

EDITORIAL

This is a *special issue on serial resources on religion in eastern Europe*. Mark Elliott, whose paper leads off the issue, organized a round table discussion at the annual convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS) which met in Pittsburgh in November 2002. Following presentations by Elliott, Sawatsky and Paul Steeves (on his online translation service of Russian religious news), there was vigorous discussion well beyond the time limit set.

Two key concerns emerged that should at least be mentioned here. One missing resource is the regular publication of a news chronicle of events/developments and of publications emanating from conferences. In consideration of the transitory nature of independent research institutes, another real concern was to ask what established institution - university or library - might now commit to collecting what are admittedly ephemeral printed resources relevant to religion throughout eastern Europe, so that the small circle of scholars could send original copies there for safe keeping and access. The uncertain 1990s had seen the rise and fall of many publication ventures, and the new electronic and online capabilities were enabling publications within specific circles, yet the scholar might eventually never find a copy.

In order to offer readers a somewhat more comprehensive overview than was possible in Pittsburgh, *REE* has undertaken not only to publish the papers from the convention but to include similar materials on those research organizations that have been most helpful. Travels in Europe while on sabbatical made it possible for me to obtain papers of a similar order - which I needed to translate, however - with the exception of a systematic report from Keston Institute. We have attempted to substitute with a composite of materials that Stricker and I, who have both been involved with Keston throughout its history, wrote.

Several key conclusions are worth re-stating here. Western attention to religion in eastern Europe went through phases shaped by perceptions of crisis - a regular relationship of information exchange is not yet happening. Our readers, divided between east and west, would surely profit from a systematic overview of religious information sources within eastern Europe (going as far as Central Asia) in the major languages of the region. Secondly, as should be obvious from the views of the authors of this issue, cooperation and respect for scholarship continue to transcend serious differences in perspective and interpretation. That must continue.

Walter Sawatsky