

The 8th Conference of the
European Association
for the Study of Religions



TIME OF DECLINE, TIME OF HOPE

SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT
OF THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

Programme and Abstracts 2008

7 – 11 September 2008

Brno • Czech Republic

Special Conference of the International
Association for the History of Religions



**The 8th Conference of the EASR
is organized by**

European Association for the Study of Religions

International Association for the History of Religions

Czech Society for the Study of Religions

Department for the Study of Religions

Faculty of Arts • Masaryk University • Brno

**The 8th Conference of the EASR
is held under the patronage of**

Ondřej Liška

Minister of Education of the Czech Republic

Petr Fiala

Rector of Masaryk University

Roman Onderka

Mayor of Brno

**TIME OF DECLINE, TIME OF HOPE :
SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT
OF THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS**

The 8th Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions
Special Conference of the International Association for the History of Religions

7–11 September 2008 • Brno • Czech Republic

PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS



<http://www.phil.muni.cz/relig/easr2008/>

The 8th Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions:

Programme and Abstracts

The titles and abstracts of the individual papers are printed as submitted by the authors in the registration application at <http://www.phil.muni.cz/relig/easr2008/>, possibly with minor, mostly typographical corrections.

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Brno 2008

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

General organisation, concept, academic programme

Břetislav Horyna, David Václavík

Coordinators

Luboš Bělka, Aleš Chalupa, Milan Fujda, Eleonóra Hamar, Lucie Hlavinková,
Dalibor Papoušek, Jana Rozehnalová, David Václavík, David Zbíral

Conference website, online registration, book of abstracts

David Zbíral

Payment, registration

Aleš Chalupa

Very special thanks to the panel convenors and to all our student assistants.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Conference Schedule	4
2	Programme	7
	Saturday	7
	Sunday	7
	Monday	8
	Tuesday	17
	Wednesday	24
	Thursday	29
3	Abstracts of Keynote Lectures	31
4	Abstracts of Panels	33
5	Abstracts of Papers	47

1 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

	Sept. 6 Saturday	Sept. 7 Sunday
9:00		
10:00		IAHR Executive Committee II
11:00		
12:00		<hr/> <i>Registration start</i>
13:00		
14:00		
15:00		
16:00	IAHR Executive Committee I	
17:00		<i>Registration end</i>
18:00		<hr/>
19:00		Opening lecture
20:00		
21:00		Welcome party
22:00		

Sept. 8 Monday	Sept. 9 Tuesday	Sept. 10 Wednesday
Plenary session	Panel sessions	Plenary session
Coffee break		Coffee break
Panel sessions	Coffee break	Panel sessions
Lunch break	Panel sessions	Lunch break
Panel sessions	Lunch break	Panel sessions
Coffee break	Announcements	Coffee break
Panel sessions	EASR General Assembly	IAHR International Committee
EASR Executive Committee	Public lecture	_____
Concert	Social evening	_____
	_____	_____

2 PROGRAMME

SAT

SATURDAY 6 SEPTEMBER

Saturday 14:00–19:00

④ FACULTY OF ARTS, MAIN BUILDING • DEAN'S CONFERENCE ROOM

IAHR Executive Committee I

SUN

SUNDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

Sunday 9:00–15:45

④ FACULTY OF ARTS, MAIN BUILDING • DEAN'S CONFERENCE ROOM

IAHR Executive Committee II

—

Sunday 12:00–18:00

④ FACULTY OF ARTS, MAIN BUILDING • ENTRANCE HALL

Registration

—

Sunday 19:00–22:00

SUN 19:00–20:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF LAW • AUDITORIUM MAXIMUM
OF MASARYK UNIVERSITY

Opening lecture

Peter Antes: The Study of Religions on Demand

—

SUN 20:00–22:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF LAW • ENTRANCE HALL

*Welcome party under the patronage of the rector
of Masaryk University, Petr Fiala*

MON

MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

Monday 9:00–10:00

② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

Plenary session

**Martin Baumann: Re-negotiating the Public Sphere:
Minority Religions, Conflict and Academic Modelling**

Monday 10:00–10:30

Coffee break

Monday 10:30–12:00

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

**Is Theory and Methodology of the Academic Study
of Religions in Crisis? I**

Chair: Gustavo Benavides (Villanova University, USA)

- *David Vaněk*
Reflexivity and the Study of Religion
 - *Radek Chlup*
On Non-Reductive Explanations of Religion
 - *Willem Hofstee*
No Crisis: In Praise of Theoretical and Methodological Pluralism
-

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

**Crossroads in the History of Academic Study of Religions
(Events, Turning Points, Persons) I**

Chair: Thomas Hase (Universität Leipzig, Germany)

