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**International Society for the Sociology of Religion**

**Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions**

# **Network 32**

## **Réseau**

**March 2008**

Published by: Karel Dobbelaere

### **30th ISSR Conference**

## **THE CHALLENGES OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM**

**Santiago de Compostela (Spain) 27-31 July 2009**

*Please make a note of the date and put it in your diary*

**Description of the conference theme:**

**page 3-4 of this Network and on our Web Site**

### **Deadlines**

**May 31st 2008:** **Proposals for Thematic Sessions and Working Groups** to be sent to the General Secretary

Session titles and the conveners' names will be published in the next Network and posted on our web site [www.sisr.org](http://www.sisr.org) by **July 15th 2008**

**October 31st 2008:** **Abstracts of proposed papers for sessions** to be sent to the convener of the Session, **abstracts of miscellaneous papers** to be sent to the General Secretary

**Early January 2009:** Programme of the Conference on our Web Site [www.sisr.org](http://www.sisr.org) and in the first issue of Network of 2007

## **LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

During its last meeting in Paris on February 15-18, the ISSR/SISR Council has chosen the theme of our 30<sup>th</sup> Conference: “*The challenges of religious pluralism*”. In this issue of *Network* you will find the presentation of this theme that is being developed in two plenary sessions. As you know, this theme will also be treated in the Opening Session organised by the Local Committee, where Spanish colleagues will discuss the Spanish religious situation,. You will also find some suggestions made by the Spanish Local Committee, for Thematic Sessions linked to conference theme. Beyond this common theme, as usual, all kinds of topics related to the sociology of religion may be proposed as part of Thematic Sessions and Working Groups.

Nowadays, religious pluralism is a relevant issue both from the point of view of the challenges faced by contemporary societies in different continents as well as for religions themselves. For sociological analysis it is particularly relevant to distinguish the factual diversity of religious expressions from the way in which this diversity is socially perceived, organised, administrated and evaluated. In order to study accurately how the actual diversity is socially constructed and lived, it is crucial for us sociologists to have the theoretical and methodological tools required for this analysis. In other words, it is important to construct sociologically our object of study.

Thanks to Professor Juan-Luis Pintos of the University of Santiago de Compostela and to all members of the Spanish Local Committee, our 30<sup>th</sup> ISSR/SISR Conference will be welcomed very cordially in the famous city of Santiago de Compostela whose pilgrimage is worldwide well-known. An ISSR/SISR Conference is obviously not a pilgrimage, but I wish the Santiago Conference will attract, as the pilgrimage, a large attendance from all the continents. I also hope this Conference will be an opportunity of strong mobilization for sociologists of religion throughout the world and that it will constitute a new step in the development of our association, particularly thanks to the presence of sociologists of religions of the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America.

Jean-Paul Willaime

## **30TH ISSR - CONFERENCE**

### ***CONFERENCE THEME***

#### **THE CHALLENGES OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM**

Religious diversity is a constant feature of human societies. When the very existence and the understanding of this diversity become the subject of contestation, as has been the case in contemporary societies, we can speak of the challenges of religious pluralism. The [2009 conference of the ISSR] seeks to contribute to the sociological analysis of religious pluralism and its common understandings. The conference will include a wide range of possible approaches and will pay particular attention to both the ways in which religion adapts to the context of religious pluralism and to the ways in which contemporary societies respond.

##### **Plenary 1 - Religious Pluralism as a Challenge for Religion**

In contemporary society, religious pluralism presents a range of complex challenges to religious groups and communities. In a plural situation, they are faced with the need to compete for social and communal capital, such as members, financial contributions, legitimacy, and political influence. Religious groups have to decide on the ways in which they want to approach and relate to members of other groups—whether they opt for dialogue, mission, confrontation or indifference. They have to find ways of addressing internal pluralism, democratic pressures, and individualism. They are also challenged by the presence of other religious ‘truths’. Speakers in this plenary session will deal with these issues by exploring both theoretical and empirical facets.

