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Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions
International Society for the Sociology of Religion

Network 36

Réseau

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Published by: Karel Dobbelaere and Giuseppe Giordan

In 2011, the 31st ISSR Conference will take place

in

Aix-en-Provence (France)

The **THEME** of the 31st ISSR-Conference will be decided by the
COUNCIL at its meeting in February 2010

**We invite members to submit proposals (2 pp. maximum) for the theme of the 31st
Conference, to be discussed at the meeting of the Council in
February 2010.**

**Proposals should specify the general theme, its rationale and how it could be divided between
2 plenary sessions**

Proposals must reach the General Secretary before Jan. 15th 2010 :
generalsecretary.issr@unipd.it

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The 30th conference of Saint James of Compostela is over now and I believe I can say that it has been a great event indeed. That is why my first words are addressed to Juan-Luis Pintos to thank him and his team again for the organization of this 30th conference. I hope it will have a positive impact on the sociology of religions at the University of Saint James of Compostela, in Galicia and all over Spain. I am pleased to note that the growth that we have observed on the occasion of the Leipzig Conference (2007) has been confirmed and even extended in Saint James of Compostela : according to the latest computations that have been carried out, 520 colleagues have registered in the 30th Conference and our society by now counts 616 members, figures that we had never achieved before. The scientific work prompted by the theme of *the challenge of religious pluralism*, has been greatly appreciated, according to the feed back that I have received, especially during the numerous thematic sessions, many of which have met with outstanding success.

The 30th conference of Saint James of Compostela will also be marked by an important moment in the life of our society: the end of the term as General Secretary of Karel Dobbelaere, an end of term that is not comparable to others because of the important role played by Karel in the history of our society, well beyond his term of General Secretary. On behalf of everybody, I wish to express our infinite gratitude for the numerous hours that he has devoted to the ISSR. As you have already noticed, Giuseppe Giordan has just taken his functions of General Secretary, with enthusiasm and effectiveness. Our cooperation has started in a very satisfactory way and I am happy to work with Giuseppe who benefits from the support of the department of sociology of Padova University. We may confirm that it is a good thing that our statute has foreseen in different times the turn over both of the General Secretary and of the President.

We are now already turning towards the 31st conference which will take place in 2011. Unfortunately, it has not been possible for us to leave Saint James of Compostela with an established date for this 31st conference. I am really sorry and we must keep watch that such inconvenience does not happen again. The hypothesis we agreed upon, the day after the conference of Saint James of Compostela, was to organize the next conference at Anadolu University in Eskişehir (Turkey) following the suggestion proposed by our colleague Fatma Sündal. After accomplishing the necessary verifications, Fatma Sündal informed us that her University could not undertake the task of hosting the 31st conference in 2011 and that she rather saw it more probable by the year 2013. We then keep this option for the future, as well as that of Moscow that professor Alexander Agadjanian had put forward to us. I wish to thank these two colleagues very much for their respective offers: these two proposals were even more interesting because they concerned countries such as Turkey and Russia, where no ISSR conference has ever been organised.

At the time when I am writing this letter I can assure you that our 31st conference will take place in 2011 at Aix-en-Provence (France) thanks to Raphaël Liogier, professor of sociology at the Institute of Political Studies of Aix-en-Provence. The calendar of the university institutes of this town, as well as the different events (the Festival of Lyrical Arts, the Economists' Forum) lead us to place this 31st conference at the beginning of Summer (end of June 2011). The precise dates will be fixed during the ISSR council that will take place in Paris on 12-14 February 2010. Even the theme of this 31st conference will be chosen during this council. Some of you have already given a few suggestions, of which I thank you

very much. I wish to encourage you, dear ISSR members, to do so. This will facilitate the work of the council who has the responsibility of choosing the theme and of structuring the plenary sessions to be dedicated to this theme.

To each one of you I wish a fruitful academic year 2009-2010 : may projects and collaboration activities flourish in the sociology of religions in those places where you work!

Jean-Paul Willaime
SISR/ISSR President

ISSR Officers and Council Members
(2009-2011)

The Executive Committee

President	Jean-Paul Willaime
Vice President	Peter Beyer
General Secretary	Giuseppe Giordan
Treasurer	Jean-Pierre Hiernaux

Council Members

Honorary President : Karel Dobbelaere
Past-president : Enzo Pace
Véronique Altglas (France)
Elisabeth Arweck (United Kingdom)
Irena Borowik (Central and Eastern Europe)
Gary Bouma (Australasia)
Roberto Cipriani (Italy)
Pauline Côté (Canada)
Renée de la Torre Castellanos (Mexico)
Matthias Koenig (Germany)
Roberto Motta (South America)
Kati Niemela (Nordic Countries)
Juan-Luis Pintos (Iberic Peninsula)
Erik Sengers (the Netherlands)
Olivier Servais (Belgium)
Jim Spickard (USA)
Jorg Stolz (Switzerland)
Tadaatsu Tajima (Japan)

Ex-officio:

Roberto Blancarte RC 22 ISA (Mexico)

Chair of the Local Committee:

Secretary of the Local committee:

Editorial Committee / Comité Editorial

Enzo Pace chair
Nathalie Luca (France)
Peter Beyer (Canada)
Véronique Altglas (France)
David Voas (Great Britain)

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Minutes of the General Assembly of the ISSR

Santiago de Compostela (Spain), Wednesday 29th of July 2009

1) Welcome

Jean-Paul Willaime, President of the ISSR, opens the General Assembly at 19.00 and welcomes the 90 members present.

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2) Adoption of the Agenda

The proposed agenda is unanimously adopted with a small change: the Treasurer asks that the Auditor's Report precedes the Report of the Treasurer

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3) Minutes of the previous General Assembly (2007)

The Minutes of the previous General Assembly, which took place in Leipzig (Germany) – on Tuesday 24th July 2007, published in Network 31 (December 2007), are accepted unanimously by the General Assembly.

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4) Report of the Chair of the Local Committee

The report of the President of the Local Committee was distributed to the participants of the General Assembly. Juan-Luis Pintos, President of the Local Committee, presents his report.

1. "During the 29th ISSR Conference at Leipzig (2007) when I assumed the responsibility of organizing the 30th Conference at Saint James, I was conscious of the magnitude of the work that I had to plan, contrast, and discuss and finally execute. To do so, I had to select the members of the Local Committee and try to respect the accorded dead lines for the Council settled at the meeting in February 2008 in Paris.
2. At the beginning, the information that I was requested was delayed and sometimes there were misunderstandings, but as the weeks went by and thanks to the very frequent writing conversations with the General Secretary, we managed to put at their place the different sensibilities and our diligences at the service of the same objective: operative work necessary to make possible the realization of this conference.
3. The first decision was related to the financial systems. I have to say that the mechanisms that we finally chose did work: a minimum of financiers and a maximum of financing, having as a reference the Leipzig Conference. In this way, at the moment, we can say that our financing sources are the following: 1. The Galician Government through administrative organs of the "Presidencia de Gobierno" and the "Consellería de Educación" (for public convocation); 2. The "Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia" (that depends on the Justice Ministry of the Spanish Government). This two financings gave wide enough budget for this meeting and we are ready to respect the engagements undertaken with the ISSR into the Council meeting in Paris.
4. The second organizational decision that we had to take concerns the physical spaces to celebrate the Conference. This a meeting that combines the communication of the researches done by different academic groups, the possibility to discuss about them, to use the appropriated technical means and the information of all this ensemble, rising remarkable exigencies. All this had to be combined with concrete spaces available and their access possibilities. Finally, we had

to find the appropriated installations for the plenary sessions and we needed to have simultaneously 18 spaces for the reunions of different groups. Everything had to be settled in proximal buildings to reduce the distances. I think we did so, thanks first to the generosity of the authorities of the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, and second to the persons in charge of the services in the buildings.

