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**International Society for the Sociology of Religion**

**Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions**

# **Network 37**

## **Réseau**

**April 2010**

Published by: Giuseppe Giordan

### **31th ISSR Conference**

## **RELIGION AND ECONOMY IN A GLOBAL WORLD**

**Aix-en-Provence (France) June 30 – July 3, 2011**

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

**Description of the conference theme:**

**page 4-5 of this Network and on our Web Site**

### **Deadlines**

**June 15<sup>th</sup> 2010:** 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 2010**

**October 31<sup>st</sup> 2010:** 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

**January 15<sup>th</sup> 2011:** Programme of the Conference on our Web Site [www.sisr.org](http://www.sisr.org) and in the first issue of Network of 2011

## *LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT*

We have ended the Santiago de Compostela Conference (July 2009) without arriving at any decision concerning the venue of next ISSR Conference due in 2011. I am very sorry for this situation and I believe that it is necessary to do our best to prevent such situation from happening again. Following the withdrawal of Turkey's candidacy in September 2009, my first concern then has been to find an alternative solution in a short time. This has been possible with the proposal made by Raphaël Liogier from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques of Aix-en-Provence (France) of hosting the 31st ISSR Conference in this charming town of Provence, so appreciated by artists. On the occasion of the February 2010 meeting, after listening to Raphaël Liogier, the ISSR Council accepted this proposal: the 31<sup>st</sup> ISSR Conference will take place **in Aix-en-Provence (France)**, a town that is serviced by the TGV and by the Aix-Marseille airport. In February the ISSR Council had accepted July 10-13 as the Conference dates. Unfortunately, local events about which neither Raphaël Liogier nor Giuseppe Giordan or I had any control, have forced us, in these last days of April, to change dates: our Conference then will be held from **June 30 to July 3, 2011**. I thank the Council Members for their understanding and I ask each one of you to mark this dates in your agenda.

The other important decision that has been taken during the Council's meeting of last February in Paris, is the choice of the theme of the Conference. The council have appreciated the fact of receiving two reasoned and structured proposals concerning the conference themes. I am very grateful to the authors for their proposals. The former was about « The future of the sociology of religion : the lost paradigms » and the latter about « Religion and economy in a global world ». It is the latter proposal that has been accepted. You will find a more detailed presentation in the present Network. I am personally pleased that the classic question of the inter relations between economy and religion has been highlighted again at the very moment when the financial capitalism arouses so many interrogatives and worries.

At the 2011 Conference, the present vice-president, Peter Beyer, will take my place as the President of the ISSR according to our Statute. It is then necessary to find a new vice-president who will become president at the end of Peter Beyer's mandate. I am very pleased that two colleagues are interested in this office and have accepted to submit to your suffrage: many thanks to Pauline Côté and Jörg Stolz (the ballot will take place in Spring 2011).

Without getting here into the details, I am also keen to acknowledge the important work carried out by different groups, especially concerning the website and the finances of the ISSR. The reflections of these working groups is very useful to serenely foresee the most appropriate working modalities for the future of our association that must take up the challenge of its own development (it is evidently much better that it does so!). Our treasurer Jean-Pierre Hiernaux deserves our gratitude for the very scrupulous way in which he manages our finances; his work will now be facilitated by the possibility of paying for the subscription fees on line. As you can imagine, our new secretary general, Giuseppe Giordan, has been very busy in these last months, discovering the different aspects of his task very quickly. I am pleased with the fruitful cooperation that we have had and the support provided in these last months by the department of sociology of Padova University.

In this Network 37 you will have the pleasure of reading the first pages of the history of ISSR written by Karel Dobbelaere. No one is more apt than he to write this history, and I thank indeed Karel to share with us his precious memories.

In conclusion, I would like to attract your attention to the calendar of the activities and to the different deadlines dates contained in these pages. A good preparation for the next conference starts from respecting the indicated dates. Pay much attention to them! I wish a good end of the academic year to you all.

Jean-Paul Willaime

# 31<sup>st</sup> ISSR - CONFERENCE

## ***CONFERENCE THEME***

### **RELIGION AND ECONOMY IN A GLOBAL WORLD**

The recent financial crisis has opened up new prospects on experimental financial alternatives, and critical discourse on liberal capitalism, sometimes underpinned by more or less religious modes of justification. Besides, this does not only concern the renewal of Islamic finance. Numerous Buddhist, Christian, and Jewish movements also fit into the frame of new alternative economic perspectives. Beyond this current opportunity, which is spotlighting the relationship between the economy and religion, it is undeniable that beliefs and religious affiliations may enable us to better understand economic behavior patterns (those of producer, investor and consumer) in our global world. Besides, the economic variable is not only relevant downstream (in correlation with economic choices and behaviors), but also upstream: it is indeed hard to contest the fact that the standard of living may be a determining factor in choosing a specific religious affiliation.