- *Giorgio Ferri*
Religion as Culture: The Lesson of Angelo Brelich
- *Ondřej Sládek*
From Prague to Paris and Back: Structuralism Revisited
- *Jesper Sørensen*
The Construction of Ritual Efficacy: Why Magic Won't Go Away

—

MON 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

Academic Study of Religions in Central and Eastern European Countries and Its Place in European Research I

Chair: Eugen Ciurtin (Romanian Academy, Romania)

- *Luboš Bělka*
Creation versus Evolution: The Role of the Academic Study of Religions in the Controversy
- *Zhargalma Dandarova*
Cultural-historical Perspective in Psychology of Religion

—

MON 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

Contemporary Religious Situation in Europe and Its Reflection from the Point of View of the Academic Study of Religions I

Chair: Milan Fajda (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Martin Klapetek*
Religious Organisation as an Equivalent of Social Structure of Family: The Example of Turkish Muslims in Germany
- *Rasa Pranskevičiūtė*
Utopian Communities—Ideality and Transformations: The Case of Vissarion and Anastasia Movements

MON

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Experience and Reflection: Religious Experience and Experience in the Academic Study of Religions I

Chair: Hrvoje Čargonja (Institute for Anthropological Research, Croatia)

- *Vladimír Smékal, Irena Ocetková, Ladislav Koubek, Josef Stuchlý, Jiří Vander*

Spirituality and the Quality of Life

- *Helmut Maassen*

Religious Experience in William James and Whitehead and the Question of Truth

—

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

Religion in the Public Sphere I

Chair: Franz Winter (University of Vienna, Austria)

- *Isabelle Rieben*

Spiritual Coping and Attachment in Schizophrenia

- *Pierre-Yves Brandt*

Religion, Spirituality and Schizophrenia

- *Attila Molnar*

Peace and/or Truth Claim of Religion

Monday 12:00–14:00

Lunch break

Monday 14:00–15:30

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

Religions in Contact: Encounter, Communication and Mission I

Chair: Attila Kovács (Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia)

- *Jana Rozehnalová*
Exploring the Theories of “the Other” in the Context of European Medieval Travel Accounts
- *Jenny Berglund*
Translating Islam: Admitting the Power of Educational Choices
- *Csongor Sarkozy*
Sunny Life: A Case Study of a Bricolage Religious Group

—

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

Reading between the Lines: Textual Sources and the Study of Religions I

Chair: Graham Harvey (The Open University, United Kingdom)

- *Maya Babkova*
Some Methodological Reflections on Translating of the Sacred Texts
- *Chelsey Vargo*
The Disservice of Favouring Canon
- *Britta Rensing*
Individual Expression in Practitioners’ Poetry

—

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

Approaches of the Academic Study of Religions in the Study of Archaic Religions I

Chair: Luther H. Martin (University of Vermont, USA)

- *Ina Wunn*
Methods of Natural Sciences in the Humanities: A Way to Reconstruct the Religion of Non-literate Societies of the Past
- *Panayotis Pachis*
Redescribing the Oriental Cults of Graeco-Roman Age according to the “Modes of Religiosity”
- *Aleš Chalupa*
Why Did Greeks and Romans Pray Aloud? A Cognitive Perspective

Reconsidering Identities: Religion, Nation and Politics I

Chair: *Francisco Díez de Velasco (University of La Laguna, Spain)*

- *Stephanie Frank*
Mauss, from Sacrifice to Gift: A French Post-Theology for the Third Republic
- *Eleonóra Hamar*
Memory and Post-Memory in 2nd Generational Jewish Identity Narratives: Secular and Religious Self-Understandings
- *Theodore Kneupper*
J. Krishnamurti's Critique of Religion

—

Is Theory and Methodology of the Academic Study of Religions in Crisis? II

Chair: *David Vaněk (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)*

- *Bulcsu K. Hoppal*
From the Phenomenology of Religion to the History of Religions: The Pathway of Religious Studies
- *William Lee McCorkle Jr.*
The Fate of Religious Studies: The Future of an Illusion
- *Monika Recinová*
Study of Religions as a Philosophical Discipline

—

Rethinking Religion in India: Socio-Political Predicaments

Chair: *Jakob De Roover (Ghent University, Belgium)*

- *Marianne Keppens*
The Case of the Aryans
- *Iris Vandeveldde*
Hindutva's Discourse on Hinduism: A Western-Indian Blend

- *Sarah Claerhout*
A Doubtful Match: Freedom of Religion and Anti-Conversion
Legislation in India

—

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

The Political Temptations of Western Esotericism I

Chair: Marco Pasi (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

- *Gian Mario Cazzaniga*
From Lodges to Political Secret Societies: The “Vendite” of Italian Carbonari
- *Anna Corrias*
The Enochian: A Language for Heavenly and Earthly Paradises
- *George Sieg*
Illumination and Enlightenment

Monday 15:30–16:00

Coffee break

Monday 16:00–17:30

MON 16:00–17:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

Crossroads in the History of Academic Study of Religions (Events, Turning Points, Persons) II

Chair: Jesper Sørensen (University of Southern Denmark, Denmark)

- *Muhammad Akram*
The Legacy of Marburg and the Disciplinary Identity of
Religious Studies
- *Thomas Hase*
The Legacy of Joachim Wach
- *Roman Kečka*
Can the 21th Century Study of Religions Be Inspired by the 20th Century
Crisis of Theology?