5. The third organizational decision concerns the lodgments and the alimentation of participants. In this sense, and to inform the Spanish speaking public, we created a web page, with the information we got from the Council meeting in February 2008. We published the deadlines for the participation to the Conference and its information, from February 2009 and on, as well as the lodgment possibilities for participants. Where we needed to invest more time was in the lodgment offerings in the University residences. We reserved (since July 2008) 250 double and individual rooms.
6. The information, the formulary, the deadlines for inscription, the reservations procedures and the payment modality were communicated on the web page. The deadline pointed by the university residences was May, 10th. By that time we had to pay the 25% of the total of reserved rooms. We needed also to have a written prove of demanders that had effectively paid. This complicated a little bit the procedure, mostly because the USC does not admit credit cards, and payments can only be done by banc transfer. After all this procedure, we had to remark that the possibility of having places at the university residencies has not been fully profited, as the number of places requested are barely 75. For the lodgments at the “quality hotels” we have used the services of a travel agency to make the reservations at the hotels. Finally, we had put the addresses in Internet so everyone can choose the lodgment of his preference.
7. I would like to give a special consideration about the utilization of informatics for organizational means. It has a big advantage: it permits to treat big masses of information and distribute them to many persons leaving a trace of the procedure. This gives place to a rationalization of complaints, as well as a verification of requests. Nevertheless, it also has an inconvenient: people that are not used to electronic forms may not get all the information and many details. Sometimes, information is lost because of informatics and its accidents, till the point that sometimes it can not be recuperated. In our case, we have had difficulties with payments receipts and mostly with the respect of deadlines.
8. Finally, the last decision we had to undertake is about the organization of the cultural acts of the ISSR conferences. We have two reasons to make our mind: 1. the much cultural tourism offers in town. At other moments and in other places, specific presentations for congress attendants were organized, this days the tourist market has developed exponentially, at least in a country like Spain and thanks to Internet gives offers that can not be equaled -even less our organization group that does not belong to the tourist field. This is the reason why we have given the Internet links, so individuals and groups, can make their own choices. 2. The second reason is the fact that Saint James has during a week multiple celebrations and festivities, which information is available on internet through the conference link.

Saint James of Compostela, July, 27th, 2009”

The President expresses his appreciation for a well organised conference and proposes that the Local Committee and its Chair be congratulated for this achievement. The applause of the participants present in the General Assembly expresses their unanimous appreciation and their gratitude to the Local Committee and its Chair for their excellent work.

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5) Report of the President of the ISSR

The President’s report was distributed to the participants of the General assembly and orally presented by the President.

“It was a special privilege for me to assume the presidency of the ISSR at our 29th conference in Leipzig in 2007, as a record number of participants (438) were attending the conference and as our association was taking pride in the fact that it had gone over the 500 mark in membership (517 members to be precise). It is obviously preferable to become president of a scientific association on the rise than one in decline. At the same time, growth like the ISSR is experiencing represents a challenge: when an association grows, managing it carefully becomes crucial, both on the organizational and financial levels. Thanks to our general secretary, Karel Dobbelaere, and our treasurer, Jean-Pierre Hiernaux, the ISSR benefited from such management. Before anything I would like to express my warmest gratitude to them for all the work they’ve done, on a volunteer basis, for our association. Also at Leipzig, Juan-Luis Pintos gave us a preview of the 30th conference at Santiago de Compostela, where we have the pleasure of meeting today so that we may work under practical and comfortable conditions on a timely issue: pluralism. Before I say a few words on the topic of this conference, let me remind you that in order to organize each conference and make sure it runs smoothly, a high level of cooperation is required between the local organizing committee on the one hand, and on the other, the president and the general secretary. This productive cooperation makes it possible to observe how a region's culture influences the way in which an international conference is prepared there, as each of our conferences requires the local organizers to establish working relationships not only with the educational authorities in the area, but also with representatives of the government, tourist boards and political groups. As is customary during the planning stages of our conferences, I came to Santiago de Compostela in the autumn of 2008, accompanied by the general secretary Karel Dobbelaere, in order to see for myself what the conditions would be like for this 30th conference under the direction of Juan-Luis Pintos. The preparations for the conference also involved allocating seven grants, for a total of 7562 €, so that low-income researchers could participate. The selection of these seven people, from the twenty grant requests that came to us, was carried out by the Programme Committee (comprising the president, the vice president, the general secretary and the president of the local committee). After carefully considering each request, the members of the Programme Committee gave each one a mark from 0 to 10; the seven grants allocated were each approved unanimously by the committee members: Yaghoob Faroutan (Iran), Lovemore Ndlovu (Zimbabwe), Zoran Matevski (Macedonia), Daniel Oguntola (Nigeria), Kartygash Sergazina (Russia), Anna Shirokanova (Belarusia) and Edio Soares (Brazil).

But let’s come to our topic, *The challenges of religious pluralism*, which was chosen at the meeting of the ISSR council in Paris on February 15-18 2008. The time is right for bringing up the issue of religious pluralism, whether by discussing the challenges it represents for contemporary societies on all continents, or by looking at the issue in terms of what it means for religions themselves. This topic of sociological analysis has been a constant matter of debate in society and in political circles. I think it is essential for our association to take on issues that have a strong level of social and even political relevance. But this is one more reason for us to remain vigilant and disinterested, in other words to remain within the framework of sociological investigation. Cultural and religious pluralism is a fact that is constantly perceived, presented and approached in different ways. Of course, in the sociological analysis of this question, it is especially important to distinguish between the objective diversity of religious expression and the way in which society sees, organizes, handles and evaluates that diversity. In order to properly study how genuine diversity is constructed and experienced socially, as sociologists we must have the necessary theoretical and methodological tools to do so. The very mission of our association requires us to first offer analyses that combine empirical data with theoretical frameworks, then to discuss,

indeed to debate, the adequacy and the relevance of such analyses. Our association would make itself most useful to society (indirectly) by staying within the strict framework of this scientific mission.

At this 30th conference of the ISSR that has brought us here to Santiago de Compostela, I am happy to see that the sessions organized in cooperation with other scientific organizations (ACSRM, AISLF, ISA, ISORECEA, RRA...) are playing an important role. We should continue our efforts in this area: it will help the sociology of religions become a more open discipline. The programme for all the sessions at this conference shows that Europe (including Eastern Europe, we should be happy to note) and the Americas are the main cultural zones covered in the texts being presented. We still have a lot of work to do to make sure that countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania receive more adequate coverage: we need to see more studies, and more researchers, from these regions. Some of you have yourselves experienced the difficulties in getting researchers from certain countries to take part in our group. But none of us must relinquish our efforts to make our association more representative of the whole world.

When our general secretary, Karel Dobbelaere, finishes his term at the end of 2009, an important era in the history of our association will come to a close. Not only because Karel Dobbelaere will have been general secretary for two consecutive terms (from 2001 to 2009) after having been president for two terms in the 1980s, but also because our friend Karel is an important figure in the ISSR who has been closely linked to its history ever since 1962, when he first attended one of its conferences in Königstein, Germany. The figures speak for themselves: this 30th conference of the ISSR is the 24th in which he has participated! I don't think there are any sociologists of religion in the world that have participated in as many ISSR conferences as Karel! But above all, Karel Dobbelaere has been involved in many major changes in the history of our association, the two most important being: 1) the transition from the association's origins as the *International Conference on Religious Sociology*, closely linked to Catholicism, to the non-religious scientific association that it is today (becoming the ISSR in 1989); 2) the cooperation with *Social Compass*, which has proved to be extremely productive. I would incidentally like to thank Sage Publications for all they have done in this area. And when I add that Karel Dobbelaere has also played a preponderant role in the financial stabilization of our association (when he became president in 1983, it was bankrupt!), we get a better idea of how indebted the ISSR is to him. Speaking for all the members of our association and for myself, I would like to express our profound gratitude to Karel for everything he has done for our association: many thanks, Karel, for all the trouble you took to make sure the ISSR could carry on with its mission under the best possible conditions! My thanks also go out to Liliane Voyé, working alongside Karel after having herself been president, who continued her close relationship with the ISSR and its history, as well as all those, particularly Madame Hilde Van Meerbeeck-Cravillon, who, in Leuven and in Louvain-la-Neuve made sure, year after year, that our association's conferences were well prepared. Until now, only one former president has been named honorary president of our association, the late Bryan Wilson (1926-2004). I would like to propose to the general assembly of our association in this, the 30th conference of the ISSR in Santiago de Compostela, that we name Karel Dobbelaere Honorary President of the ISSR.

I am very grateful to Giuseppe Giordan (University of Padua, Italy) for having agreed to succeed Karel Dobbelaere as general secretary of the ISSR, and I would very much like to thank our friend Enzo Pace, the former president, for agreeing to give Giuseppe Giordan the full backing of the University of Padua's sociology department, which Enzo directs. Jean-

Pierre Hiernaux, our beloved and devoted treasurer, has agreed to carry on in that capacity, and we should thank him tremendously for it. I am all the more grateful to him as it became clear to me that these two important posts of general secretary and treasurer should not change hands at the same time, in order to make sure that the continuity is maintained in way our association operates.

In conclusion, let me say a few words in memory of those members of the ISSR who have passed away since the Leipzig conference in 2007, and to whom our Networks paid homage: Tadeusz Doktor (University of Warsaw, Poland), Jean Séguy (CNRS, France) and Selva J. Raj (Albion College, Michigan, USA). To these three colleagues, and to all those who are no longer with us who I didn't know, I would like to express on behalf of all of you our gratitude for their contributions to the ISSR. Thank you, dear members of the ISSR, for all your contributions to the association. I urge you to make every effort you can in your respective countries so that other researchers, particularly younger researchers, can join our association and thereby contribute their knowledge to our conferences.”