#### **Plenary 1 - Religious Life and Economic Life**

*How religious choices may be determined by standards of living, and how economic behavior patterns may in turn be determined by religious affiliations...*

The first plenary session will be more empirical, devoted to studies underpinned by fieldwork in sociology of religion linked with the economy. The addresses will be devoted to the role of religious variables in economic behavior patterns (here a few striking figures connected with economic flows, consumption, investments, etc., powered by religious dynamics will be shown) and to the more general influence of standards of living on confessional and spiritual choices. Both addresses will be general, subject to debate, proposing hypotheses and orientations for research from empirical reports.

#### **Plenary 2 - Religions in Global Capitalism**

*The place and function of religions in the current capitalist system; the legitimization and criticism of the current capitalist system by religions...*

The more theoretical second plenary session will be devoted to analytical path-finding, to possible proposals of descriptive models in the process of elaboration, of the relations between the economy and religion within a globalized humanity. The speakers will expose various explanatory hypotheses on the contemporary situation of relations between these two dimensions. They will also describe, analyze and interpret contemporary (generally but not always critical) religious and quasi-religious discourses on the global capitalist system, especially concerning the financial dimension (Islamic, Buddhist, catholic, protestant criticisms, etc.)

## 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, 'Religions and Economy in a Global World':

- The economic paradigm of the religious market: a contested paradigm
  - Religious values and economic behaviour patterns
- New religious discourses and imaginaries connected with the economy
  - Marketing of religious products and globalization
  - The economy of religious mobility
- Religious affiliations, standards of living and socio-economic trajectories
  - Religion and economic development
  - Religion and alternative finance
- Religions in the firm and religions of the firm
  - The new economy of religious donation

**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**  
**([generalsecretary.issr@unipd.it](mailto:generalsecretary.issr@unipd.it))**

**BEFORE the 15<sup>th</sup> of JUNE 2010**

**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**

Hours	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>
8:45 - 10:30	<b>10:00 – 18:30 Registration</b>	<b>Plenary Session 1</b>	Thematic Sessions 4	<b>Plenary Session 2</b>
11:00 - 12:45	10:00: Council Meeting Free Networking	Thematic Sessions 1	Thematic Sessions 5	Thematic Sessions 8
14:00 – 15:45	Free Networking	Thematic Sessions 2	Thematic Sessions 6	Thematic Sessions 9
16:00 – 17:45	<b>Opening Session [Local Committee]</b>	Thematic Sessions 3	Thematic Sessions 7	Thematic Sessions 10
18:15	Welcome Party	<b>General Assembly</b>	Presidential Address	Council Meeting
			<b>19:00 Linguistic Groups</b>	

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

The conference will end on Sunday at 17.45, except if we have so many demands for sessions that we will need to organize an 11<sup>th</sup> session.

<p><b>Please keep in mind that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to submit a session proposal or a paper you need to be a ISSR member;</li> <li>- no matter what payment method you choose, you need to register through the ISSR website</li> </ul> <p><b><a href="http://www.sisr.org">www.sisr.org</a></b></p>
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**Please inform the General Secretariat of changes in address:**

**[trentin.issr@libero.it](mailto:trentin.issr@libero.it)**

**or**

**Giuseppe Giordan  
General Secretariat of the ISSR/SISR,  
Dipartimento di Sociologia dell'Università di Padova  
Via Cesarotti, 10/12  
35123, Padova  
Italy**

### **HOW TO REACH US ?**

**Jean- Paul Willaime**, President  
Groupe de Sociologie des Religions  
et de la laïcité IRESCO  
59-61, rue Pouchet  
F-75849 Paris Cedex 17, France  
Tel. Bureau: +-33-140 25 10 92  
Fax.: +-33-140 25 12 35  
GSM : + 33 (0) 6 62 85 25 69  
e-mail: [jean-paul.willaime@gsrl.cnrs.fr](mailto:jean-paul.willaime@gsrl.cnrs.fr)