Academic Study of Religions in Central and Eastern European Countries and Its Place in European Research II

Chair: Luboš Bělka (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Eugen Ciuartin*
Professional Desiderata and Institutional Dynamics in the Academic Study of Religions in post-1989 Eastern Europe
- *Gabriel Pirický*
Academic Interpretations of Islam in Communist Czechoslovakia: Rudolf Macůch, Karel Petráček and Ivan Hrbek

—

Contemporary Religious Situation in Europe and Its Reflection from the Point of View of the Academic Study of Religions II

Chair: Roman Vido (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Christian Euvrard*
New Religious Movements and State Relations in France: The Case of Mormonism, 1850–2000
- *Milan Fajda*
Secularization and New Religiosity: Media as an Agent of Transformations of Religions in Modern Societies
- *David Václavík*
Religious Pluralism in “Atheistic” Society after 1989: Social and Religious Process, Trends and Legislation

—

Experience and Reflection: Religious Experience and Experience in the Academic Study of Religions II

Chair: Vladimír Smékal (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Hrvoje Čargonja*
From “Krishna’s Arrangements” to “Cultivated Consciousness”:
Religious Experience in Vaishnava Community in Zagreb, Croatia
- *Barbora Spalová*
Reflexive Steps During an Anthropological Research in the Christian
Communities

—

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

Religion in the Public Sphere II

Chair: Steffen Dix (University of Lisbon, Portugal)

- *Zrinka Stimac*
Religious Plurality in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Issue of
Religious Education
- *Susanne Olsson*
Egypt Between Privatisation and Islamisation
- *Mohammad Hassan Khani*
Bringing Study of Religions from Margin to Mainstream in Academic
Sphere: A Case-Study of Interdisciplinary Studies at Imam Sadiq University
(ISU) in Iran

—

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Reading between the Lines: Textual Sources and the Study of Religions II

Chair: Annika Hvithamar (University of Southern Denmark, Denmark)

- *Ionut Daniel Bancila*
Iranian Dualism, “Spontaneous Generation” and Theodicy in the
Manichaeen Attitude towards the Insects
- *Michael Aeschbach*
Narrative and Vision: The Pilgrim Vision of Nicholas of Flüe (1417–1487)
- *David Zbiral*
The Inquisitorial Concept of Religious Group and Its Resonance in
European Historiography

MON

MON 16:00–18:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

**Review Panel: Gregory D. Alles (editor, 2008),
Religious Studies: A Global View**

Chair: Steven Sutcliffe (University of Edinburgh, Scotland)

Respondent: Gregory D. Alles (McDaniel College, USA)

- Tim Jensen
- Morny Joy
- Donald Wiebe
- Gerard Wiegers

Monday 18:00–19:30

MON 18:00–19:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

General Assembly of the Czech Society for the Study of Religions

The assembly will be held in Czech.

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MON 18:00–19:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

EASR Executive Committee

Monday 20:00–22:00

RED CHURCH, NEXT TO ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES

Concert

Le Duo Krist Nouveau (Stefan Krist & Josef Novotny)

TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 9:00–10:30

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

Approaches of the Academic Study of Religions in the Study of Archaic Religions II

Chair: Jörg Rüpke (University of Erfurt, Germany)

- *Charles Guittard*
From Mythology to History: New Prospects in Roman Religion
- *Pavel Titz*
Pompeian Archaeology and Pompeian Religion
- *Dalibor Papoušek*
Christian Origins in Perspective of Academic Study of Religions:
The Concepts of Heikki Räisänen and Burton L. Mack

—

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

Reconsidering Identities: Religion, Nation and Politics II

Chair: Rosalind Hackett (University of Tennessee, USA)

- *Alex Ntung*
The Influence of Beliefs in Witchcraft and Prophecy on Modern Political Processes in the Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): Case Studies from South Kivu
- *Jan Záhořík*
Ethiopia: Christian or Muslim Identity? Some Historical Views on Religion and Ethnicity in the Horn of Africa
- *Gatis Ozoliņš*
The Set of Values in the Contemporary Latvian “Dievturi” Movement

TUE

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

The Study of Religions and Syllabuses for School Education about Religion I

Chair: Tim Jensen (University of Southern Denmark, Denmark)