##### **Plenary 2 - Religious Pluralism as a Challenge for Contemporary Society**

Religious pluralism affects many sectors of society. Ranging from the challenge to individuals and families of religious intermarriage to the presumed threats that religious pluralism poses to national identities, religious diversity increasingly demands social responses. Areas of recent concern include: the growing need for governments to manage conflicting demands from religious and non-religious groups and communities; the necessity that the mass media understand diverse religious viewpoints; issues in state education regarding religious themes; equal, but sensitive treatment of religious organisations by the law; the growing relevance of religious beliefs in professional training and the implications in the wider social sphere; the shifting roles which religious communities and outlooks play in the political realm. This plenary session will consider aspects of these challenges and explore the responses of the various parties involved.

**Possible topics for thematic sessions and papers**

**The Local Committee has suggested the following topics for the Thematic Sessions, with reference to the general conference theme, 'The Challenges of Religious Pluralism'.**

- Democracy and state religion/religious states
- Church–state relations
- The state's monopoly regarding legitimate violence and religiously motivated terrorism
- Religious groups and civic cultures
- Religious minorities: practices and legal provisions
- The state and religious education
- Religion in the mirror of controversies
- Religious pluralism and political pluralism
- Established religion, popular religion, and secularism
- The role of religious celebrations and festivals for integration
- Religions' internal pluralism
- Migration and pluralism
- Dominant and dominating religious, civic, and popular practices
- Religion, folklore, and nationalism

**Please note: although thematic sessions which relate to the general conference theme are welcome, thematic sessions are not tied to the general conference theme.**

**EACH CONVENER**

**MAY ONLY ORGANIZE**

**ONE THEMATIC SESSION OR ONE WORKING GROUP**

**Conveners should send to the General Secretary**  
**([karel.dobbelaere@soc.kuleuven.be](mailto:karel.dobbelaere@soc.kuleuven.be))**

**BEFORE the 31st of MAY 2008**

**the title of the proposed session, in English **and** French**

**and the rationale of the Session**

(100 words in each of the two languages of the ISSR)

**mentioning also their institutional affiliation and their email address**

**Taking into account the daily rhythm in Spain,  
the timing of the Sessions have been changed**

Hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 – 11:00		Plenary Session 1	Thematic Sessions 4	Plenary Session 2	Thematic Sessions 8
11:30 - 13:30	Free Networking	Thematic Sessions 1	Thematic Session 5	Linguistic Groups	Thematic Sessions 9
15:30 – 17:30	16.00 Opening and Plenary Session [Local Committee]	Thematic Sessions 2	Cultural Afternoon and Free Networking	Thematic Sessions 6	Thematic Sessions 10
18:00 – 20:00		Thematic Sessions 3		Thematic Sessions 7	
19.00 – 20.30			General Assembly		

**“Thematic Sessions” is the space reserved for Thematic sessions, New Researchers Forum, Miscellaneous sessions, Working Groups...**

**Note that we have incorporated time: on Monday from 11:30 -13:30 and Wednesday from 14-00-19:00 for free networking. Applications to book rooms for such informal meetings should be addressed to the Secretary General.**

**We have kept the Wednesday afternoon free for Cultural activities, e.g. visits to Santiago de Compostela**

**The General Assembly is moved to Wednesday from 19.00 – 20.30**

**The conference will end on Friday at 17.30, except if we have so many demands for sessions that we will need to organize an 11<sup>th</sup> session.**

## vacant academic position

### *Academic position (professor) in Empirical sociology of culture and religion (2008-2009)*

**K.U.Leuven (Belgium)** invites applications for a full-time tenure track academic position in the domain of empirical sociology of culture and religion at the Faculty of Social Sciences, starting academic year 2008-2009.

#### DUTIES INCLUDE:

##### *Research*

The successful candidate will support the further expansion of the national and international research collaborations of the Centre for Sociological Research (CeSO). He/she is expected to develop his/her own research programme, which will achieve a scientific output that adheres to the highest international standards. The research will deal with the importance of culture and religion in shaping individual attitudes, collective identity formation and shared life styles. It focuses as well on the usage that is made by social actors and institutions of culture and religion in order to structure (political) mobilisation as to its use as discipline strategies. The research will not be limited to the dominant western European values and the Roman-Catholic religion. It will concentrate also on other non-western values and/or minorities' values from Western Europe and their religions.