The president's report was unanimously accepted with a vigorous applause

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6) Election of an Honorary President of the ISSR

The proposal of the President to the General Assembly “that we name Karel Dobbelaere Honorary President of the ISSR” was unanimously accepted by the audience with vibrant applause.

Karel Dobbelaere thanked the President and the Members present at the General Assembly for the honour bestowed upon him. He said, “When I started participating at the conferences of the SISR in 1962, I never imagined that I would become 47 years later Honorary President of the ISSR. It was that, as a young assistant, I was happy to meet the illustrious members whose books and articles I had been reading for my PhD. Neither did I think that when, in 2001, I accepted, after two previous requests, to become Secretary General. At that time, one of my mentors, the late Bryan Wilson, was the Honorary President”.

Karel Dobbelaere stressed that his service to the Society had been based on the many rewards this membership has brought him: it is the place where he met colleagues in the field from all over the [world](#), of whom many have become friends; it was rewarding for him to have been involved in the changes the Society has undergone in these 47 years, e.g. the change from a Catholic to a scientific organisation; it has also been the place that has greatly influenced his career, e.g. when in 1975, at the 13th conference in Lloret de Mar (Spain), he was commissioned to write a trend report on secularization for *Current Sociology*. He stressed how important bridging language barriers has been for his career, which the ISSR promotes and stimulates. And he also mentioned his emotional attachment to the SISR, since it was founded at his university, a university that has always supported his endeavours to build, to develop and to internationalize our Society. He also expressed the satisfaction he has had to work as President with two Secretary Generals, Roland Campiche and Enzo Pace, who later became Presidents of our association, and to have served as Secretary General [for](#) three presidents, Jim Beckford, Enzo Pace and Jean-Paul Willaime, who are all three very different in their approach and in their expectations, but with whom it has been a privilege to work together. He finally underscored the support he has received from the membership in the different positions he has served the ISSR and expressed his gratitude to them all.

On behalf of the ISSR, the President gives Karel Dobbelaere a present which will allow him, wherever he is, to continue to communicate with all members of our Society, regardless in which part of the world they live.

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7) Report of the General Secretary

This report has also been distributed to the participants of the General Assembly and the Secretary General orally commented it.

«I. Members

Types of members	Number of members in the years					Index of growth since 2001
	2001	2002-03	2004-05	2006-07	2008-09	
Full Members	168	295	281	305	341	203
Members with a reduced fee	53	87	135	215	275	519
Total	221	382	416	520	616	279

In 1995, the year of the Quebec conference, in Canada, we registered a first peak of membership: 295, which was confirmed in 1997 when we had our 24th conference in Toulouse (France): 300 members, from 30 countries. In the following years, the numbers declined: in 1999, the year of the 25th conference in Leuven, we registered only 195 members and in 2001 in Mexico 221 members (see table). In the years between the conferences, the numbers were always about 50 less, e.g. in 1996, 246 members and 130 members in 1998¹. For that reason, the Council decided to have a bi -annual membership, taking the year of the conference as the second year, it being the pinnacle of two years' work.

The numbers for 2008-09 at the close of the conference was 614 members, from 60 different countries. Compared with 2001, the growth index is 279 (see table). The strongest growth was in the category “members with a reduced fee” (519); these are members from countries with weak currencies, students, unemployed, retired colleagues, partners (couple) of full members and researchers under 35 years of age. Indeed we now have more retired members, young researchers and colleagues from countries with weak currencies than before.

¹ Data about the period 1995-2001 were received from our colleague Grace Davie, former General Secretary of the ISSR.

It was visible at the 30th conference in Santiago that many young researchers have joined our ranks.

This growth is due to teamwork: the conveners of more and more thematic sessions at the conference, making the conference more appealing; the work of the Local Committees – chaired by colleagues who marvellously organized the conferences at historical sites – and the teamwork of the treasurer, the administrative secretary and myself. Mme Van Meerbeek efficiently helped us, by making again and again suggestions to improve our efficiency. It has been my pleasure to work with them all.

2. Registered Participants at the conferences

Conferences	Registered Participants
<i>Turin</i> (2003)	299
<i>Zagreb</i> (2005)	286
<i>Leipzig</i> (2007)	438
<i>Santiago de Compostela</i> (2009) (*)	520

The 30th ISSR-conference was a great success since we had more than 500 registered participants. Compared to the conferences in the early 21st century, we have an index of growth of 174. Unfortunately, the last weeks before the conference, more than 30 have informed us that they were not able to come for lack of financial support. Not only our members, but also the National Foundations and Research Institutions, have a difficult time due to the economic crisis.

3. Elections

Only 68 members voted. **The following candidates were elected**

General Secretary: GIORDAN Giuseppe (Italy)

Treasurer: HIERNAUX Jean-Pierre (Belgium)

For a second mandate on the Council:

ALTGLAS Véronique (France)

ARWECK Elisabeth (G. B.)

STOLZ Jörg (Switzerland)

For a first mandate on the Council

Germany: **KOENIG Matthias**

Iberian Peninsula: **PINTOS DE CEA-NAHARRO Juan-Luis**

Mexico : **DE LA TORRE CASTELLANOS Renée**

South America : **MOTTA Roberto**

Congratulations, Colleagues, and thank you for having accepted to take responsibility for the ISSR

4. The organization of the 30th conference in Santiago de Compostela

We received 84 proposals for **thematic Sessions**. **Some had the same topic and some had similar topics**: e.g. three sessions on pilgrimages; two on an analysis of religiosity in international quantitative surveys, with references to EVS; six on Islam; two on “laïcité”; three on immigration and religion... I have tried to propose some integration, but was only very partially successful. Since I needed 14 simultaneous sessions per time period to organise all sessions within the conference programme, some of these overlapping sessions were planned at the same time, so there was a lack of cross fertilisation. **To what extent may the next Secretary General exert pressure so that the conveners try to integrate their proposals? And how can this be done?**

The General Secretariat was only in charge of organizing the Miscellaneous Sessions and the Sessions ‘Author meets Critics’. The organization of the Thematic Sessions and the New Researchers Forum was delegated to the conveners of these sessions. I want to express my gratitude to them for their work and their co-operation. Due to the decentralisation of the programme organisation, I was not able to apply the rule agreed by the Council that participants should not present more than one paper or be active in different sessions as discussants or chairpersons. Indeed, all these sessions were sent to me by the conveners after they had decided on the programme of their session. I was not in position to liaise with them beforehand. **It is up to the Council to suggest to the next General Secretary how to solve this problem**. One way could be that he requests of those who want to present two papers that they decide which session they want to give priority to. However, this may disorganise the other session they are in. I have only intervened in three cases where someone wanted to present the same paper in two different sessions.

I want to thank the participants for the effort made to send their abstracts in English and French, the two official languages of the conference. In order to do so, some mobilized colleagues who are more competent in these languages than they are. Most conveners of the Thematic Sessions also made a great effort to improve the abstracts stylistically and grammatically. However, there is no doubt that the abstracts’ style and grammar are far from perfect. I have neither the competence nor the time to rewrite them all. These abstracts are on the web site of the Local Committee.

The organisers of the last two conferences complained that too many of those who were listed in the programme did not attend in the end, which created difficulties for the Local Committee: e.g. the question of how many participants there will be for the receptions, how many programmes need to be printed, how many conference documents and conference bags

need to be prepared. To solve this problem the Council decided that those who had not responded to a reminder and had not paid their pre-registration in time should be eliminated from the programme. However, this could not be applied since more than 50 % of participants did not pre-register. I applied **another system which will need to be evaluated**:

- the conveners, after having been informed by the General Secretariat, were asked to contact those who did not pre-register, ask them if they intended to attend the conference and, if they did, suggest that they pre-register. For that reason the Treasurer and I decided to postpone the pre-registration date. Some of the conveners did a good job, others not. The General Secretariat also mailed those on the programme who had not pre-registered, asking them to pre-register before the newly set deadline. However, some colleagues did not reply – neither to the conveners and nor to me. Maybe we could sanction these in the future...

- 219 colleagues who were listed in the programme did not reply; 97 of these did not even pay their membership. The invitation to propose papers for the sessions was mailed in June 2008, and informed all colleagues that only members can present papers at the conference; in future, maybe we could sanction those who pay **neither** their membership nor their registration fee. Let us see how many of these 97 who did not pay their membership fee attend in the end. If that is a small minority, these could be the criteria to use. More than a dozen eventually showed up.

- You can see in my comments that I am hesitant. Indeed it is sometimes difficult for colleagues to pre-register and even to pay their membership in advance of the conference: high banking charges, no international credit card...and some await a response to their application for financial support (in some countries, payments which are made before individuals receive a positive reply to an application for financial support will not be re-imbursed).