- *Wanda Alberts, Tim Jensen*
Introduction to the Panel
- *Andrea Rota*
Religious Education in the French-Speaking Switzerland
- *Francisco Díez de Velasco*
Teaching Religious Education in the Spanish Schools: Some Non Religio-Centric Proposals
- *Wanda Alberts*
The Syllabus for Compulsory Education about Religion in Norway

—

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

The Problem of Second Order Tradition in Religious Studies

Chair: Kim Knott (University of Leeds, United Kingdom)

- *Veikko Anttonen*
Disciplinary Matrix in the Study of Religion: Rethinking Ideology, Theory and Practice
- *Steven Sutcliffe*
Second Order Tradition as an Epistemological Problem: “Culturalists” Versus “Naturalists”
- *Gwilym Beckerlegge*
The Study of Religions – A Vehicle for Promoting “Cultural Competence”?

—

TUE 9:00–10:30 ④ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

The Political Temptations of Western Esotericism II

Chair: Gordan Djurdjevic (University of British Columbia, Canada)

- *Jacob Senholt*
Sinister Strategies: Political Insight Roles in the Order of the Nine Angles

- *Jean-Pierre Laurant*
Politica Hermetica: A Laboratory for the Study of Esotericism and Politics
- *Egil Asprem*
“Neutrality” vs. Critical Approaches in the Study of Western Esotericism?

—

TUE 9:00–10:30 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Discussion Panel: Genetics and the Study of Religions

Chair: Aleš Chalupa (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Ugo Perego*
Introduction to the Panel
- *Ugo Perego*
Using Genetic Testing Techniques in Religious Studies:
Examples from Mormon History
- *Ugo Perego*
DNA, Genealogy, and Religious Identity: Overcoming the Concept
of Race while Exploring Our Unique Heritage

Tuesday 10:30–11:00

Coffee break

Tuesday 11:00–13:00

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

Contemporary Religious Situation in Europe and Its Reflection from the Point of View of the Academic Study of Religions III

Chair: David Václavík (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Ingvild Sælid Gilhus*
The Return of Angels: Contemporary Religious Processes in Norway
- *Frans Jaspers*
A Paranormal Offensive?

TUE

- *Christopher Alan Lewis*
Religion and Life Perspectives among Young People in the Republic of Ireland

—

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

Rethinking Religion in India: Historical and Methodological Issues

Chair: Sarah Claerhout (Ghent University, Belgium)

- *Raf Gelders*
Indian Traditions and the Lexicographic Project
- *Esther Bloch*
The Caste System: The Results of the European Search for Religion in India?
- *Martin Fárek*
“The Right Thing To Do”? On Restructuring the “Hindu Law” in India under the British Rule
- *Jakob De Roover*
Desperately Seeking Manu: Protestant Christianity and the Creation of Hindu Law

—

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

Is Theory and Methodology of the Academic Study of Religions in Crisis? III

Chair: Eleonóra Hamar (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Gustavo Benavides*
The Invention of the Invention of Religion
- *Lieve Orye*
In Search of Metatheoretical Reflexivity Type Theories of Religion: The Parochialism of Religious Studies Lies in Its Global Outlook
- *Baira Dyakieva*
New Media as the Tool of Political and Religious Participation
- *George Jarvis*
Hope for Religious Freedom

The Study of Religions and Syllabuses for School Education about Religion II

Chair: Wanda Alberts (University of Bergen, Norway)

- *Galina Rousseva-Sokolova*
Teaching Religion in Bulgarian Schools: A Psychodrama in Search of a Plausible Ending
- *Jenny Berglund*
Islamic Religious Education adapted to Swedish “fundamental values”?
- *Mariachiara Giorda*
Educating People to Be Citizen through the History of Religions
- Concluding discussion about the panel and about the EASR working group on religion in secular education

—

Religion in the Public Sphere III

Chair: Pierre-Yves Brandt (University of Lausanne, Switzerland)

- *Franz Winter*
Religion in Pictures: The Use of Manga and Anime in Japanese New Religious Movements
- *Maria John Bernardin*
Religion Comes to Public Sphere: The Experience of People in a South Tamil Nadu Village
- *Csilla D. Farkas, Gabriella Pusztai*
Anthropological Approach to the Church Maintained Higher Education Research in CEE
- *Olga Breskaya*
Social and Symbolic Boundaries in Religious Field: Transdisciplinary Inquiry

TUE

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

Religions in Contact: Encounter, Communication and Mission II

Chair: Jana Rozehnalová (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Kryštof Trávníček*

Cham: Are There Any Transformatory Processes of the Tibetan Religious Dances under the Influence of Western Contacts?