**Jean-Pierre Hiernaux**, Trésorier  
Département de Sociologie  
ESPO/POLS/ANSO  
Université Catholique de Louvain  
Place Montesquieu 1/1  
B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium  
Tel. bureau: + 32-10-474241  
Residence Tél.: + 32-71-811736  
e-mail: [hiernaux@anso.ucl.ac.be](mailto:hiernaux@anso.ucl.ac.be)

**Giuseppe Giordan**, General Secretary  
Università di Padova  
Dipartimento di Sociologia  
via Cesarotti, 10  
35123 Padova - Italia  
Tel. Bureau : +39.049.8274325  
Fax : +39.049.657508  
GSM : +39.338.6678009  
e-mail : [generalsecretary.issr@unipd.it](mailto:generalsecretary.issr@unipd.it)

**Chiara Trentin**, Administrative Secretary  
via Monte Ortigara, 30  
36016 Thiene - Italia  
e-mail : [trentin.issr@libero.it](mailto:trentin.issr@libero.it)

**All the NEWS regarding our MEMBERS, VACANT ACADEMIC POSITIONS, and  
INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS are posted in our website**

**[www.sisr.org](http://www.sisr.org)**

## THE FOUNDATION OF THE CISR: ISSUES OF THE FIRST TWO DECADES.

1948-1967

### 1. The foundation: a nondenomination association for a religious sociology

Jacques Leclercq, professor of moral and social philosophy at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, was instrumental in founding the *Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse* (International Conference for Religious Sociology), CISR, of which he was the first president. In 1938, he had organised in his university the first conference on sociology in order to stimulate the development of the empirical study of social facts to promote the advancement of social philosophy. In 1948 he published his *Introduction à la sociologie*, an introductory textbook considered of no value in the USA, but that was translated in Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, which proved to him the necessity of sociology for the Catholic, Latin European public. In 1947, on April 2-3, he invited fifteen professors and researchers from France, the Netherlands and Belgium to meet in the drawing room of the Philosophical Institute of the Universitas Catholica Lovaniensis in Leuven. These scholars felt the need for further opportunities for exchange and for more permanent contacts with others engaged in similar research. Therefore they founded on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 1948 *La Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse*, an international association known under this name until 1989. Statutes were drawn up in which the founders specified that the association was to be a scientific non-denominational organization to promote a methodologically sound religious sociology (art. 3 and 4). It is clear that the purpose was in line with the objectives that Leclercq underscored since 1938: to stimulate a methodologically well-founded empirical study of social facts, i.e. the religious situation, in order to promote an efficacious pastoral action. There was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference in Leuven in 1949, where, upon invitation, studies were presented from Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain, enlarging the scope of the conference to two more countries, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference was scheduled for 1951 in the Netherlands.

In 1949, J. Leclercq, canon of the Catholic Church, informed Rome of the founding of the CISR. Rome warned specifically against “social research in the field of religion which could be done starting from postulates and using methods of the ‘sociological science’, as it is understood generally”. In fact, Rome warned against positivism and the Durkheimian school. In 1956, at the 5<sup>th</sup> conference which took place in Leuven, Leclercq, sharply formulated again



his point of view: religious sociology did not need “speculative sociology” like Durkheim’s, but an American-type of sociology which was characterized as a study of facts. The gist of the argument was almost “*Say it with Figures*”, and this at about the same time that Sorokin was warning sociologists in his *Fads and Foibles of Sociology* against a quantitative sociology. Leclercq furthermore insisted that religion cannot be studied from the outside without the risk of false interpretations. Consequently, he argued that religious sociology only could be pursued by religious minds knowing theology.

## 2. The CISR becomes a Catholic Organisation

The 3rd conference took place in Breda (the Netherlands) at the invitation of KASKI (the Catholic Social-Ecclesiastical Institute). A central discussion in this conference was the status of religious sociology. Should it be based on theology, the position of Monzel, Geck and Furfey, or was it a positive science, i.e. an empirical study of religion, as defended by Leclercq? The latter viewpoint was divided about the object of the study. Some like De Volder and Zeegers, restricted the object of religious sociology to the empirical study of the social forms of religious life (organizations, religious orders, etc.), the relations between these structures, and the analysis of the relations between such religious structures and secular groups (social classes, etc.). Le Bras’ approach, discussed in the conference, was clearly broader and included the study of objective data on religious life such as rituals, rules, ethics and so on, nor did he exclude relations between religious life and secular realities such as demography, economy, and the like. His position prevailed in the CISR, but the sociological approach remained religiously committed: not only was research to be at the service of the Church, but it was also to be undertaken by Catholics, whose schemes of analysis were necessarily tributary to their transcendent faith, whose observations had to be enlightened by their religious commitment (Labbens and Lebret).