The Council will have to work out a system to solve these difficulties; one issue is the deadline of the pre-registration: for this conference, Network was sent out later than previously, because some information was received after the Council's agreed deadline. **The only possible way of solving that I see is to set an early deadline for pre-registration, then to contact those listed in the programme who did not pre-register and set a new deadline for pre-registration, either those contacted pre-register before the set date or give an affirmative answer that they intend to attend and to register when they arrive. The papers of those who do not reply would then be removed from the programme.**

Another question the Council should debate: there is at least one Research Group – “GERICR” of which I am a member, which uses the opportunity of the conference to meet. GERICR are studying the Catholicism in Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Most of the members of this group are members of our Society. However, it is an interdisciplinary group and some of the members are not sociologists. Two of them will present papers and, consequently, they are, according to our rules, active at the conference and must be members of our association and pay the conference fee. This will cost them: 236 € (256 €), which includes a subscription to Social Compass. For attending two days of this conference, this is a lot of money; however, I have applied the rules. In the past, other research groups have met, as they do during the conference. I would like to ask **the Council** to reflect on this and **to establish clear rules in February when we meet in Paris: either** to confirm the rules, **or** to reduce the cost: **either** asking these participants to become members at a reduced fee (like the young researchers, pensioned colleagues, etc) and a fee equivalent to these categories for registering for the Conference: cost 129 € (140 €), **or** only paying the registration fee for the conference 44€ (55 €).

5. Thanks

I want to express my gratitude towards the *Presidents*, the *Treasurer* and the *Council* for the spirit in which it was possible to work together for eight years. Furthermore, I want to report that it was a great pleasure to work with the chairperson of the *Local Committees* who, with their team, have done a great job in preparing the conferences. I also want to thank very cordially *Mrs Van Meerbeeck* who has helped the Treasurer and me with administrative duties, suggested administrative improvements, corresponded politely with members asking for information about the ISSR and its conference, and helped me in the preparation of this conference. Thanks are due also to *Mme Lallemand* of the *Université Catholique de Louvain* who was an efficient assistant to the Treasurer. Not only have Mrs Van Meerbeeck and Mme Lallemand served you very kindly and efficiently at this and former conferences, but they have also contributed, over the past eight years, to the smooth functioning of our Society.

I also want to address a word of thanks to Mrs *Franckx* of the *Centre for Sociological Research* of the *Katholieke Universiteit Leuven* who managed to prepare the address-lists for the different mailings and Networks that have been sent to you over the past eight years. As in the previous years, my wife and former president of the ISSR, *Liliane Voyé*, has graciously corrected my French documents and official letters and former President *Jim Beckford* and Council-member *Elisabeth Arweck* have done so for those in English. Finally, I want to thank *all of you* for having participated in such large numbers in the 30th ISSR-conference and contributed to the scholarly exchanges that have been taking place here this week.

I wish my successor good luck and all the success he deserves and I hope that he will have the same support from the officers and the members of the ISSR as I received. I told him, when we spent a whole day discussing the tasks of the Secretary General, that I will do my utmost to help him, if he needs it. And if I have raised some problems in this report, they are based on an experience of eight years, and it was done in complete agreement with my successor, so that the service of the general secretariat may be enhanced.

Leuven, July 12th 2009 and **updated with the information available at the end of the conference.**»

The report of the General Secretary was unanimously accepted. The Council will discuss which actions might be taken after the new Secretary General has had the opportunity to consider the different issues raised by this report.

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8) Auditor's Report

Pierre Bréchon and N.J. Demerath III. reported the checks they have done of the Society's accounts to the General Assembly:

“State of the Society's Accounts and Records for 2007, 2008, and the first half of 2009

We have checked the accounting of the ISSR from the first of January 2007 till now. We checked the actual records for all the large accounts and then sampled the smaller accounts of little consequence because it was not possible to check every operation in the time available.

Our inspection of the detailed records of credits and debits (income and expenses) for these 2.5 years reveals no errors. All the account items are available to justify the inputs and outputs of money. We are pleased to report that the books are well in order, the accounting is clear and well organized.

The expenses seem to be rather moderate, made with a great sense of savings.

The Society's treasury is in good standing. As of the the end of 2006, the Society's accounts had a total reserve balance of 128 820.80 €. By end of 2007 this balance stood at 168 831.66 €, and according to its most recent tally before all Conference expenses have been paid, the mid-year amount stands at 186 464.80 €.”

The President expressed the gratitude of the membership for the thorough inspection which the auditors have made and asked the General Assembly to accept their report. The General Assembly unanimously adopted the auditors' report

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9) Report of the Treasurer

The treasurer's report is distributed to the audience and is reproduced in Appendix 1. The treasurer introduces his report by underscoring that, “According to this document, the balance of the accounts for the period 2006-07 is positive and, taking into account that the actual balance of the accounts allows us to predict a positive result for the period 2008-09, we may present a budget for 2010-2011, which will have a positive result.” He further underscored that:

- the positive results of the balance of the accounts allows us to realise step by step the goals set by the previous General Assemblies (Zagreb 2005, Leipzig 2007), which is: for the Society to have enough Capital to be able to cover any deficits and to be, most of all, its own patron, i.e. to be able to offer grants to deserving candidates from countries with weak currencies enabling them to attend our conferences.

- these positive outcomes result from, on the one hand, a management that has assured and ameliorated the service and advantages offered to the membership, especially to those less fortunate, notably the reduced fees for members from countries with weak currencies and for those in less secure professional position (retired members, young researchers, students, unemployed...) which has – crucially for the growth of our society – produced a growth of these categories from 24 % in 2001 to 45 % of the membership in 2009 (See Report of the General Secretary)

- on the other hand, these positive results arise from the growth of our membership and the number of participants at our conferences, both with a growth rate of more than 70 % since 2003 (see Report of the General Secretary), this augments our income while some costs remain rather stable, whatever the number of participants at a conference (e.g. a translator costs the same, whether there is an audience of 100 or 500). The Treasurer added initial and permanent factors that have been influential: economic use of available means, the voluntary work of – the General Secretary and the Treasurer and others who do not complain, but enjoy their work and are proud of it! – third parties who offered services, such as the Catholic University of Louvain and the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (the latter has given us – for the last eight year and without recompense – the support of a patron), and the very important support of the Local Committees. Therefore, we should be very grateful to Juan-Luis Pintos, his colleagues and assistants as well as to the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela – without whom the conference would not have been possible in this venue – and also the

Xunta de Galicia and the Fondation Pluralismo y Convergencia d'Espagne, which had both provided the Local Committee with financial support.

Having made clear the sources for the positive balance sheets, the Treasurer points out the following:

- even though the General Assembly has decided since the General Assembly of Torino (2003) to protect the value of the fees against inflation
- and even though this decision was not carried out since July 2007
- the Council proposes, taking into account the current economic circumstances and considering this an exceptional measure, not to apply this decision in the next two years, this means that the real value of our income will decline (with an inflation rate of 1,5 % per year, the 2008-09 fee of 149 € will be worth a little less than 145 € in 210-2011; therefore, taking the number of members per type into account, the total cost of this measure will be about 3000 € for the 2010-11 budget).

Unless the General Assembly wants to adapt the fees in line with the predicted inflation rate for 2010-11, the Treasure proposes to accept the accounts of 2006-07 and the budget of 2010-11, with the terms as set out in the documents that have been distributed to the audience.

The Assembly adopts unanimously the proposition of the Treasurer as it is stated in the French version of his report: the figures in the English version need to be corrected in accordance with the French version.

N.B.: The English version that is presented as an appendix to these Minutes has been corrected accordingly.

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10) Election of the auditors for 2010-2011

The auditors who checked the accounts for 2007-2009 are re elected: Jay Demerath (USA) and Pierre Brechon (France)
Reserve: Pal Repstad (Norway)

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11) Report of the Chair of the Editorial Committee

Enzo Pace, Chairperson, presents the report

“Following the Leipzig Conference, 26 papers were submitted for consideration for *Social Compass* 2009/2, 17 in English and 9 in French. All the papers were sent to two independent referees and to the members of the Editorial Committee for assessment. Eleven papers were selected for revision and resubmission in Paris in February 2008 and, before the end of October 2008, the final versions of the papers and the *Introduction* had been sent to *Social Compass* for issue n. 2/2009, which appeared in March 2009.

Our colleague and member of the EC, Xavier Costa has resigned for personal reasons. The Editorial Committee thanks Xavier for his excellent contribution to the assessment process. Véronique Altglas has been invited to replace him and she has willingly accepted.”