##### *Teaching*

The successful candidate will take on teaching responsibilities in the relevant domain at the bachelor and master levels and he/she will supervise Master theses. Teaching is expected to meet the reigning international standards regarding the level and orientation of academic programmes and should be in line with the K.U.Leuven's concept of education. A commitment to the sociology program as a whole is taken for granted.

#### QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates should hold a Ph.D. or doctoral degree in the social sciences or an equivalent diploma, with a demonstrable knowledge in the sociology of culture and religion. They are expected to be familiar with empirical sociological research.

Candidates are expected to have an excellent research record and very good teaching and training skills, in order to contribute to the research output of the unit and to the quality of its educational program. The quality of the candidates' research should be evidenced by high level publications.

International research experience is highly appreciated. The candidates are expected to participate into the further internationalisation of research and education.

At K.U.Leuven the main language of instruction is Dutch. The successful applicant, who is not proficient in Dutch, is expected to acquire sufficient knowledge of Dutch in order to be able to instruct in the Dutch language within three years time. Proficiency in the English language is expected of all applicants.

Depending on the candidate's experience and qualifications, the position will be filled at one of the levels of the Senior Academic Staff (assistant professor, associate professor, full professor).

The K.U.Leuven pursues a policy of equal opportunity and diversity.

Contact persons:

Geert Bouckaert, Commission Chair ([geert.bouckaert@soc.kuleuven.be](mailto:geert.bouckaert@soc.kuleuven.be))

Marc Swyngedouw, CeSO coordinator ([marc.swyngedouw@soc.kuleuven.be](mailto:marc.swyngedouw@soc.kuleuven.be))

Candidates are invited to apply online at:

<http://www.kuleuven.be/personeel/jobsite/vacancies.htm> (select ' [Vacancy list, senior academic staff \(ZAP\)](#) ' then select ' [Faculty of Social Sciences](#) ' then scroll to '15/20003 Academic position in Empirical Sociology of culture and religion')

**Applications must be in by March 26, 2008. Electronic applications are obligatory**

**Please inform the General Secretariat of changes in address:**

[sisr@soc.kuleuven.be](mailto:sisr@soc.kuleuven.be)

**or**

**General Secretariat of the ISSR/SISR, Centre for Sociological Research,  
Parkstraat 45 Box 3601, B-3000 LEUVEN  
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If you have an **electronic address** and you receive **NETWORK** by regular mail, inform the General Secretariat of your electronic address at once:

[sisr@soc.kuleuven.be](mailto:sisr@soc.kuleuven.be)

## **NEWS OF THE MEMBRES:**

### ***Congratulations***

**Christophe MONNOT**, Université de Lausanne, Observatoire des Religions en Suisse, CH-1015 Lausanne, has won the Yves Lambert Price for papers presented in the session New Researchers' Forum at the Conference in Leipzig.

### ***Publications*** (only books and readers)

**Jim BECKFORD and N. J. DEMERATH III** (eds.), *The Sage handbook of the sociology of Religion*. London: Sage Publications, 2007, XVII + 746pp.; with chapters of members: **Jim Beckford, Peter Beyer, Roberto Blancarte, Irena Borowik, Pierre Brehon, Jay Demerath, Paul Freston, Jim Richardson, Jim Spickard , David Voas and Linda Woodhead.**

**André CORTEN**, *L'autre moitié de l'Amérique du Sud. Lettres à mon petit-fils*, Montréal, Mémoire d'encrier, 2008.

**Gwendoline MALOGNE-FER**, *Les femmes dans l'église protestante mâ'ohi. Religion, genre et pouvoir en Polynésie française*, Préface de Jean-Paul Willaime. Paris, Karthala, Collection "Mémoire d'Eglises", 2007.