- *Milos Hubina*

Christians in Buddhist Land

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Reading between the Lines: Textual Sources and the Study of Religions III

Chair: Hubert Seiwert (Universität Leipzig, Germany)

- *Ivar Maksutov*

Reconstruction of Anthropological Lexicon as a Method for the History of Religions

- *Andrej Mentel*

Folk Model of the Mind in the Contemporary Christian Orthodox Hagiography

- *Annika Hvithamar*

Textual Pictures: Icons in the Orthodox Church

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • G31

Approaches of the Academic Study of Religions in the Study of Archaic Religions III

Chair: Ina Wunn (University of Bielefeld, Germany)

- *Lisbeth Bredholt Christensen*

Archaeology and Material Culture: The Indispensable Source to the Study of the Origins of Religion

- *Radek Kundt*
Can Cognitive Science of Religion Help Us to Better Understand the Reasons for Nestorius' Downfall?
- *Barbora Polířková*
Issue of Primogeniture in the Sagas of the Hebrew Patriarchs: Possibilities and Limits of Anthropological Approaches

—

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • G32

Ex Oriente Lux: The Presence of Western Esotericism in Eastern Europe I

Chair: Marco Pasi (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

- *Hermann E. Stockinger*
Esotericism in the Habsburg Empire under the Emperor Leopold I (1658–1705): A Survey
- *Jason Rose*
Astronomical Astrology: Calculation and Conjunction in the Work of Cyprian von Leowitz

Tuesday 13:00–14:30

Lunch break

Tuesday 14:30–18:30

TUE 14:30–15:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

Various announcements (upcoming conferences etc.)

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TUE 15:00–17:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

EASR General Assembly

TUE

TUE 17:30–18:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

Public lecture

Donald Wiebe: Beyond Apologetic Modes of Theorizing

Tuesday 19:00–21:00

② NEW TOWN HALL

*Social evening under the patronage of the mayor of Brno,
Roman Onderka*

WED

WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 9:00–10:00

② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

Plenary session

Harvey Whitehouse: Explaining Religion

Wednesday 10:00–10:30

Coffee break

Wednesday 10:30–12:00

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

**Is Theory and Methodology of the Academic Study
of Religions in Crisis? IV**

Chair: Peter Antes (University of Hannover, Germany)

- *Heiko Grünwedel*
Tracing Shamans in Two Worlds: Some Theoretical Conclusions for the Study of Religions Based on the Linking of Methodological Experiences from a Bicontextual Investigation
- *Mar Marcos*
The Debate over Religious Persuasion and Religious Coercion in Ancient Christianity
- *Anna Yudkina*
Shifting Boundaries of Sacred in “Folk Orthodoxy” in Post-Soviet Russia

—

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

Contemporary Religious Situation in Europe and Its Reflection from the Point of View of the Academic Study of Religions IV

Chair: Steven Sutcliffe (University of Edinburgh, Scotland)

- *Roman Vido*
The Concept of Secularization in the Academic Study of the Modern Religious Situation
- *Jan Váně*
Adaption and Implantation of Non-Institutionalized Religious Communities in Public Sector
- *Eva Szolar*
Church-Owned Higher Education and the Democratization of Romania

—

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

Religion in the Public Sphere IV

Chair: Attila Kovács (Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia)

- *Steffen Dix*
The Reaffirmation of Traditional Catholicism in a Secularized Society: A Case Study in Portugal
- *Lucie Hlavinková*
Social Work as a Churches' Strategy for Finding Its Own Place

WED

- *Kalle Toivo*
Desirable Rituals, Acceptable Rituals and Uninteresting Rituals –
Remoulding Public Religious Practices within Hegemonic Religious
Organization: The Case of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

Reading between the Lines: Textual Sources and the Study of Religions IV

Chair: Maya Burger (University of Lausanne, Switzerland)

- *Michael Berman*
The Shamanic Story: An Armenian Example
- *Xicotencatl Martinez Ruiz*
108 Verses (Ślokas) in Context: Mapping Methodological and
Theoretical Scenarios for a Tenth Century Sanskrit Text

—

WED 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

Approaches of the Academic Study of Religions in the Study of Archaic Religions IV

Chair: Mihaly Hoppal (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary)

- *Vladimír Bahna*
Disgust and Religious Beliefs
- *Ülo Valk*
Were-Tigers and Magic of Mayong: Contextualizing the Belief Legends
of Assam

—

WED 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Reconsidering Identities: Religion, Nation and Politics III

Chair: Stephanie Frank (University of Chicago, USA)

- *Teresa Gómez Cerdeño, Luisa Marco Sola*
“Caudillo by God’s Grace”: A Critical Linguistic Analysis of the Political
Use of Catholicism in Franquist Discourse during the Spanish Civil War
and Postwar (1936–1945)

- *Tiina Mahlamäki*

A Study of Swedenborgian Elements in the Spiritual Orientation of the Finnish National Poet J. L. Runeberg