He informs the General Assembly that on July 27, at 2 pm, i.e. before the opening of the Conference, a meeting was held to discuss the plenary papers. Members of the Editorial Committee have since met with these authors and expressed their expectations concerning the final versions of their presentations.

For the second issue of Social Compass with papers presented at the 30th Conference, a “Call for Papers”, with the necessary instructions, will be circulated by the General Secretariat in August. Applications for this issue should reach the Editorial Committee before November 15th 2009.

The General Assembly expresses its satisfaction with the policy of the Editorial Committee and accepts its report. The President thanks Enzo Pace and the members of the Editorial Committee for their splendid work.

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12) The 31st International Conference of the ISSR in 2011

Proposals for the venue of this conference will be discussed at the next Council meeting on Thursday 30th July at 7pm. This is due to the fact that the representatives of the Local Committees that extend an invitation to the ISSR were not able to join the Council last Monday. Given these circumstances, the President proposes that the Council will decide the venue of the 31st conference. Due to the fact that this decision concerning the conference venue lies with the General Assembly, a motion was proposed by Elisabeth Arweck:

“I propose that, due to circumstances beyond the Council’s control, the decision regarding the venue of the next ISSR/SISR conference will, exceptionally, be delegated from the General Assembly to the Council. However, in order not to set a precedent, this motion only concerns the 2011 conference.”

This motion was seconded by Pauline Côté and unanimously accepted by the General Assembly

At 9.05 pm, the meeting came to a close after the President had thanked all members present and promised that an announcement about the possible venue of the 31st ISSR-Conference in 2011 would appear on the message board at the Conference Secretariat of the ISSR on Friday morning.

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**Appendix to the Minutes of the General Assembly of the 30th Conference of the
ISSR in Santiago de Compostela**

**C-0607-STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS ; C-1011-B-BUDGET ISSR
Conference Santiago 2009 - TREASURER'S REPORT**

CREDITS	<i>ACCOUNTS 2006-2007</i>			<i>BUDGET 2010-2011</i>
C-I Interest on all deposits	7,231.14			4,000
C-II Membership dues	520 memberships :	57,362.39		"500" memberships : 57,000
C-III Conference registrations	436 participants :	31,172.28		"400" participants : 29,000
TOTAL ASSETS :	<u>95765.81</u>			<u>90000</u>
EXPENSES	ISSR	patronage	TOTAL	sisr
D-I Council	2749,15	633,48	3382,63	3300
D-II Bank charges	188,41	-	188,41	250
D-III Credit card charges	574,21	-	574,21	600
D-IV Social Compass	23464,85	-	23464,85	25000
D-V Secretariate	3993,92	983,90	4977,82	5500
D-VI Website	1620	-	1620	2000
D-VII Miscellaneous	-	-	-	600
D-VIII Conference	7804,05	9884,40	17688,45	15000
D-IX Grants	-	-	(in here above)	4000
TOTAL EXPENSES:	<u>40394,59</u>	<u>11501,78</u>	<u>51896,37</u>	<u>56250</u>

(a) Results for 2006-2007 :

° Fiscal year 2006-2007, closed after the last Conference, has confirmed the ISSR's capacity to generate financial reserves on its own;

- this essentially results from the following factors :
 - (1) substantial improvement in revenue from memberships following the adaptation of costs to inflation rates;
 - (2) the simultaneous pursual of increase in memberships (from 417 to 520 = +24,7%);
 - (3) strict reduction in the costs of functioning, volunteer work and certain costs being paid by third parties;
 - (4) remarkable support from the Committees organizing local Conferences, and the success of those Conferences;
- to these factors can be added the support of a temporary but generous sponsorship, all this permitting :
 - (1) carrying out current ISSR activities in the best of conditions;
 - (2) a membership fee policy favouring members from countries with "non non-convertible currencies";
 - (3) increased support for grants for participation at conferences;
 - (4) strengthening as well reserve funds on the revenues of which the Society, in the absence of sponsors, should be able to count in supporting its policies while remaining prepared for any unforeseen eventualities.

(b) Forecasts for fiscal year 2008-2009 :

◦ The present fiscal year - 2008-2009 – includes the present Conference and only ends in December 2009. Thus its definitive statement of accounts can only be presented at the next General Assembly ... in 2011. Yet it will be examined by the Council early in 2009 and looks favourable, just judging by the fact that by this Conference date our membership has risen from 520 to 563 = +8.26%.

(c) Budget for the fiscal year 2010-2011 :

◦ Even if the ISSR membership dues and inscriptions to the Conferences have no more been adapted to the inflation rate since July 2007, the proposal is made to postpone such an adaptation through the next two years. The nominal value of the ISSR tariffs will thus be kept as follows, which means they decrease in real value :

Membership fees for 2 years :

- (1) full rate : 149 ; (2) half-rate : 75 ; (3) "week currency" rate : 54

pre-registrations to the conference :

- (1) full rate (member) : 87 ; (2) half-rate (member) : 44 ; (3) non-member : 109

registrations on the conference site :

- (1) full rate (member) : 109 ; (2) half-rate (member) : 55 ; (3) non-member : 131

◦ One can thus fill in the table at the upper right-hand corner of this page :

- by prudently round down the number of members and participants in the 2010-2011

Conference on the basis of their number of 2006-2007, which gives "500" and "400", and on this basis predict the revenues and expenses, depending on the number of persons involved (dues, conference registrations, Social Compass);

- on the other hand, unless exceptions to decide about, consider that the expenses which are independent of the number of persons involved will be the same as those of past fiscal years and, in the absence of 2008-2009 final results, recalculate them based on the budget of that period (itself derived from 2006-2007 results) while granting the posts concerned an increase of +1,5 % per annum for inflation; - n.b.: the posts concerned are, among others, all those of the Conference which are ordinarily assumed by the ISSR (interpreters, speakers, secretariate...); the other posts – some of which may be affected by the number of participants (rooms, receptions, translation equipment...) – is never the ISSR's responsibility but indeed that of the local committee.

(d) Conclusions :

The Treasurer suggests the Assembly to approve the elements above and so to confirm the general financial policy they proceed from and the Society has up to now benefitted from, which is :

- to valorize the members' financial contributions not only for paying current expenses but also for endowing the Society;
- to keep the expenses at a level which is clearly lower than that of the incomes;
- to capitalize, at each fiscal period, a highly positive balance;
- to thus increase the Society's reserves and not to charge expenses to these but only to their income at term.

MESSAGE FROM THE PAST GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear Colleagues,

During eight years I was able to correspond with all of you about our Society and its Conferences. The last two years I got more than 2.000 emails, some were of course spam or which I considered spam: e.g. those from Conference Centres and Hotels inviting me to organize our conferences in there facilities, which is a normal procedure in many American associations. This makes me reflect upon the start of our Society, we then met in monasteries or convents. I remember quite well the place in Königstein in 1962, with its chapel and mass on Sunday, we were a Catholic Society then. But this changed quickly after the Conference in Rome in 1969. There we still met in a convent, a beautiful place with a large garden and a swimming pool, but with sleeping rooms that could not be locked...A couple of years ago, being in Rome, I wanted to visit the place, but could not find it anymore. Roberto Cipriani, for whom Rome was his first ISSR-conference, told me that the convent did not exist any more, however, we still do...!!

When in the sixties, Jacques Verscheure, a Canon in the Catholic Church, was Secretary General, he had to organize the Conference by postal service. It then took two weeks to solve a problem with an American colleague and I remember that he had two postal addresses. It was a period of frequent strikes in the postal service in France: his second address was one we had to use when there was a strike in France and it was situated across the boarder in Tournai (Belgium), near to his office in Lille. It would have been impossible to organise a conference of more that 500 persons this way. Now, with email, a problem with a colleague in the Americas is solved in half a day, and with a Japanese colleague, it takes no more than one day... The first technical device that helped us was the fax...; of course there was the phone, but this was too expensive for a poor international society...

The President asked me to reminisce and write our history down. Today, it is not the great history of our society that I here wrote down. Later I will maybe have time to do so. I have done already one piece which is printed out after this message. It is the backbone of our organisation. It is not completely finished, some information is still lacking. If you can help me, please inform me and also tell me if there are mistakes in the table.

Finally, I invite all colleagues, who have information to offer about the past, to send it to me, and why not anecdotes, ludic stories or your first impressions when you joined the ISSR-conferences. It would help me to start writing our history, but, most of all it would be nice to have a section *Reminiscences* in Network, I think...and I could keep contact with you this way.