The composition of the participants in this third conference drastically changed since the first two meetings. Here clerics, involved in pastoral work of the Church but who lacked any sociological background, attended the conference in great numbers. This majority elected a *Comité Général* (General Comity) charged to ameliorate the functioning of the CISR. Mgr. Koenraadt, president of KASKI, wanted to institutionalise the denominational flavour of the Breda-conference and make the CISR a Catholic association. Leclercq reacted in a letter

stating, that the society was intended and had to stay nondenominational, since, researchers could learn from the research methodology applied on other religions and from a comparative analysis of the results. On May 24<sup>th</sup> 1951, after the Breda conference, the initial statutes were changed at the meeting of the *Comité Général*: the CISR became denominational. In 1953, at the 4<sup>th</sup> Conference in La Tourette (France), Le Bras, appearing for the first time at the conference, stated in his intervention, “De Louvain à La Tourette”, that the CISR had become “a pastoral and confessional, i.e. a Catholic organisation”.

This reorientation had a major effect. From 1951 on, both clerics, who were interested in the results of the studies, and researchers, who were more interested in theoretical and methodological discussions, attended the conference. Their divergent expectations emerged very clearly at the plenary sessions. Clerics were not interested in scientific discussions, which they interrupted with questions about the results, and scientists interrupted the discussions of results with methodological questions. Whereas clerics wanted results, which could be helpful in their pastoral work, scientists wanted to improve their research instruments and to test their hypotheses. No one was happy with the mixed attendance at the conference and the resulting contradictory demands. Because so much discussion focussed on methodological and theoretical issues, the clerics, who attended the conferences, lost confidence in the results that were presented.

The conference of Breda also set a precedent: the conference was opened by the local Bishop, which was the case at subsequent conferences. The CISR asked for and received from the Holy See and the local Bishop approval for its conference programme and the first Acts were published with an *Imprimatur* and *nihil obstat*. Notwithstanding these options, the Vatican Secretary of State informed the President and the Secretary General in 1956 that the Holy See was of the opinion that the permanent “organizational structure” of the conference – i.e. a presidency and officers – was premature. Clearly, the Vatican worried about the position of the CISR in the organizational structure of the Church. Hereupon, the President of the CISR wrote a letter to a friend in Rome, asking him to inform the Secretary of State that the CISR was not an “International Catholic organism for socio-religious studies”, but an instrument to improve the methodology of socio-religious research, in order to improve the validity and reliability of the sociological studies done for the bishops. For that reason, CISR also organized summer schools.

### 3. What is sociological in religious sociology ?

Despite the mixed audiences, scientists continued to set up the programme of the conferences. At the 4<sup>th</sup> conference in La Tourette (1953), under the heading of “Methods and Problems”, reports were presented about the relationship between religious sociology and theology (Leclercq), pastoral work (Motte), canon law (Le Bras), religious psychology (Rozier) and human economy (Lebret). It is clear that religious sociology searched its place in relation to the traditional religious sciences, which limited its domain to a descriptive science. In fact it was defined as “sociography”. It could defend its position in the Catholic Church only by stressing its methodological objectives and the services it could provide for the Church. This is not typical only for the Catholic world. I remember visiting the grave of Martin Luther King Jr in Atlanta (USA) where I could read “science investigates, religion interprets”.

In their conferences sociologists exchanged results and discussed methods; however, they also wanted to improve the organizational structure of the church by relying on scientific research and principles. In Leuven, at the 5<sup>th</sup> conference in 1956, for example, they discussed the organization of the parish and searched for criteria to realize an ecological and demographic optimum for rural and urban parishes. At subsequent conferences sociological theory and concepts were more at the core of the programme. In Bologna (Italy) at the 6<sup>th</sup> conference in 1959 the theme was “religion and social integration”, with contributions on functional analysis in the sociology of religion, the parish and social integration, religion and social change, catholic minorities and social integration. At this conference, the president, Labbens, again underscored that the CISR had a confessional character since religious sociology was called to take a place in the Church among the sacred sciences. And he underscored that religious sociology is required to be theologically justified. In a critical evaluation of the conference, Maître wrote in *Archives de Sociologie des Religions* (Nr 9): when studying the content of religious life, we are each time confronted with the same problem: theological affirmations prevail over sociological theory. Under the participants gradually a new spirit was emerging.