Wednesday 12:00–14:00

Lunch break

Wednesday 14:00–15:30

WED 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

Religion in the Public Sphere V

Chair: Attila Molnar (Eötvös University, Hungary)

- *Boniface Omatta*
Constructing Yoruba Religion Through the Internet: Between Authenticity and Fakeness
- *Tatiana Folieva*
Social Doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church in Modern Politic Conditions in Russia
- *Janis Priede*
Educational, Cultural and Political Engagement of the Theosophical Groups in Latvia

—

WED 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

Reconsidering Identities: Religion, Nation and Politics IV

Chair: David Václavík (Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- *Attila Kovács*
Picturing Hamas: Palestinian Islamic Movement and Visual Representation
- *Tomas Gal*
Exploring Identity of Religious Group on the Internet
- *Kaarina Aitamurto*
Conservative Politics and Egalitarian Utopias

WED

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

Reconsidering Identities: Religion, Nation and Politics V

Chair: Teresa Gómez Cerdeño (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain) & Luisa Marco Sola (Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain)

- *Paul van der Velde*
White Elephants, Kings and “Buddhist Animism” in Myanmar
- *Zdeněk Trávníček*
The Role of the Buddhist Monk in Contemporary Sri Lanka
- *Jakub Havlíček*
Religion, Politics and Identity in Modern Japan: Examining the Case of Yasukuni Shrine

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WED 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Ex Oriente Lux: The Presence of Western Esotericism in Eastern Europe II

Chair: Egil Asprem (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

- *Anita Stasulane*
Yoga of the Roerichs in Practice
- *Gordan Djurdjevic*
Hidden Wisdom in the Ill-Ordered House: A Short Survey of Occultism in Former Yugoslavia
- *Sara Møldrup Thejls*
Esoteric Yoga: The Case of Gregorian Bivolaru and MISA

Wednesday 15:30–16:00

Coffee break

WED

Wednesday 16:00–18:00

② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

IAHR International Committee

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Wednesday 18:00

End of the academic programme

THU

THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

Departure

RELIGIO — REVUE PRO RELIGIONISTIKU

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Edited by Pavel Spunar

Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague

and Jana Rozehnalová

Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

Religio is a peer-reviewed journal published twice a year by the Czech Society for the Study of Religions in cooperation with the Department for the Study of Religions at Masaryk University. The journal was founded in 1993 as the first scholarly journal focused on the academic study of religions in the Czech Republic. *Religio* welcomes articles in Czech, Slovak, English, German and French. Contributions by authors from all over the world are welcomed.

The journal publishes articles, commentaries, discussions, documents, translations, reports and reviews related to a wide spectrum of topics connected to the academic study of religions. *Religio* is open to contributions concerning any religious tradition, contemporary or ancient, as well as contributions that discuss methods and approaches within the study of religions.

Tables of contents of back issues and guidelines
for the authors are available at:

<http://www.phil.muni.cz/relig/religio.php>

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3 ABSTRACTS OF KEYNOTE LECTURES

Peter Antes

The Study of Religions on Demand

SUN 19:00–20:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF LAW • AUDITORIUM MAXIMUM
OF MASARYK UNIVERSITY

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University of Hannover, Germany

The paper states that the Study of Religions is in a time of hope. Examples from the political scenario, from the field of historical research and from the theory field show what the Study of Religions has to offer to other disciplines in search for more comparative and global competence which is already realized in the Study of Religions and has led to a unique collection of material hold on stock for being used on demand.

—

Martin Baumann

Re-negotiating the Public Sphere: Minority Religions, Conflict and Academic Modelling

MON 9:00–10:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

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The increased public awareness of religion is not only due to an inflated attention in the media. Apart from news paid to main figures such as the Pope, the Dalai Lama and top Christian and Muslim political leaders, immigrant and minority religions have their share in the renewed interest of religion in the wider public (in Europe). The lecture focuses on the establishment and evolving public visibility of minority and immigrant religions in western European nation states, developments often accompanied by controversies and heightened public attention. The paper suggests delineating characteristic structures and phases of such processes, proposing a heuristic model of incorporation of minority religions – both in the public sphere and socio-political context.

Harvey Whitehouse

Explaining Religion

WED 9:00–10:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

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University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Much research in the cognitive science of religion emphasizes that some features of religious thinking and behaviour are universal, arising from our species' evolutionary history. Examples include certain qualities attributed to supernatural agents (e.g. gods and ghosts), which humans everywhere appear to recognize with minimal need for instruction. But there is also growing evidence that many religious concepts require considerable cognitive, social, and technological resources to create, remember, and pass on. Cross-culturally variable aspects of religion arise in part from the evolution of cognitive systems devoted to connecting concepts (e.g. through the formation of novel analogies) and storing them (e.g. in semantic memory) and in part from the historically changing sociopolitical conditions in which such systems can be exploited. Only a coordinated, interdisciplinary effort that takes into account the role of both evolved cognition and human ecology in religious innovation and transmission will be sufficient to provide the broad empirical and theoretical base necessary for explaining religion.