Karel Dobbelaere, past General Secretary

Année/ Year	Lieu et Président du Comité Local / Venue and President of the Local Committee	Theme of the Conférence / Thème de la conférence Bibliography / Bibliographie	Président / President	Secrétaire Général/ General Secretary	Trésorier/ Treasurer
1948	Leuven (Louvain, Belgique)	<i>Fondation de la Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse (CISR)</i>	Jacques Leclercq		
1949	II CISR : Leuven (Louvain, Belgique)	<i>Communications sur invitation</i>	Jacques Leclercq		
1951	III CISR Breda (Pays Bas)	<i>Milieus modernes et vie religieuse (Lumen Vitae, 1951, 1 et 2)</i>	Jacques Leclercq		
1953	IV CISR Arbresle (Lyon, France)	<i>Sociologie religieuse, sciences sociales</i>	Jacques Leclercq	Jean Labbens	
1956	V CISR Leuven (Louvain, Belgique) François Houtart	<i>Vocation de la sociologie religieuse, sociologie des vocations. Paroisses urbaines, paroisses rurales (Tournai : Casterman, 1958, 2 vol.)</i>	Jean Labbens	François Houtart	
1959	VI CISR Bologna (Italie) Antonio Toldo	<i>La religion et l'intégration sociale (Social Compass, 7 : 1-3)</i>	Jean Labbens	François Houtart	

1962	VII CISR Königstein (Allemagne) Walter Menges	<i>L'appartenance à l'Eglise. Aspects psychologiques et sociologiques</i> (Bruxelles : Ed. du Cep, 1965)	Jean Labbens	François Houtart	
1965	VIII CISR Barcelona (Espagne) Rogelio Duocastella	<i>La religion dans le passage d'une société pré- technique à une société industrielle et urbaine</i> (Social Compass, 13 : 1, 3, 4-5)	A.E.W. Spencer	Emile Pin	
1967	IX CISR / ICRS Montréal (Canada)	<i>Clergy in Church and Society / Le clergé dans l'Eglise et la société</i> (Acts published by the General Secretariat)	Sabino Aquaviva	Emile Pin	
1969	X CISR / ICRS Rome (Italie) Emile Pin	<i>Types, Dimensions and Measures of Religiosity / Types, dimensions et mesure de la religiosité</i> (Actes publiés par le Secrétariat Général)	Sabino Aquaviva	Jacques Verscheure	
1971	XI CISR / ICRS Opatija (Yougoslavie) Srdan Vrcan	<i>Religion and Religiosity, Atheism and Non-belief in Industrial and Urban society / Religion et religiosité. Athéisme et non-croyance dans les sociétés industrielles et urbanisées</i> (Acts published by the General Secretariat)	Bryan Wilson	Jacques Verscheure	
1973	XII CISR / ICRS Scheveningen (Pays Bas) W.J.J. Kusters	<i>The Contemporary Methamorphosis of Religion / Métamorphose contemporaine des phénomènes religieux</i> (Actes publiés par le Secrétariat Général)	Bryan Wilson	Jacques Verscheure	
1975	XIII CISR / ICRS Lloret de Mar (Spain) Rogelio Duocastella	<i>Religion and Social Change / Changement social et religion</i> (Acts published by the General Secretariat)	David Martin	Jacques Verscheure	

1977	XIV CISR / ICRS Strasbourg (France) François-Georges Dreyfus	<i>Religious, Secular and social class symbolism / Symbolisme religieux, séculier et classes sociales</i> (Actes publiés par le Secrétariat Général)	David Martin	Jacques Verscheure	
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1979	XV CISR / ICRS Venice (Italie) Gustavo Guizzardi	<i>Religion and Politics / Religion et politique</i> (Acts published by the General Secretariat)	David Martin	Jacques Verscheure	
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1981	XVI CISR / ICRS Lausanne (Suisse) Roland Campiche	Religion, Values and Daily Life / Religion, valeurs et vie quotidienne (Actes publiés par le Secrétariat Général)	David Martin	Jacques Verscheure	
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1983	XVII CISR / ICRS London (GB) David Martin Barker	<i>Religion and the Public Domain / religion et le domaine public</i> (Acts published by the General Secretariat)	David Martin	Jacques Verscheure	
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1985	XVIII CISR / ICRS Leuven / Louvain-la- Neuve (Belgique) Karel Dobbelaere et/and Liliane Voyé	<i>Religion and Modernity : Survival or Revival ? / Religion et modernité: Survie ou réveil?</i> (Actes publiés par le Secrétariat Général)	Karel Dobbelaere	Jacques Verscheure	
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1987	XIX CISR / ICRS Tübingen (Germany) Walter Sprondel	<i>Secularization and Religion : The Persisting Tension / Sécularization et religion : Persistance des tensions</i> (Acts published by the General Secretariat)	Karel Dobbelaere	Roland Campiche	
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1989	XX SISR / ISSR Helsinki (Finland) Nils Holm	<i>The State, The Law and Religion / L'état, le droit et la religion</i> (Social Compass, 37 :1 and 38 :1)	Karel Dobbelaere	Roland Campiche	
1991	XXI SISR / ISSR Maynooth (Ireland) Michael McGreil	<i>Religion and Economy / Religion et économie</i> (Social Compass, 39 :1 et 40 :1)	Karel Dobbelaere	Enzo Pace	
1993	XXII SISR / ISSR Budapest (Hongrie) Miklos Tomka	<i>Religion, Culture and Identity / Religion, Culture et Identité</i> (Social Compass, 41 :1 and 42 :1)	Roland Campiche	Enzo Pace	
1995	XXIII SISR / ISSR Québec (Canada) Jacques Zylberberg	<i>The Regulation by Religion of Nature and Body / Régulations religieuses du corps et de la Nature</i> (Social Compass, 43 :1 et 44 :1)	Roland Campiche	Grace Davie	Mike Hornsby- Smith
1997	XXIV SISR / ISSR Toulouse (France) Jean-Pierre Albert	<i>Religion the City and Beyond / La religion, les frontières changeantes de la cité</i> (Social Compass, 45 :1 and 46 :1)	Liliane Voyé	Grace Davie	Mike Hornsby- Smith
1999	XXV SISR / ISSR Leuven (Louvain, Belgique) Karel Dobbelaere	<i>Le Voyage / Journeying</i> Social Compass, 47 :1 et 48 :1	Liliane Voyé	Louise Fontaine	Yuki Shiose
2001	XXVI SISR / ISSR Ixtapan de la Sal (Mexico) Roberto Blancarte	<i>Interpreting Religion Today: Competing Processes and Paradigms / Interpréter le religieux aujourd'hui : la pluralité des processus et des paradigmes</i> Social Compass, 49 :2 and 50 :2	Jim Beckford	Louise Fontaine	Yuki Shiose

2003	XXVII SISR / ISSR Torino (Italie) Franco Garelli	<i>Religion and Generations / Religion et générations</i> <i>Social Compass, 51 :2 et 52 : 2</i>	Jim Beckford	Karel Dobbelaere	Jean-Pierre Hiernaux
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2005	XXVIII SISR / ISSR Zagreb (Croatia) Sinisa Zrinsack	<i>Religion and Society : Challenging Boundaries /</i> <i>Religion et société : Les frontières en question</i> <i>Social Compass, 53: 2 and 54 : 2</i>	Enzo Pace	----- Karel Dobbelaere	Jean-Pierre Hiernaux
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2007	XXIX SISR / ISSR Leipzig (Germany) Monika Wohlrab-Sahr	<i>Secularity and religious vitality / Sécularités et</i> <i>vitalités religieuses</i> <i>Social Compass, 55: 2 and 55 : 2</i>	Enzo Pace	----- Karel Dobbelaere	Jean-Pierre Hiernaux
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2009	XXX SISR / ISSR Santiago de Compostela Juan-Luis Pintos	<i>The Challenges of Religious Pluralism / Les défis</i> <i>du pluralisme religieux</i>	Jean-Paul Willaime	----- Karel Dobbelaere	Jean-Pierre Hiernaux
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2011	XXXI SISR / ISSR	-----	Jean-Paul Willaime	----- Giuseppe Giordan	Jean-Pierre Hiernaux

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear ISSR members,

just a few words to greet all of you at the beginning of my term as General Secretary. I am sure you can understand how I feel in my task of filling Kerel Dobbelaere's position. I make no secret of my concern for this important task. I am however encouraged by the climate of cooperation I have encountered within the Council and in meeting some of you in Santiago last July.

For our Association it is a period of exuberance. In fact we keep growing both as in number of members and conference participants. At the same time the networking among members has been increasing, and this is a positive sign for quality of research in the field of the sociology of religion.

It is my hope that I will be able to respond adequately to your requests. Anyway, I am aware that I will make some mistakes, and I am counting on you to let me know so that I may learn. My goal is to carry on the rich tradition of our Association, and this can be done only with the help of all of you.