In Königstein (Germany) at the 7<sup>th</sup> conference in 1962, sociologists searched for a frame of reference to integrate the merely sociographic studies undertaken up to that time. “Church affiliation” became the frame of reference for the conference, a frame of reference scarcely different from studies about political participation, union membership and the like. This was, indeed, the period of sociological studies on “normative integration” in organizations, institutions, and so forth. At this conference, researchers of religions other than Catholicism were on the official programme of the conference. At the end of the conference, Canon Boulard (France), heading a small group, protested vehemently in the Executive Committee against this. He even threatened to establish another international conference faithful to the origins of the CISR. He clearly forgot that the founders of the CISR intended it to be a scientific non-denominational organization. However, let me give you, in a little parenthesis, an idea of the Catholic flavour of the meetings in the 1960’s. I remember the Sunday morning at the conference in Königstein, my first conference, nearly everyone went to mass and in rows – one after the other – to communion, and at the same time, colleague priests were saying mass at the different side-altars, a new mass starting every 15 to 20 minutes. And in Rome, in 1969, we were housed in a convent, like in Königstein, each day at noon there was mass, and we had rooms in the convent with doors we could not lock.

Our 8<sup>th</sup> conference was in Barcelona in 1965. There are no Acts of this Conference, except four articles published in *Social Compass*. At this conference an overview of books and articles published since the last conference in the field of Sociology of Religions was presented by Schreuder. In contrast to the overview made by Pin for the 6<sup>th</sup> conference, it was not limited to the “Sociology of Catholicism”. Steeman called such overviews being an integral part of the conference a “happy custom” that, unfortunately, was discontinued after the 9<sup>th</sup> conference, presumably because it may have been difficult to motivate someone to analyze the growing literature in the field. In my trend report for the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference covering the publications of 1965-66, I was confronted with 370 publications per year.

Ecclesiastical problems still played an important role in setting up the programme of the conferences. At the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference in Montreal (1967), for example, “Clergy in Church and Society” was the central theme, with papers on the self-image and the malaise of the clergy; recruitment, seminarians and seminaries; celibacy; the economic and pastoral position of the clergy; and the position of the military chaplain. For the first time the Acts of the conference were published by the Secretary General. The studies in these Acts were very

narrowly focussed, i.e., mere “religious sociology”: only 40 % of the papers had references to studies outside this particular field (e.g. to general sociology and social psychology, sociology of stratification, sociology of the professions and sociology of organizations and bureaucracy). Of barely a dozen names cited outside the specific field of religious sociology, only Parsons and Weber were referred to in more than two papers. Even the selected bibliography presented in the acts was restricted to socio-religious studies of Catholic clergy. Consequently, religious sociology was self-centred and narrow. However, a change in the composition of the conference is emerging. The majority of the texts in the Acts were in English. Where at the start the language of the conference was French, bit by bit English was more and more used. In fact, gradually, the society became bilingual and the acronym ICRS, which stands for International Conference for Religious Sociology, is being used more and more.

All in all, up into the sixties, CISR practiced a special type of sociology of religion: “religious sociology”. This type of “sociology” was self-sufficient, particular, mostly at the service of one church, and “sociological” only in its methods. The Catholic church clearly wanted to control the output of religious sociology, and CISR could defend itself against the Holy See only by stressing its methodological objectives and the services it could provide for the Church.

#### 4. The Professional context of the CISR

In the period under study, many centres and networks for religious sociology were established e.g. in Belgium by Leclercq and Houtart, in France, among others, by Boulard, Le Bras, Labbens, Lebret and Motte, in Italy by for example by Aquaviva, Buralassi, Droulers and Pin, and in Espagne by Duocastella.. And KASKI had spread to Germany and Austria. In fact, study centres for socio-religious research emerged also in many dioceses. All these Centres asked for some coordination. In 1956, the President of KASKI founded in Geneva ICARES – an International Catholic Institute for Socio-ecclesiastical Research – which organized conferences in 1955 and 1957. In 1958 this institute was transformed into FERES, the International Federation of Institutes of Social and Socio-Religious Research, which changed its seat to Fribourg (Switzerland). In 1970, it was transferred to Leuven and finally moved to Louvain-la-Neuve with the *Université Catholique de Louvain*. Besides its European

members, under the impulse of Houtart this federation also has members in Latin America and its international journal is *Social Compass*.