—

Donald Wiebe

Beyond Apologetic Modes of Theorizing

TUE 17:30–18:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P31

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Given that the founders of Religious Studies as a modern academic discipline committed the enterprise to seeking a detached and objective account of religion and religious phenomena, I find the theme set for the eighth conference of the European Association for the Study of Religion worrying in that it assumes – or so it appears – that the academic/scientific study of religions ought to move beyond a simple scientific objective of knowledge-for-the-sake-of-knowledge-alone and become engaged in cultural and political agendas. Pressures for it to do so are rampant under the current conditions in which we work. An analysis of selected examples from contemporary studies of religion will show that it is detrimental for the field to surrender to such pressures. I will argue therefore that Religious Studies in our time is, despite its robust appearance, in decline.

4 ABSTRACTS OF PANELS

Is Theory and Methodology of the Academic Study of Religions in Crisis?

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

Theory and methodology of the academic study of religions has long been in the centre of the discussions about the identity of this academic discipline, which for the purposes of its research of religion and religious facts has to use methods of other fields of science (sociology, history, psychology, cultural anthropology etc.) and it has not yet developed an autonomous theory of religious studies and a related set of methods. Rather than resulting in the development of interdisciplinarity in the study of religions, this fact challenges the status of the academic study of religions as an independent scientific discipline. Since it fails to formulate generally valid and verifiable rules for its research, define its subject on the provable theoretical basis, determine its own methods and verify their effectiveness on the subject of its study in the form of scientific results, it becomes a mere narration dependent on momentarily used methods.

The aim of the panel is to prompt an exchange of views concerning questions such as—what kind of science does the academic study of religions represent? Which kind of rationality can it legitimately refer to? What rules can apply as general, necessary and binding for the construction of its inner scientific structure, for its own forms of research and for the construction of its own language (i.e. for the scientific behaviour of the academic study of religions as a whole)? In such a way, the theory of the study of religions generates conceptual knowledge of the field of the “academic study of religions”, i.e. it becomes primarily a theory for the construction and use of its own terminology (concepts) which should show, what terms, such as explanation, comprehension, reasoning, evidence, statement, fact, observation, explication and conditions of adequation of knowledge, mean within the academic study of religions.

We invite contributions that deal, on a general level, with the issues of theoretical and methodological competencies of the academic study of religions and with questions concerning its cultural location, the external influences that may determine the development of the discipline, the risks of ideological biases of the academic study

of religions, the extent to which coincidence of its purposes and outer social, political and cultural determinants is possible, and the principles on which the study of religions can base its fundamental theory and methodology.

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Crossroads in the History of Academic Study of Religions (Events, Turning Points, Persons)

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

MON 16:00–17:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

The aim of this panel is to discuss the contribution and influence of various approaches, methods or works that were, or still are, applied to the scientific study of religions.

Panel proposals or individual papers can touch upon the following questions, methods or personalities (the list is not, however, meant to be exhaustive; your initiative is welcomed):

- What are the consequences of the past and present clash between culturalist and naturalist approaches in the study of religions? Is cognitive science of religion an important methodological advancement of the academic study of religions, or rather an inappropriate and misguided attempt, which will only lead to another impasse? Can the progress in neurosciences or evolutionary psychology contribute to a better understanding of human religiousness? Can these approaches help us to better understand the historical origin of religions and their transformations, caused by the changes in the social environment?
- What is the role of comparativism in the contemporary academic study of religions? Is a transition from “big theories” (e.g. Dumézil’s Indoeuropean comparative mythology or Eliade’s concept of hierophanies) to contextually embedded comparisons a substantial improvement? What is the role of the academic context which influences every comparison?
- What was the contribution of the approaches coming from cultural anthropology, especially symbolism of Clifford Geertz or structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss (whose centenary will be celebrated in 2008), to the methodology of the academic study of religion? Were possibilities they offer, or their criticism (in case of symbolism especially from Dan Sperber, Talal Asad or Russell McCutcheon) sufficiently discussed?

- What is the past, present and future of the hermeneutic approaches (Mircea Eliade, Jacques Waardenburg)? Can they be modified and re-applied to the academic study of religions? What challenge (or support for) to hermeneutic approaches can be provided by literary theory (semantic, grammarology, translation studies etc.)?
- Can some conferences (e.g. in Marburg, Mexico City etc.) be considered crossroads in the academic study of religion? What is the influence of these conferences? How long did it last and in which countries or scholarly traditions are they considered a real turning point? Can the foundation of new scientific journals (e.g. *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, *Culture and Religion* or *Journal of Cognition and Culture*) be also seen as important crossroads in the academic study of religions?

