# Letter by George Gasper to Erik Koelink, 14 August 2003

Dear Erik,

In order to refresh my and Mizan's memories, I had to look up some letters and material from the 1970's and 1980's that were stored in my basement. From the [attached copy of Mizan's Feb. 24, 1976 letter to me](#) it is clear that we first met at the January, 1976, AMS meeting in San Antonio. Mizan told me that it was also at that meeting that he first met Mourad.

We started collaborating on our joint research about four years later after we met a second time in San Antonio at the January, 1980, AMS meeting. Since he was tired of having to repeatedly search papers for known formulas involving basic hypergeometric functions that were not contained in either Bailey's or Slater's books, Mizan suggested that we should  write an up-to-date book on basic hypergeometric functions. After some hesitation to start such an ambitious project, I eventually agreed that we should write the book. Attached is a [copy of the outline](#) of the contents that we came up with while I was visiting Mizan on March 26, 1982, the starting date of our Basic Hypergeometric Series book. Four years later the book had grown so much that we were at the stage outlined in the [attached three page Contents](#). Little did we realized that it would take another four years before our book was published.

The book turned out to be a great success judging from the reviews, numerous citations and enthusiastic comments that we received from the readers and users. We were especially glad that Mir published 1200 copies of the Russian translation of it by N.M. Atakishiev and S.K. Suslov. With the full support of our publisher we have been working during the past few years on an updated and expanded second edition. It will contain three additional chapters entitled
- *On Linear and Bilinear Generating Functions for Basic Hypergeometric Polynomials*,
- *q-Series in Two or More Variables*,
- *Elliptic, Modular, and Theta Hypergeometric Series*,
and it should be published early next year. A great surprise was when we noticed that Jacques Sauloy wrote `see the ``bible'' [15]' in his *Galois theory  of fuchsian q-difference equations* [math.QA/0210221](#) preprint, where reference [15] turned out to be our BHS book.

Who would have thought that Mizan's frustrations in not being able to find needed formulas would evolve into such a useful book?

Sincerely yours,

George