



BETH

Bibliothèques Européennes de Théologie

BETH Bulletin 2026

No. 04

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Outgoing

Farewell Message from the President to the Leaving Secretary

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the Metropolitan Chapter of Milan, Italy

As Henrik steps down from his role as Secretary of BETH, I wanted to mark the occasion in this Bulletin.

From the very start, his style impressed me: however busy he was, he always found the time, and somehow made it feel unhurried. I was particularly struck by how quickly he replied to my messages. His manner was light—never heavy-handed—but never superficial either. Behind the ease was real substance, and he made it all look effortless.

This combination contributed greatly to the atmosphere of BETH itself. He has a gift for building a collaborative spirit and genuinely cares about relationships across our wonderfully diverse community—an original blend of Northern, Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe.

Even before I had the opportunity to get to know him well through BETH activities,



it was clear that he understood what BETH truly is: not merely a professional network, but an ecumenical community of librarians. He always treated it as such.

One place this was especially evident was Sarajevo. The technical collaboration behind that conference—the logistics, coordination, and countless small decisions that make a gathering successful—bore his mark throughout. Stavanger was no different: his support behind the scenes, even from a distance, was invaluable. I suspect there was much more that he did which I never even heard about, because he never made any of it seem like a burden.

It also showed in how naturally he took over the role itself. The handover from his predecessor, Matina Curic, could easily have been difficult, but instead it was seamless.

Beyond BETH's own boundaries, he encouraged me to build wider connections—through his support for the Panacea Social Talks and, not least, by exploring the possibility of closer cooperation with EBLIDA. He was always thinking about the long-term interests of the network.

Now it is someone else's turn. Everyone will bring their own style, and that is exactly as it should be. It is part of what keeps BETH alive.

As he leaves the secretariat, I hope this is not a farewell but simply a change of address. I very much hope we will stay in touch and continue working together whenever the opportunity arises. Above all, I hope the relationships he helped nurture within BETH will continue to flourish for many years to come.