knoth**



**Christiane Kemmler**

great, of course, because I was a "full-time Revoluzzer". In the beginning of 1990 we decided to concentrate on East Europe. We thought that we former GDR people could be something like "interpreters" between East (our history) and West (our future?). That's why I took part in the ERA in Hirschluch: being a member of the ERC.

And I hope it will be a good time ... I'm sure."

**Christiane Kemmler,  
Germany  
Women's Coordinator**  
"Oh my God, who am I?

Maybe I shouldn't expect a direct reply? - while I am waiting and pondering over this, I might as well start collecting some of the more basic details about myself, things just easy enough not to see them vanish the moment I want to grasp them. Just to give you something to read while we wait...

I am a white heterosexual female. I am German. I am a student of German and English literature and linguistics at the Free University of Berlin with the option to become a secondary school teacher after I finish. Which I might or might not choose to do.

I spent my happy childhood living out in the woods, sleeping in tents and hanging around camp-fires, singing, dancing, exploring foreign lands with a couple of close friends. Or in more technical language, I joined the Scout movement when I was little, took over the responsibility of group leader quite soon and became deeply involved in the movement.

I was in fact still working with young adults in our Berlin groups, trying to initiate programmes on political, social and environmental issues (you can't spend all your life out there in the woods, can you?), when I very innocently joined the ERA in Hirschluch last summer...

I got involved with SCM when I spent six months in England, studying English literature at the University of East Anglia in Norwich (1989/90). Back home, I then found my way to our Berlin ESG (SCM), but I had obviously needed this impetus from the British!

Before I went to England, I had been in touch with a more fundamentalist Christian student group. I value their commitment to live a spiritual life - or call it a Christian life - but their concept of God was not mine, their answers to my burning questions seemed too narrow.

To me, social and political awareness and action are an integral part of my search for God, and luckily, in the SCMs I know I have found people of a similar understanding to work and discuss and argue with.

Then suddenly I was asked at the ERA, Wouldn't I like to work at WSCF European level as a member of the ERC? I didn't exactly feel called to agree, being acutely aware there had to be lots of people more experienced and generally more able to do the job. But somehow all these people did not show up for my rescue... I accepted the challenge. And since then, I can



feel myself almost physically growing with the tasks. (wie ein Luftballon der aufgeblasen wird)

As I had joined the women's interest group because of the feminist interests I have developed during my studies, I decided to stand for the position of women's coordinator. And it seemed they wanted me-You will find out more about the women's work when you read the Women's Newsletter!!

You might have wondered why I had such a difficult start telling you something about myself. In fact, these problems sort of started last summer, since when I have gone through a few periods of identity crisis: my student identity is in danger because I have no more time for studying. And in different meetings and conferences I questioned and tried to shape and tell others about my Christian, Lutheran identity, my feminist self, my inescapably advantaged position as a white person from Western Europe, as a German; as someone representing WSCF-Europe without yet a solid knowledge of all the structures...

I sometimes find myself hoping for some direct message from above to clear up some mess or other - and then while I go on by myself I do have the feeling She is around."

### Joanna Pieters, Britain Regional Balance

Joanna Pieters' international contacts began in late 1969, when she first appeared to the world and to her British and Belgian parents. Brought up in a rural village in the middle of England, in 1989 she moved up to the windy, northern university town of Durham, where she is generally to be found wandering around with a violin in one hand and a copy of the complete works of Shakespeare in the other. One life-changing weekend, taking a break from her English Literature course, she discovered SCM, and since then has been involved with both the North of England Region and the British movement, developing a useful immunity to the hardness of church hall floors and particular interests in women's issues and Christian art forms. In her spare time, she plays Beethoven, walks up hills, and indulges a terribly English liking for tea-shops. Later this year she is planning to begin a course in book and magazine publishing near London.

### Albrecht Kasper, Germany Treasurer

"How to present a 27 year old Frankonian/German, nearly an economist, single, lazy, short-sighted, bold and unreal to you, unknown reader?

Do you want to know the treasurer? I doubt it. You might have expectations, probably bad experiences. Perhaps you suffer from personal debt, you grumble and wonder what reason beside tradition WSCF needs a treasurer for. Yeah, friend, you are right!



Joanna Pieters



Albrecht Kasper

The treasurer is always second best. I agree!

It was not money, rather aikido and politics, that made my world go round! (It was only that for years my politics were argued down economically.) But then - how did I come to where I am now? When I joined the ERA I asked some general questions concerning the finances - to find myself being asked to be the next treasurer. What did it mean? Challenge, playground, experience, alternative project, feast? How would you have responded?

I agreed, you know. At that moment and still now I'm trying to pass my Finals in economics at the Free University of West Berlin. In the past my subjects were 'development theory', 'international relations', 'the economic

history of Europe' and the 'inbeddedness of economy in its society' but motivated mostly politically. During two years of my studies I tried to find the way to paradise (harmony and wealth, you know) in the faculty of theology. But I came back ruefully to economics since theology doesn't speak about that paradise and even more: they cannot manage the church's own daily life problems, nor have they a vision for justice in a world-society, because theologians in general know too little about economics (at least).

It is still hard to wake up. But in that time I started doing chassidic dances with SCM friends. We discovered gender analysis, Jewish and liberation theology. And I got a third spiritual education programme with Brazilian youth.

What I'd like to do as treasurer of the ERC includes: The teaching of 'God the economist' in the world religions; economics beyond individual and linear development-rationality; the Biblical and the daily ethics of money; the Church identity between administrative bureaucracy and firm; and Meditation and activity in economic life. Concretely, there will at least be a new financial structure and report-system.

In the ERC I enjoy our different experiences even more than half a year ago and I think we could be a fruitfully sharing community. And I hope that in 1993 more people in European SCMs know something about the Biblical version of a just economy, share and deal with finances and know how others do it. For me, it is the more important task of the Centennial Fund project. Perhaps we can even grow to be a voice on the people's side in the European market integration process."

### What is the ERC?

The European Regional Committee is appointed every two years by the ERA to oversee the work and activities of WSCF-Europe, represent it on official bodies, plan conferences, employ staff, etc.

As well as those members shown, also on the current ERC are José Manuel de Jesus Cerqueira (Portugal, Regional Balance) and Robert Schoen (France, ExCo); a Solidarity Coordinator will soon be chosen.