**Minutes of the 2013 ASEC Business Meeting**,

held Friday 22 November at the 45th Annual Convention of the Association of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies in the Massachusetts Room of the Boston Marriott Copley Place Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts.

President Valeria Nollan opened the meeting at 3:09 PM.

**Introduction of New Officers**

Valeria introduced the new officers: Scott Kenworthy is the vice president and president elect. Eugene Clay serves as secretary and Roland Clark as treasurer. This group of officers is entirely new, and they have been undergoing a process of transition as they learn their jobs. Chuck Arndt has agreed to edit our newsletter, and has already sent out one issue. The newsletter will come out every six months. Please be sure to send news of your accomplishments to Chuck.

**Approval of the Minutes of 2012 Business Meeting**

The assembly unanimously voted to approve the minutes of our 2012 annual business meeting, with a proviso that the record could be corrected later, if necessary.

**Distinguished Scholar Prize**

As the chair of the Distinguished Scholar Prize Committee, Scott Kenworthy reported that 15 articles, exploring subjects ranging from early to contemporary Christianity, had been nominated. The committee, which also includes Chris Johnson and Theo Stavrou, will announce the prize on 15 December and will prepare a statement to be published in the NewsNet.

[UPDATE: [Nadieszda Kizenko](http://www.albany.edu/news/experts/8266.php) has been awarded the Association for the Study of Eastern Christian History and Culture‘s 2013 Distinguished Article Prize for her article “Feminized Patriarchy? Orthodoxy and Gender in Post-Soviet Russia,” *Signs* 38, No. 3 (Spring 2013): 595-621.

Abstract: Kizenko’s article investigates the tensions facing religious women in contemporary Russia. Kizenko argues that while individuals face fewer obstacles in practicing Orthodox Christianity, as compared to the communist period, leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church conflate Soviet-era rhetoric and Western liberalism, rejecting both as alien and hostile to Orthodox values; many instead seek to affirm traditional gender roles as a panacea to Russia’s troubles. Kizenko finds that Orthodox women in Russia are negotiating this terrain in new ways, whether as casual parishioners, as “virtuosi,” as priests’ daughters who become priests’ wives and church choirmasters, as church lawyers and heads of parishes, or in the new religious publications industry.

An Honorable Mention was awarded to Sir Fergus Millar for his article "The Evolution of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the Pre-Islamic Period: From Greek to Syriac?" which appeared in the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*.

Abstract: 'The Evolution of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the pre-Islamic Period: from Greek to Syriac?' is an attempt to examine how far the emerging monophysite Church of the later fifth and sixth centuries was marked by a distinctive level of writing in Syriac, and translation of Greek works into Syriac. It also emphasizes the extraordinary riches of contemporary texts in Syriac from this period. END OF UPDATE]

**ASEC Biennial Conference 2015**

Valeria reported that the executive committee had decided to hold the ASEC biennial conference at the Westin Hotel and Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee in 2015. Rhodes has pledged support for the conference. The conference will be held in late September on a weekend, Friday through Saturday. Within a few weeks, the exact date will be determined; it will be announced in a future newsletter. We still need to develop a timetable, find a theme and recruit a keynote speaker for the conference.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Roland Clark presented the treasurer’s report, which was approved unanimously.

**Resolution of Gratitude to Hilandar Research Library**

David Goldfrank made a motion, seconded by April French, to express thanks to the Hilandar Research Library at Ohio State University for their consistent and generous support of ASEC. Their support has enabled capable young graduate students to participate and present their research in our biennial conferences. The motion passed unanimously.

**Publications Report**

Jenn Spock delivered the publications report. ASEC is publishing its volumes in the Early Christian Studies (ECS), a subseries of Ohio Slavic Papers (OSP). The first volume is available through Slavica, which is the distributor. Our second volume, *The Tapestry of Russian Christianity: Studies in History and Culture*, is still underway, but getting closer to being finished. A third volume was published as two special issues in *Russian History* (2013). ASEC has resolved to publish a volume of selected papers from the March 2013 conference, to observe the 500th anniversary of the death of Iosif Volotsky. The working title is: *Antecedents and Subsequents of Iosif Volotsky: Issues in Eastern Christian Studies 500 Years Later.* ASEC needs to create a formal editorial board.

Following the report, there was general discussion about how to expedite our publications. The *Tapestry* volume has been under production for a long time; the papers were originally delivered at a conference in 2006. Valeria suggested that ASEC consider publishers other than OSP, such as Eerdmans. Scott Kenworthy agreed, noting that OSP does not market or distribute its books, so another publisher might prove a better option. Valeria noted that Jenn has had no assistants, who are especially needed for copy-editing manuscripts. Valeria also announced that the executive committee would create a publications committee. She encouraged the membership to e-mail their nominations for the committee and their suggestions to improve the process of publication.

**Possible Name Change**

Valeria continued a discussion, originally opened last year, to change the name of ASEC from the Association for the Study of Eastern Christian History and Culture to the Association for the Study of Eastern Christianity. The current name privileges one discipline. Our membership is more diverse, as a recent survey of our membership roll shows:

**Departmental Affiliation Percentage of Membership**

History— 54%

Slavic languages and literatures— 20%

Religious Studies— 11%

Theology— 4%

Arts and Music— 3%

Russian East European, and Eurasian Institutes— 3%

Other— 5%

David Goldfrank suggested that we conduct a discussion by e-mail about a possible name change. Eugene Clay and Roland Clark agreed to send out message inviting discussion of name change on ASEC list. [Update: This e-mail conversation took place in December 2013 and provided the executive with a helpful variety of views on this question.]

**Membership Roll and Call for Dues**

Valeria announced that our e-mail and membership list had recently been purged of all those who had not paid any dues for the last five years. We currently have about 80 members in good standing. An e-mail will go out to remind members to renew. We will continue to have a mailing list that is broader than the membership list, but we want to encourage people to join our association and benefit from their membership.

**Web Site**

Valeria announced that ASEC will soon have its own web site. We have been offered the services of Joshua Powell. The site will help us to achieve our mission to promote knowledge and education. We hope to include a database of syllabi that members can contribute to and draw from. The site will also include ASEC newsletters and a bulletin board.

**Exhortations to Review Manuscripts**

David Goldfrank reported that Peter Kracht of the University of Pittsburgh Press was having trouble finding readers to review manuscripts. If we do not read the manuscripts of younger scholars, we are wrecking our own profession. David encouraged everyone to be willing to review manuscripts. Eve Levin agreed and noted that she sometimes has difficulty finding reviewers for *Russian Review*. As busy as she is with editorial work, teaching, mentoring grad students, she always agrees to review prospective manuscripts. Valeria strongly concurred.

**Byzantine Connections**

Nick Chapman noted the importance of Byzantine Studies for understanding Eastern Christianity and suggested that ASEC build connections with groups such as the Byzantine Studies Association of North America. Valeria concurred and noted that Byzantine Studies are underrepresented in American academia.

**Announcements**

Scott Kenworthy will be a keynote speaker on Friday, December 6, 2013 at the Sixth Annual Sophia Institute Conference which will take place on the campus of Union Theological Seminary. The day-long gathering, titled “Monasticism, Asceticism and Holiness in the Eastern Orthodox World,” will focus on the serious ways the Eastern Orthodox Church, over past centuries, and in recent times, has understood the monastic life, ascetical praxis and spirituality.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 PM.