

## **European Association for the Study of Religion (EASR)**

### **Report of the General Secretary**

Presented at the General Assembly, 19 August 2010

University of Toronto (IAHR World Congress)

### **Membership status and issues**

#### EASR Member Associations 18 August, 2010 with names of appointed delegates/representatives to the EASR Executive Committee

- APER, Portuguese Association for the Study of Religion (Associação Portuguesa para o Estudo das Religiões) (Steffen Dix)
- BASR, British Association for the Study of Religions (Bettina Schmidt)
- Ceska Spolecnost Pro Studium Nabozenstvi (The Czech Society for the Study of Religion) (David Václavík/David Zbiral)
- DAHR, Dansk Selskab for Religionshistorie (Danish Association for the History of Religions) (Annika Hvithamar)
- DVRG, Deutsche Vereinigung für Religionswissenschaft (German Association for the Study of Religions) (Christoph Bochinger)
- ESSR, Eesti Akadeemilise Usundiloo Seltsi (Estonian Society for the Study of Religion) (Ülo Valk)
- GSSCR Greek Society for the Study of Culture and Religion (Panayotis Pachis)
- LRPB Latvian Society for the Study of Religions/Latvijas Reliģiju pētniecības biedrība (Janis Priede/Anita Stasulane)
- Magyar Vallástudományi Tarsaság (Hungarian Association for the Academic Study of Religions) (Mihály Hoppál/ Ábrahám Vajk Kovács)
- NGG, Nederlands Genootschap van Godsdiensthistorici (Dutch Association for the History of Religions) (Gerard Wiegens)
- NRF, Norsk Religionshistorisk Forening (Norwegian Association for the History of Religions) (Knut A. Jacobsen)
- Polskie Towarzystwo Religioznawcze (Polish Association for the Science of Religions) (Halina Grzymala-Moscinska)
- ÖGRW, Österreichische Gesellschaft für Religionswissenschaft (Austrian Association for The Science of Religion) (Johann Figl)
- RAHR, Asociația română de istorie a religiilor (Romanian Association for the History of Religions) (Eugen Ciurtin)
- SECR, Sociedad Española de Ciencias de las Religiones (Spanish Association for the Science of Religions) (Santiago Montero)
- SGR/SSSR, Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Religionswissenschaft/Société Suisse pour la Science des Religions (Swiss Association for the Science of Religions) (Maya Burger)
- Società italiana di storia delle religioni (Italian Association for the History of Religions) (Giovanni Casadio)
- Société Ernest-Renan. Société Française d'Histoire des Religions (French Association for the History of Religions) (Charles Guittard)
- Société Belgo-Luxembourgeoise d'histoire des religions (Association for the History of Religions of Belgium-Luxembourg) (André Motte)

- SSRF, Svenska Samfundet för Religionshistorisk Forskning (Swedish Association for Research in Comparative Religion) (Susanne Olsson; Olof Sundqvist)
- Suomen Uskontotieteellinen Seura (Finnish Society for the Study of Comparative Religion) (Tuula Sakaranaho)
- TAHR, Türkiye Dinler Tarihi Dernegi (Turkish Association for the History of Religions) (Mehmet Aydin)

#### Individual members

Gustavo Benavides
Ivar Maksutov
Michiaki Okuyama
Ivan Miroshnikov
Galina Rousseva-Sokolova
Hrvoje Cargonja
Olga Breskaya
Maya Babkova
Pavel Kostylev
Igor Krupnik
Anna Sokolova
Ksenia Trofimova
Anna Yudkina
Elena Sergeeva
Anton K. Salmin
Mario Katic

#### IAHR representative

Rosalind Hackett/Tim Jensen

#### **Membership**

The number of EASR-affiliated national associations is twenty two, with sixteen individual members (including two new ones), and one IAHR member (jointly held post).

There have been no applications for membership from national associations, though discussions are far advanced with the Ukrainian Association of Researchers in Religion (already a member of IAHR) whose application, we hope, will be brought to next year's meeting.

The Executive Committee, following advice from its Working Group on Honorary Membership, and in light of meeting outside Europe, has recommended no new Honorary Members this year.

#### **Regular business**

a) EASR bursary information and application form were circulated and posted on the website earlier in the year (with closing date of mid-June). Applications were considered by the President, General Secretary and Treasurer.

b) Member associations and individual members were reminded of the need to pay subscriptions (or make an arrangement with the Treasurer) by 31 May.

c) The call for this year's General Assembly was made by email more than 90 days in advance as required by the constitution. It was posted on the e-lists of EASR.

d) Correspondence was exchanged with the IAHR World Congress organisers in order to set dates and venues for this year's EASR meetings.

e) The General Secretary was invited to participate in a plenary panel on 'Global Perspectives on Religious Studies' at the American Academy of Religion conference in Montreal, November 2009. She presented a paper on the diversity of approaches, methods and issues within the study of religions in Europe, focusing in particular on the work of the EASR and its constituent associations and members. A copy of the paper will be posted on the new EASR website.

