

## Constitution of the

# South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR)

(as per the two revisions made on December 22, 2005 and May 24, 2006)

### Article 1. Name and registration

- i) The Association shall be named "South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion".
- ii) In languages other than English it may be referred to informally by means of appropriate equivalents.
- iii) The official acronym shall be **SSEASR**.
- iv) The Association shall be legally registered at New Delhi. In the event of disputes arising concerning these statutes and their application informal mediation shall be sought. In the event that attempts at mediation should fail, all disputes and legal actions which might arise, shall as a last resort, to the exclusion of all other official bodies and insofar as admissible by law, be adjudicated exclusively by the judge entitled to adjudicate in the subject of dispute in the High Court of Delhi, Delhi, India.

### Article 2. Affiliation

The South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (hereafter **SSEASR**) is affiliated to the International Association for the History of Religions (hereafter IAHR). Its organisation and activities shall be developed in a manner consistent with the well-being of the IAHR and all other associations affiliated thereto.

### Article 3. Objective

- i) The objective of the **SSEASR** is to promote the academic study of religions through the international collaboration of all scholars normally resident in South and Southeast Asia whose research has a bearing on the subject. It would cover subjects such as (and not confined only to) history, linguistics, political science, anthropology, sociology, literature, cultural studies, law, folklore, etc. Cross-cultural studies would also be promoted to encourage better understanding among scholars.
- ii) The objective of the **SSEASR** is to be pursued by the usual means of scholarly activity such as the arrangement of conferences, symposia or colloquia, the encouragement of scholarly publications, the exchange of information through electronic or other means, and such other activities as the association or its elected officers shall from time to time determine. The **SSEASR** would also disseminate such scholarship by the publication of a journal, books and a newsletter.
- iii) The **SSEASR** shall stand for creating a network of scholars in the region, and for that purpose, it shall cooperate with related agencies in the region of South and Southeast Asia to develop healthy academic atmospheres. In recent times, Asian scholars have started to work "within" Asia, such trends would be further promoted by the **SSEASR** among young Asian scholars who need exposure to the standard of research being conducted at various competent academic institutions in the world.

### Article 4. Membership

- i) Membership of the **SSEASR** shall be open to all students, researchers and others who share its

objective, and who are normally or occasionally resident in or have close academic ties with South and Southeast Asia. Membership may take the form of individual membership or honorary membership.

ii) Applications for individual membership shall be addressed to the appropriate officer of the **SSEASR**, and the Committee (cf. Article 6) shall have the right to approve or reject such applications.

iii) The membership of any individual may be terminated by decision of the *General Assembly* for good and sufficient reason and after an opportunity for representations to the contrary has been extended.

iv) Individual members shall pay an annual subscription, the amount of which shall be determined from time to time by the Committee. The rights and privileges of membership depend on payment of the membership subscription in advance for the membership period in question. Lapsed membership may be restored with reference to a subsequent membership period without further application.

v) Honorary membership may be granted to individuals by the *General Assembly* in exceptional cases with the same rights and privileges as ordinary individual membership.

#### **Article 5. General Assembly**

i) The governing body of the **SSEASR** shall be the *General Assembly* of its members, presided over by the President.

ii) The *General Assembly* shall be convened once every two years. The date may vary, taking account of the conference program which provides the context. The Committee shall convene an extraordinary *General Assembly* at the request of a minimum of two thirds of the members. The minimum notice for an extraordinary *General Assembly* shall be 30 days by postmark.

iii) The *General Assembly* shall be convened whenever possible in the context of an academic conference organised by the **SSEASR** or by affiliated institutions. Except when held in the context of a quinquennial World Congress of the IAHR, the *General Assembly* shall be convened in one of the countries of South and Southeast Asia. During a year in which a quinquennial World Congress of the IAHR is held in a country outside of South and Southeast Asia, the *General Meeting* of the **SSEASR** may be held in the context of that Congress, by decision of the Committee, but in such case no decisions shall be taken regarding changes to the constitution or dissolution of the Association.

iv) Notice of a meeting of the *General Assembly* shall be given by the *Secretary General*. When notice is given not less than 90 days in advance of the *General Assembly* a widely available form of communication such as a printed bulletin or an electronic medium is sufficient. If the period of notice is shorter, notice must be sent to all members individually in writing. The minimum period of notice is 30 days by postmark. Non-receipt of notice by one or more members shall not invalidate the decisions of the meeting.

v) The agenda for the meeting of the *General Assembly* shall be published in advance when the meeting is called. At the decision of the Committee, or if at least ten members in good standing submit this preference in writing, any issue can be referred for decision to a postal and/or electronic ballot which shall be conducted by the *General Secretary*. Proposals for additions to the agenda shall be sent to the *General Secretary* not less than three weeks before the meeting. Any additional alterations to the agenda shall require a two thirds majority of those present.

vi) The minimum number of members required for a meeting of the *General Assembly* (quorum) shall be twenty, of whom at least seven shall be members of the current Committee. If the quorum is not achieved, a further meeting shall be called at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

vii) Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of those present at a meeting, except for the exceptions stated below. In the case of simple majority votes, abstentions shall be recorded but are not counted as "no" votes. Additions to the published agenda shall require a two thirds majority of all those present.