There was also an active Protestant Organization, which organized six European Sociological Colloquia on Protestantism in the period 1959-1965, and in Brussels two international colloquia on Jewish life were organized in 1962 and 1965. Finally, two International Colloquia on Religious Sociology were organized in Eastern Europe, first in Iena (1965) and later in Prague (1966). In the USA, 10 years before the CISR, the American Catholic Sociological Society was established, which, two years later, started a quarterly journal *The American Catholic Sociological Review*, a journal that became *Sociological Analysis* in 1964. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress of the International Sociological Association (ISA) in Amsterdam (1956) and at the subsequent one in Stresa (1959) informal meetings were organized for those interested in the study of religious phenomena at the initiative of Desroche and Birnbaum. From 1962 on it became an official Research Committee of the ISA and still is as RC 22 Sociology of Religion.

Karel Dobbelaere

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**Sources :**

DOBBELAERE, Karel. CISR, an Alternative Approach to Sociology of Religion in Europe : ACSS and CISR Compared. In *Sociological Analysis*, 1989, 50(4), pp.377-387.

POULAT, Emile. La CISR de la fondation à la mutation: réflexions sur une trajectoire et ses enjeux. In *Social Compass*, 1990, 37(1), pp. 11-33.

In order to be able to complete this document, I ask those of you who know one or more of the persons mentioned in the text to inform me of the discipline and the professional status of these persons.

[dobbelaere.voye@skynet.be](mailto:dobbelaere.voye@skynet.be)

## Jacques Zylberberg (1939-2010)

### A fieldworker at heart

Jacques Zylberberg passed away last February 28<sup>th</sup>. He was just over seventy years old. From the seventies until the middle of 2000, he would play an active part in close to twenty conference meetings of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion. Over the same period, he was also a regular contributor to *Social Compass* as author or guest editor, alone or in collaboration.

A tireless working group sponsor and convener, our colleague excelled at networking researchers. He could easily reach through sociological traditions. As well, he could not help but try and break down linguistic barriers. Because of such inclinations, he drew on ethnography and ethnographers to respond to the tribunal of universal human condition. Always on the offensive on “cabinet” sociology, as well as on primordialism, he focused on cultural movement and transactions. Only culture as artefact would he recognize.

Zylberberg lived by Gabriel LeBras’ maxim to the effect of paying as much, if not closer attention to believers than to religion. Research projects on “Religious Lifeworlds” which he conducted in Chile and then in Canada, while a professor of political science at Laval University, provided him with his most enduring source of inspiration. His contribution may perhaps best be appreciated by going back to his articles on the dilemmas of religious orientation in Chile’s political turmoil. Equally perceptive was his interpretation of the French Canadian “charismatic” movement as a successful, but short-lived attempt at women’s empowerment within the Catholic Church. There, already, one could get a fair preview of today’s plausibility challenges faced by churches and notably, by Catholicism.

Zylberberg’s occasional outbursts were a fact of life at ISSR meetings. His zest for life, moral strength and energy were notorious. These, perhaps, were the only clues he would give to a remarkable force of resilience drawn from personal tragedy. Born of Jewish parents in the port of Antwerp on November 1939, Jacques Zylberberg was “un enfant de la guerre”, illustrative of those whose fate was so powerfully evoked in Charles Aznavour’s song. His fierce individualism was part of a complex personality. As much as total religious commitment was insufferable to him, he had the greatest admiration for those living examples of fraternity borne out as the utmost religious sentiment. An unknown catholic nun on the street could be asked if and how she was related to “the bonnes soeurs du Bon Pasteur” who helped save him from the Shoah. A political prisoner of Pinochet, he proudly recounted the fact (and the irony) of owing his liberty to the very efficient campaigning of the “internationale catholique” headed by “ses maîtres de Louvain”.

Zylberberg had been absent from the academic scene for most of the past ten years. More still have passed since we last had occasion to debate over a paper. Yet to long-time collaborators, students, friends and colleagues alike, his presence remains. A fieldworker at heart fuelled by insatiable curiosity, with a phenomenal memory of beings, places and things, an uncommon intellectual generosity and ever, ever, the living ideal of a world without frontiers.

Pauline Côté  
Département de Science Politique  
Université Laval