### **Nominations and election**

The nominations and election process for the triennium 2011-13 was initiated. The Nominating Committee, agreed at the 2009 General Assembly, was established (Mar Marcos, Susanne Olsson, Wim Hofstee, Bretislav Horyna, and Kim Knott, with the latter acting as Chair). With advice from EASR officers and delegates, the committee drew up a list of nominated candidates for vacant positions. Nomination forms and statements of intent were completed. The nominations process was then opened up to the wider membership of EASR (at the end of May, with the call for the General Assembly), with officers and delegates of national associations invited to nominate officers (and individual members invited to nominate to the post of representative of the individual members). No further nominations were received by the closing date of 22 July 2010.

Therefore, at the EASR Executive Committee meeting on 16 August 2010 (with 27 officers and national delegates present), and in conformity with the EASR Constitution, article 7.2, the following people were 'elected unopposed' for the three year period from 1 January 2011 to end December 2013.

President: Maya Burger (Swiss Association, for a second term)  
Vice-President: Francisco Diez de Velasco (Spanish Association)  
Vice-President: Einar Thomassen (Norwegian Association)  
General Secretary: David Václavík (Czech Association)  
Deputy General Secretary: James Cox (British Association, for a second term)  
Treasurer: Marco Pasi (Italian Association/Netherlands Association, for a second term)  
Deputy Treasurer: Wim Hofstee (Netherlands Association, for a second term)  
Membership Secretary: Jenny Berglund (Swedish Association)  
Internet Officer: Katja Triplett (German Association, for a second term)  
Publications Officer: Eugen Ciurtin (Romanian Association, second term)  
One Representative of the Individual Members: Ivar Maksutov (Russia)

In addition, Wanda Alberts (German Association/Norwegian Association) was co-opted for a further three years to represent the interests of the EASR Working Group on Religion and Public Education.

It is gratifying to think of the business of EASR moving ahead in such capable and experienced hands, with new members joining the committee and others remaining for a second term, and with an excellent spread of officers from East, West, South and North of the continent.

Current members of the committee were thanked for their work over the last triennium, particularly those who will leave office at the end of 2010.

### **Discussion lists and website**

The Internet Officer gave a report to the Executive Committee on changes made to the website and other matters. In particular, she unveiled the new website (same website address), which will go live shortly, after EASR and national association content has been updated. It has been designed by a German IT company and is powered by Typo3, an open source content management system.

E-list activity has increased (Candide 66 members, Dolmen 201, Most 77, Synkron 124, Tonantzin 101, Yggdrasill 685).

Associations were asked to notify the Internet Officer of any changes to the names and contact details of their officers; details of past EASR conference publications and proceedings should also be sent for inclusion on the new website.

### **Publications**

An edited collection from the 2002 EASR conference in Paris has now been published: Charles Guittard (ed.) *Le Monothéisme: Diversité, Exclusivisme ou Dialogue?* (Société Ernest Renan, Paris, 2010).

### **Future conferences**

A report on future conferences was given.

18-22 Sept 2011 Budapest (Hungary), hosted by the Hungarian Association for the Academic Study of Religion, 'New Movements in Religion: Theories and Trends'.

23-26 August 2012 Södertörn (Sweden), hosted by the Swedish Association for Research in Comparative Religion

2013 Liverpool (UK), hosted by the British Association for the Study of Religions

2014 Groningen (Netherlands), hosted by the Dutch Association for the History of Religions.

### **Conclusions and thanks**

Thanks to the local organisers, particularly Sydney Yeung and Donald Wiebe, at the IAHR XXth Quinquennial World Congress, for their assistance with the programming of meetings and provision of venues.

As this is my last General Assembly as General Secretary (after a period of ten years in office either as Membership Secretary or General Secretary), I would like to

express my thanks to all those with whom I have served, particularly Maya Burger, Marco Pasi, Wim Hofstee, Mar Marcos, Tim Jensen and Michael Pye. I have learnt much from them, and indeed without them the work would have been so much greater and the pleasure far less. It has been an honour to be so centrally involved in EASR, as a fledgling and now maturing association, to be part of its formation, institutionalisation and growth. I believe that it is now among the world's most preeminent and successful study of religion associations, even though it is a regional rather than global body. EASR has done a great deal for the study of religions across Europe and in its member countries, bringing together large numbers of scholars and students for intellectual communication, the development of research ideas and projects, and teacher exchange. In addition, EASR has provided the opportunity to make friends in the study of religions across Europe: when I look around, I see all your familiar faces and remember our many conversations. Our annual conferences help to grow and sustain such relationships.

Over the first ten years EASR has grown from a membership of thirteen national associations to twenty two, with most of the additional ten being entirely new associations. From two individual members we have grown to sixteen, but it remains our hope to have none – once all the countries of Europe have established their own national bodies and joined EASR. I have been fortunate to have been in the engine room throughout this time. But everyone gets hot and tired and needs replacing by fresh workers from time to time, and that is the stage I have reached. I have every confidence in the new team who will begin work in January, made up as it is of experienced colleagues and new, energetic, but none the less highly competent people. I wish them well, and look forward to seeing the results and being a beneficiary of their hard work, at the Hungary conference in 2011 and beyond. Thank you.

Kim Knott  
EASR General Secretary  
19 August 2010