I would like, first of all, to thank Karel Dobbelaere for the kind attention he has shown me in these past weeks, and most of all for his help in not allowing me to get lost in all the small details concerning my duties. I also wish to thank President Willaime, for his welcome and support: I am sure that working with him will be a pleasure and an enrichment for me. Last, but not least, I would like to mention Enzo Pace, since he is the one who has proposed this position to me. He now assures me not just the support of the Sociology Department of the University of Padova, but also precious advice for the good of our Association.

Hoping to get to meet all of you personally,
I send you my best regards

Giuseppe Giordan
General Secretary

NEWS OF THE MEMBERS

PUBLICATIONS (only books and readers)

BERTELSMANN, Stiftung (ed.). *What the World Believes - Analyses and Commentary on the Religion Monitor 2008*. Gütersloh, 2009, with chapters from members among others: Michael N. Ebertz, Hubert Knoblauch, Matthias Koenig, Volkhard Krech, Heiner Meuleman, Olaf Müller, Detlef Pollack, David Voas and Monika Wohlrab-Sahr

GIORDAN, Giuseppe (ed.). *Conversion in the Age of Pluralism*. Leiden-Boston: Brill 2009, with chapters by: Roberto Cipriani, Anthony Blasi, Kieran Flanagan, Giuseppe Giordan, Patrick Michel, Kees De Groot, William Swatos, Régis Dericquebourg, Roberto Motta, Enzo Pace, Luigi Berzano, Stefano Federici, Sophie-Hélène Trigeaud, Paul-André Turcotte.

KNOBLAUCH, Hubert. *Populäre Religion: Auf dem Weg in eine spirituelle Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main / NewYork: Campus, 2009.

PICKEL, Gert and MÜLLER, Olaf (eds.) *Church and Religion in Contemporary Europe. Results from Empirical and Comparative Research*. Wiesbaden: VS-Verlag 2009, with chapters by: Gert Pickel and Olaf Müller, Siniša Zrinščak and Krunoslav Nikodem, Tadeusz Dołtór, Heiner Meulemann, Kimmo Kääriäinen, Olaf Müller, Gert Pickel, Paul Froese and Steven Pfaff, Detlef Pollack and Gert Pickel, Erik Sengers, Hermann Denz

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

British Sociological Association

Sociology of Religion Study Group

CALL FOR PAPERS

'The Changing Face of Christianity in the 21st Century'

**6th April-8th April 2010
University of Edinburgh**

Christianity in the 21st century is characterised by rapid change, by both steep decline in membership in some areas, but resurgence in other contexts. At the same time, contemporary Christianity incorporates (sometimes uncomfortably) new forms and hybridisations. The lived experience and performance of Christianity in the West appears to be shifting according to influences from late-modern consumer and media cultures. World Christianities are increasingly influential and migration and diaspora Christianities are (re) shaping Christianity in the West. Meanwhile, far from disappearing from the agendas and language of the public arena, Christianity continues to excite debates around the place and importance of religion in the public arena, as well as discourses of citizenship, equality and well-being.

We invite proposals for papers which explore issues surrounding the broad theme of the conference. We particularly welcome papers which fall into three sub-themes we have identified:

1. Contemporary Christian Performance and Belief;
2. World Christianities and migration or diaspora Christianities;
3. Christianity in the Public Arena.

Individual paper proposals (**max. 200 words**) or proposals for panels of three or four related papers (**max. 300 words**) should be submitted by October 31st, 2009.

Topics may include: World Christianities; post-Christianity; decline of Christianity, as well as Christian growth or resurgence; mission and reverse mission; Christianity and young people; the influence of alternative spiritualities on Christianity; hyphenated Christian identities (Buddhist-Christians, Pagan-Christians, etc.); new Christian movements; contemporary pilgrimage or (youth) festivals; Christianity in areas of social deprivation; social movements and Christianity; Christianity and the (new) media; Christianity and popular culture; Christianity and gender; Christianity and sexuality; Christianity and other religions, including indigenous religions; contemporary Christian ritual; Christianity and economics; Christianity and politics; Christianity and education; Christianity and the law; migration and diaspora Christianities; Christianity and healthcare; Christianity and public life.

SOCREL is the British Sociological Association's study group on religion (www.socrel.org.uk). The conference for 2010 is co-hosted by the University of Edinburgh Institute of Geography and the School of Divinity (Religious Studies/the Centre for the Study of World Christianity). The academic organising committee are:

Giselle Vincett (gvincett@ed.ac.uk)
Afe Adogame (a.adogame@ed.ac.uk)
Betsy Olson (eolson@ed.ac.uk).

Changing Gods. Between Religion and Everyday Life

An International Conference organized by
CESNUR, Italian Association of Sociology (AIS) - Sociology of Religions
Section,
and the School of Political Science - University of Torino
Torino, Italy, 9-11 September 2010

Call for Papers

The conference will assess the international, global-local, and local dimensions of religious change, religious pluralism, spirituality, minority religions, new religious movements, new movements within Islam and Christianity, Esotericism and the New Age, survey the current situation, and consider the fate of religious and spiritual groups as they change and relate to everyday life in an increasingly multi-cultural and trans-national world. Papers will be accepted from a variety of perspectives (sociology, history, anthropology, psychology, law, religious studies).

Topics will include: Change in Old and New Religions; Religion and Everyday Life; Societal Responses to Religious Diversity and Pluralism; Religious Movements between Mainstreaming and Marginalization; Religion, Spirituality, and Body; Religion Online and Online Religion; Magic, Esotericism, and the Sacred; Bio-religion and Politics; Prayer and Everyday life; Young Generations; Lifestyles, Religion, and the Sacred; Gender and the Sacred; and The Emergence of New Movements and Groups.

Those who would like to present papers are invited to submit a 200-word abstract of their paper (in English or Italian) and a 200-word curriculum vitae to <cesnur_to@virgilio.it> before **February 28, 2010**. Speakers will be allocated 20 minutes for their talks (but they can bring longer papers to give to interested participants or e-mail these later).

Those who would like to arrange a full session should assume that they will have 2 hours, allowing time for 5 speakers or, if they prefer, 4 speakers and more time for discussion. The session organiser should, in turn, submit a 200-word synopsis of the whole session and 200-word CVs and abstracts for each speaker to <cesnur_to@virgilio.it> before **February 28, 2010**. The selection panel will be looking for empirical and theoretical contributions to the scholarly understanding of religious and spiritual change and pluralism, religion and everyday life, and to the variety of societal and individual responses to religion. Authors of papers that have been accepted will be notified before April 15, 2010.

The conference will begin in the morning of Thursday September 9 and it will end in the afternoon of Saturday September 11. The venues will be in downtown Torino. A field trip will be arranged in the afternoon of Friday September 10. Participants will be responsible for arranging their own accommodation: there are plenty of good hotels in downtown Torino and you may want to consult your travel agent. Further details about the conference will be available in due course on the CESNUR (www.cesnur.org) website.

Unfortunately no scholarship will be available for participants. Each participant, including speakers, will be expected both to pay his or her travel and accommodation expenses, and to register before being included in the final programme.

The 20th Nordic Conference in Sociology of Religion

August 4 - 6, 2010 at University of Agder Kristiansand, Norway

MULTI-RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES- POLARIZATION, CO-EXISTENCE, INDIFFERENCE

In this conference, plenary speakers – and also, hopefully, papers presented – will shed light on the nature of multi-religious societies, and how such societies meet the challenges of religious plurality. We welcome you to Kristiansand, Norway to discuss an important topic in the sociology of religion and a central issue in contemporary society.

The keynote speakers of the conference are professor emeritus **James A. Beckford** (University of Warwick), professor **Helen Rose Ebaugh** (University of Houston), Dr. **Effie Fokas** (London School of Economics) and professor **Ole Riis** (University of Agder)

The language of the conference is English.

Further information can be obtained from Pål Repstad : pal.repstad@hia.no

XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology
11-17 July 2010
Gothenburg, Sweden

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/>

Research Committee on Sociology of Religion RC22
<http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/rc/rc22.htm>

Programme Coordinators

Adam Possamai, University of Western Sydney, Australia, a.possamai@uws.edu.au
Sinisa Zrinscak, University of Zagreb, Croatia, sinisa.zrinscak@zg.t-com.hr

Please send your proposed paper for any of these sessions (except sessions 3, 4, and 13) to the session chair(s) by the **31st of October 2009**. Please include with your proposal, a title, a 100-200 words abstract, your name

(family name first), your affiliation and your e-mail address. Do not send the same paper to more than one session.

