

ICSOR NEWSLETTER (1/2017)

Editors: Katuscia Carnà, Nicolamaria Coppola

January 2017

ICSOR, *International Center for the Sociology of Religion*, was founded in Rome in January 2017. On the 5th January 2017, ICSOR's Board of Directors - convened via computer - made the following appointments:

- Secretary and Delegate of the Board of Scientific Advisors: Cecilia Costa
- Treasurer: Maria Mansi
- President: Roberto Cipriani

Katuscia Carnà and Nicolamaria Coppola were co-opted as members of the Board. Professor Franco Ferrarotti is Honorary President of ICSOR. Professor José Casanova chairs the International Board of Advisors.



On the 26th January 2017, beginning at 6 pm, at the ICSOR headquarters in Rome, viale delle Milizie 108, the Institute officially began its activities with a paper by Professor Emanuela C. Del Re, sociologist of religion, Professor of the Sociology of Middle-Eastern Political Phenomena and of the Sociology of Cultural Processes, expert in Geopolitics

and National Coordinator of the Italian Association of Sociology, AIS's National Section the Sociology of Religion. Her paper was entitled: "Yazidi e minoranze religiose in Medio Oriente" [Yazidi and religious minorities in the Middle East]. A documentary made by Professor Del Re in the KRG entitled *La festa negata* [The feast denied] was screened. This film is available on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b01BXvx0K28>

In October 2013, Professor Emanuela Del Re, President of the EPOS organisation, filmed one of the most important Yazidi festivity, *Jazhna Jamaye* (Feast of the Assembly), held at the temple in Lalish, in Iraqi Kurdistan. Last year the feast was cancelled and the motivation given was for "reasons of public safety". In effect, in Erbil, capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, in the month of September there had been an attack that heightened security awareness considerably. The Kurdistan authorities thought it would be better to avoid large-scale crowds like that which the Yazidi festival would have attracted therefore, they forbade its celebration. The temple was placed under imposing security



measures with strict controls.

Following the screening of the film all those present took part in a debate with Professor Del Re. Some light refreshment was then provided.

February 2017

On the 21st February 2017, beginning at 6 pm, at the ICSOR headquarters in Rome, viale delle Milizie 108, Nicolamaria Coppola, PhD Candidate in Applied Social Sciences at Rome's *La Sapienza* University, Doctor in Multimedia Publishing and New Information Professions, General Secretary of the EPOS non-profit Organisation, presented his book *Omosessualità in Medio Oriente. Identità gay tra religione, cultura e politica* [Homosexuality in the Middle East. Gay identity amid religion, culture and politics], published by Aracne.

The author was present and sociologist, Professor Massimiliano Ruzzeddu, acted as moderator.

Omosessualità in Medio Oriente. Identità gay tra religione, cultura e politica is a guided journey through seductive Islamic lands vehicled by a reflection on gender identity steeped in political-religious dynamics. The narration brings the critical issue spiralling to a climax, by reviewing Middle-Eastern perspectives not always compatible with those of the West. The direct accounts of Moslem homosexuals and the author's clear considerations, comforted by a plentiful bibliography, demystify the common posits of the Koranic *Hadiths*, in hopes of the openings due to gender difference.



The presentation was followed by a discussion and some light refreshment.

April 2017

On the 20th April 2017, at 6 pm at the ICSOR headquarters, a meeting was held on the topic of "Beyond life", which provided an opportunity for a discussion of the positions of the three monotheistic religions on one of life's most important issues: death and life after death. The debate was opened by Professor Federico D'Agostino, who teaches Sociology at the Department of Education at Rome's *Roma Tre* University. This was followed by readings and comments on a number of excerpts from the sacred scriptures of the three Religions of the Book involving Professor Marco Morselli, Vice-President of Rome's Jewish-Christian Friendship Association, Father Arnaldo Pangrazzi of the Order of St Camillus and the Imam Isa Abd al-Haqq Benassi, member of the Council of Religious Guides of the COREIS, the Italian

Islamic Community. A number of scenes from the Japanese film *Departures* and music played by the violinist Emma Santagati cadenced the readings and comments. The film, which received the 2009 Oscar as the best foreign film, was the outcome of research by the filmmaker-cellist himself, which lasted at least ten years, during which time he studied the art of preparing the dead with a mortuary aesthetician and how to play the cello in the first sections of the film. In *Departures*, although death is an important aspect of the ceremony, the topic is still taboo in Japan. The evening ended with a discussion and some light refreshment.

2017 TENDER

SCHOOL OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION (SAFSOR)

Once a year, I. C. S. O. R., International Center for the Sociology of Religion, promotes and organizes, within the ambit of its educational and research programme, a **SCHOOL OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION (SAFSOR)** at the I. C. S. O. R. centre, in viale delle Milizie 108, Rome. The languages used during the course are: French, English, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

The School is designed to provide specific in-depth, up-to-date training to scholars of the sociological disciplines seeking to perfect their theoretical, methodological, empirical and practical knowledge of the field of research into the sociology of religion.

SAFSOR is for graduates in areas of the social sciences and the places available are a maximum of fifteen. Auditor students are also admitted.

At the end of the course the SCUOLA DI ALTA FORMAZIONE IN SOCIOLOGIA DELLA RELIGIONE (SAFSOR) will provide an official certificate endorsed by the President of I. C. S. O. R. Attendance is free, travel expenses and costs of bed and board are met by the attendees.

The annual SAFSOR programme will be drawn up by I. C. S. O. R's Board of Scientific Advisors, which will publish it at least one month before the course begins. The ambits covered by the SCUOLA DI ALTA FORMAZIONE IN SOCIOLOGIA DELLA RELIGIONE (SAFSOR) are sociological theories, methodologies and techniques, empirical quali-quantitative research.

For details please consult the SAFSOR page at: www.icsor.it