Changes to the constitution or a motion to dissolve the Association shall also require a two thirds majority (cf. Articles 8 and 9).

viii) Specific rules of procedure may be adopted by the *General Assembly* itself. In the absence of such rules concerning any procedural matters which arise or in the event of dispute concerning their interpretation during the course of a validly convened meeting, the decisions of the president on procedural questions relating to the conduct of the meeting in question is final. The *General Assembly* may at the same meeting appoint a procedures committee to consider rules of procedure in detail and make recommendations to a future meeting of the *General Assembly*.

#### **Article 6. Committee and officers**

i) The business of the **SSEASR** shall be conducted by a *Committee* consisting of designated officers who shall be elected by all the members as well as one representative from each country.

ii) The following shall be elected to designated offices: a **President**, two **Vice-Presidents**, a **Secretary General**, a **Deputy Secretary General**, a **Treasurer**, a **Deputy Treasurer**, a **Membership Secretary**, a **Publications** and/or **Internet Officer**. The *Committee* may assign additional functions to its members on an ad hoc basis. The conduct of elections and the periods of office are determined in Article 7.

iii) The **SSEASR** may be represented formally by any of the designated officers in accordance with their specified function or as otherwise delegated by the President or by decision of the *Committee*. The voting rights on the International Committee of the IAHR will be assumed by the President and the Secretary General or other delegated committee members, taking account of the rules of the IAHR.

iv) The President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer shall present an oral or written report at each meeting of the *General Assembly*. The President in office conducts the *General Assembly* of the **SSEASR** (cf. Article 5) and the meetings of the *Committee*. These functions may be delegated by the President or in the event of serious illness or similar incapacitation by the *Committee*, to one of the Vice-Presidents. The Secretary General may also be represented by the Deputy Secretary General.

v) The *Committee* shall meet not less than once annually. The meeting is called by the Secretary General with the agreement of the President. A meeting of the *Committee* requires written notice of not less than 30 days, the attendance of the President or one of the two Vice-Presidents and at least three other members. Decisions are to be reached as far as possible by consensus and if necessary by simple majority vote. Abstentions may be recorded but do not count as "no" votes.

vi) Specific rules of procedure may be adopted by the *Committee* itself. In the absence of such rules concerning any procedural matters which arise or in the event of dispute concerning their interpretation during the course of a validly convened meeting, the decisions of the President on procedural questions relating to the conduct of the meeting in question is final. The *Committee* may at the same meeting appoint a procedures committee to consider rules of procedure in detail and make recommendations to a future meeting of the *Committee*.

#### **Article 7. Elections**

i) The members of the *Committee* shall be elected for a period of **four** calendar years running from January 1st. A member may be re-elected, except that no member shall serve in the same office for more than three consequent terms, and no member shall be elected for a position in the *Committee* total of more than **four** terms with or without intervening periods. The same terms apply to delegated members.

ii) The elections shall be conducted by postal ballot. In cases where a candidate is unopposed there should be no postal ballot. Responsibility for the conduct of the elections lies with the *Committee*. More specific rules for the conduct of the elections may be laid down by the *General Assembly*, provided always that they are consistent with these statutes.

iii) The right to vote is strictly limited to individuals with valid current membership as registered at the appropriate time with the Membership Secretary of the **SSEASR** (cf. article 4).

#### **Article 8. Amendments**

i) Amendments to this constitution may be made by two thirds majority of the *General Assembly*. Details of proposed amendments must be given to the members in advance and not later than the notice for the convening of the *General Assembly* (cf. Article 5, iv). Amendments shall come into force immediately after the conclusion of the meeting at which they are carried.

#### **Article 9. Dissolution**

i).The **SSEASR** can be dissolved only at the recommendation of the Committee and by decision of the *General Assembly* for which a two thirds majority is required. In the event of dissolution such assets as remain after the settling of all liabilities shall be transferred to the IAHR if in existence or to such other body as has the closest affinity to the objective of the **SSEASR** (cf. Article 3).

**This constitution is the result of the corrections automatically made by January 1, 2006, in accordance with the enabling measure of archival article 10, now preserved archivally. The correction furthermore was confirmed and established by the *General Assembly* in New Delhi on May 24, 2006.**