Call for Papers

Session 1

Religion on the Move: Religion in the Context of Global Migration

James V. Spickard, University of Redlands, USA, jim_spickard@redlands.edu

Afe Adogame, University of Edinburgh, U.K., a.adogame@ed.ac.uk

This session explores several existing and emerging models of religion in the context of global migration. As is well-known, religion often plays a role in adapting immigrants to – or buffering them from – their new socio-cultural homes. Religion can also operation bi-nationally, tying together regions and communities that would otherwise remain apart. Religions can flow in surprising directions, South to North and South to South, among others, as missions and reverse missions push religion along unaccustomed paths. Religious organizations can operate transnationally, following migratory flows, or they can stimulate those flows; in either case, the movement of peoples makes their organizational dilemmas more complex. And religion can be an unexpected response to the denationalization and deterritorialization of economic migrants, both subaltern and elite; these often have political consequences. This session welcomes papers that shed new light on these topics.

Session 2

Religion and Power: Observing Catholicisms from the Global South

Eloisa Martin, Brasilia Federal University, Brazil, eloisamartin@hotmail.com

This session proposes to discuss power relationships within Catholicism (specially State-Church, but also catholicism-Church) in the Global South (Latin America, South Africa, and South and Southeast Asia). The comprehension that Europe –and the USA ultimately – could offer universal paradigms to understand religion (and its relationship with Modernity), left durable effects. The very existence of something as an international globalized academy is largely based on the prevalence of a *Europhilic* model of knowledge organization and production, that has, as a consequence, the almost impossible contact between scholars and researchs from the Global South. It is more evident within studies on Catholicism, because of its European power centralization, tends to be mediated by and compared to European perspectives.

Session 3

RC22 Keynote Address: Power, Religion and Social Theory with Enzo Pace and Bryan Turner.

Session 4

RC22 Presidential Address. The Sociology of Religion on the Move: What has changed in religion and what has changed in sociology of religion?

Session 5

Immigrant Religion and Gender

Inger Furseth, KIFO Centre for Church Research, Norway and Center for Religion and Civic Studies, University of Southern California, USA, inger.furseth@kifo.no

Studies on immigrant religions in the West have been growing. An important theme is the different ways in which gender transforms religious values and practices among immigrants and their descendants. There is a new

awareness of the role of women in various world religions. Some immigrant women demonstrate higher levels of religious activity in their new country compared to their country of origin. Gender also structures immigrant religious communities and their roles for women and men. The gender discourse in the host society may provide an important influence on the view on gender within the immigrant religious communities. In some instances, there are more varied roles, especially for women, and in other instances, these roles have become more restricted and contested.

This session explores the importance of gender in immigrant religion, both in the lives of immigrants and their descendants and in the immigrant religious communities. The aim of the session is to provide a forum for scholars to present papers on gender and immigrant religion. Especially welcome are papers discussing new theoretical approaches, but also empirical works are welcome.

Session 6

Religious Freedom and Religious Rights – Different Contexts, Different Concepts?

Sinisa Zrinscak, University of Zagreb, Croatia, sinisa.zrinscak@zg.t-com.hr

Freedom of religion and freedom from religion is widely recognized to be one of the main human rights, guaranteed by numerous international and national documents. However, what is the substance of that freedom and how it should be guaranteed in practice is far from clear. The issue is not mainly about differences between countries which basically recognized it and those which place several restrictions toward religions, but about different and in many cases conflictual understandings of religious rights. Even in the most democratic societies there are evidences about rising tensions and restrictions in the field of religious rights. This session welcomes papers which deal with the concept of religious freedom and religious rights from different social and cultural experiences and which show how and in what way the understandings and practice of religious rights change historically and socially. Both the specific case studies as well as comparative papers are welcomed.

Session 7

Religion and the Sociological Imagination

Grace Davie, University of Exeter, UK, G.R.C.Davie@exeter.ac.uk

This session invites participants to think ‘imaginatively’ about religion and its place in the modern world – in other words to open up new areas of research, new methodologies and new research questions. The latter is particularly important: how we pose the question has huge influence on the subsequent research process. Let us, then, following C W Mills himself (1959): ‘re-arrange’ the file, abandon the conventional script, engage with reality rather than received truth, but – at the same time – think rigorously about what is going on. Papers are invited from people who have done this, are doing this, or who want to do this.

Session 8

Religion and Modernity

Dick Houtman and Stef Aupers, Erasmus University, The Netherlands, aupers@fsw.eur.nl and houtman@fsw.eur.nl

The assumption that modernization erodes religion in the western world – once uncontested in the social sciences – is increasingly under fire; many now feel that it has been exposed as a mere ideology or wish dream, intimately tied to the rationalist discourse of modernity. And indeed: today’s rapid globalization of Islam and the Evangelical upsurge, especially in Africa, Latin America and East Asia, fly in the face of the expectation that religion is doomed. Moreover, the modern world is witnessing a rise of various forms of post-traditional spirituality and ‘re-enchantment’. This session calls for papers that address the relationship between modernity and religion. Two varieties are called for: first, papers that delve into the ways modernity is transforming traditional religion. One can think, for instance, about the influence of market, media and Internet on religious beliefs, routines and rituals in Islam, Christianity, Buddhism or Hinduism. Second, papers that address new religions that are generated by modernity and modernization itself are also called for. One can think in this context about New Age ‘self’ religions, ‘rational’ sects and ‘scientific’ cults like ‘Scientology’ or the ‘Raelian’ movement or unacknowledged spiritual meanings in contemporary popular culture.

Session 9

New Religious Movements and the Secular State

Martin Geoffroy, Université de Moncton, Canada, martin.geoffroy@umoncton.ca

Susan J. Palmer, Concordia University, Canada, spalmer@dawsoncollege.qc.ca

The principle of separation of church and state has been understood and applied in most democracies in the West for the better part of the 20th century. But an international survey of the “public management” of new religious movements (NRMs) indicates that this principle been applied in many different ways - ways that reflect the history and culture of the country in question. As we move from France’s «laïcité», to the U.S. “melting pot”; from Canada’s “reasonable accommodation” system to Quebec’s “multiculturalism”, we find that the line separating church and state is not always as clear as most citizens would like to think - and its “fuzziness” has implications for the level of tolerance that various states exhibit towards NRMs in their social midst. This session is dedicated towards exploring this issue, through the case studies by international scholars of NRMs and a sociological analyses of the data, that will hopefully shed light on the remarkable permutations and wide variations in church-state relations involving NRMs in recent years.

Session 10 (A Joint Session with RC34)

Youth and Religion

Sebastian Nastuta, "Petre Andrei" University of Iasi, Romania, sebastian.nastuta@gmail.com

The research tradition of religious phenomena assimilates young age, and mainly adolescence, with the major religious transformations in a person’s life cycle.

Over time, researchers interested in the study of religious conversion, in secularization or in the adhesion to the New Religious Movements have paid special attention to young people. What is happening now? Do young people still constitute an interesting category for the sociology of religion?

Research topics like religious socialization, religious formal education, youth religious practices, behaviours and spirituality, radical and alternative religious movements, the influence of religion on youth values, norms, social aspirations and social capital, the methodological and ethical aspects of researching youth or, looking from the opposite direction, the influence of youth (sub) culture on religion could be interesting subjects for this section.

Session 11

Miscellaneous Aspects of the Sociology of Religion

Adam Possamai, University of Western Sydney, Australia, A.Possamai@uws.edu.au

This session addresses an eclectic mix of themes in the sociology of religion that is not covered in any of the other sessions.

Session 12 (A Joint Session with TG04)

Risk Society and Religion

Jens O. Zinn, University of Melbourne, Australia, jzinn@unimelb.edu.au

Alpha Possamai-Inesedy, University of Western Sydney, Alpha.Possamai@uws.edu.au

The Risk Society thesis warns us not only about the rise and change of type of risks that the whole world is facing but the challenges caused by institutional individualization that urges people to deal with risk and uncertainty individually. Whilst Giddens emphasises that late modernity would see the rise of a new prudent subject, Beck is more open regarding the possible negative responses to recent social changes which might even lead to increasing xenophobia or religious fundamentalism.

There is little empirically informed theoretical work on individuals’ responses to the challenges of late modernity which shows the advantage of religion as a resource for dealing with uncertainty (Zinn 2006). However, religion is involved in reflexive modernization in two ways: Firstly, religion is a valuable resource to deal with risk and uncertainty, however how people use religions to deal with risk and uncertainty differ and are

not yet sufficiently understood. In an international perspective it is important to see how religions integrate uncertainties differently. Secondly, religions are part of general social transformations. This is reflected in the change within religions and the rise of new religions or new forms of belief. Religions engage in issues of sustainable and reflexive development (e.g. Ecotheology and neo-pagan groups), and some groups (e.g. fundamentalist groups) offer some island of security to people's rise of worries.

This session seeks to explore religions involvement in reflexive modernization to fill the gap in the existing literature that poorly addresses issues of religion and the risk society.

Session 13

RC22 Business Meeting