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Academic Study of Religions in Central and Eastern European Countries and Its Place in European Research

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

MON 16:00–17:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

The history of academic research and study of religions in Central and Eastern European countries differ in many aspects from the history of research in Western Europe. These countries underwent a complex historical and political development, which resulted in some specific features such as loss of contact with the western academic tradition and favouring ideologically focused research in the area of religions (scientific atheism). It was scientific atheism that represented one of the strategies of scientific, cultural and political engagement in whose services the study of religions was involved.

The period after World War II was the subject of a special IAHR conference held in Brno, *The Academic Study of Religions During the Cold War: Ideological and Theological Constraints, East and West*, 9–13 August 1999; the proceedings were published as *The Academic Study of Religion during the Cold War: East and West* (New York–Bern: Peter Lang, 2001, eds. Iva Doležalová, Luther H. Martin and Dalibor Papoušek). The current panel's focus is wider, both chronologically and thematically.

Although Central and Eastern European countries were part of one political area for a long time, the development of research was not homogenous in the individual countries. Defining the differences will be one of the fundamental aims of this panel. The panel will focus on describing, analysing and comparing of the academic study of religions in different Central and Eastern European countries. Special attention should be paid to the relationship between research in the above countries and in

Western Europe, particularly the issue of whether and how influential theories were discussed and what image of Central and Eastern European study of religions was and is created in other countries.

Contributions could refer to some of the following issues:

- Periodization of research on religion in Central and Eastern Europe.
- Comparison of development in respective countries.
- Specific features of development after World War II.
- “Scientific atheism”.

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Contemporary Religious Situation in Europe and Its Reflection from the Point of View of the Academic Study of Religions

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

MON 16:00–17:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

This panel shall attempt to summarize the theoretical and methodological concepts, with whose aid the present religious situation in Europe can be examined (secularization, desecularization, spiritualization, individualization, etc.), and to analyse the situation in particular European countries and regions. Contributions that bring new, not yet published knowledge, information and case studies, which either confirm or disprove the validity of theoretical and methodological concepts will be particularly welcomed. They can concern, for example, these key problems:

- Is desecularization of contemporary society a scientifically provable fact or one of the myths of postmodernism?
- Transformation of new religious movements.
- Religion and media.
- The conflict of traditional and new religious groups and its political, economic and social impact.
- Methods of research of contemporary religious life and their critical reflection.

Experience and Reflection: Religious Experience and Experience in the Academic Study of Religions

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

Religious experience is traditionally a highly problematic subject in the academic study of religions. The same is true for the issue of personal religious experience as a precondition for proper understanding of a particular religion or religion in general. Therefore, in this panel we invite participants to discuss two methodological issues:

1) How to approach and interpret a religious experience: How to define it in order to study it academically? How to operationalize it? Why (or why not) study it?

2) What role do personal religious experiences of researchers play in the academic study of religions? Can the position that personal religious experience is a precondition for understanding religions be held after a long discussion concerning ethnocentrism and other interpretation biases? Should not a different kind of experience, a personal experience of a different cultural environment and the ever-present readiness for misunderstanding it, be conceived as a more appropriate precondition for understanding religions and formulating theories concerning religious phenomena? Or to put it another way, can the contemporary study of religions still prefer “religious ideas” abstracted from particular texts and subjected to often loose interpretations to data about what people actually do?

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Religion in the Public Sphere

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

This panel is concerned with interactions of religions with their economic, political, legal, business and social contexts. “Religion in the public sphere” became a complex issue connected to discussions about the forms of contemporary western religiosity and processes of individualization and de-traditionalization on the one hand, and undisguised presentation of many non-traditional religions in modern Europe on the other.

The aim of this panel is to raise questions about theoretical as well as empirical research in this field. The panel could concentrate on some of the following issues:

- How can we define “public sphere” in the context of the study of religions?

- What are the places assigned to religion in the public sphere and what are the consequences of particular conceptualization of this issue?
- Reflection and analysis of existing theories about religion in the public sphere.
- Empirical analyses of the role of particular religion(s) in selected “public sphere”.
- Engagement and exclusion of religions in/from the public sphere.
- Public presence and significance of religion in the public sphere, the clarity of religion’s role in the public sphere, its influence over society.
- Religions and their own public spheres.

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Religions in Contact: Encounter, Communication and Mission

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

Religions in contact—a phrase which provokes various associations ranging from “inter-religious dialogue” to “bloody conflicts”. This range of issues often turns into a minefield of particularly sensitive problems bearing the biases of ethnocentrism, colonialism and orientalism, which should be quickly surpassed with no harm—especially to the scholar.

However, this field of issues spreads beyond our horizon and not only *ahead* of us but also *behind* us.

The aim of this panel is to define and discuss methods and approaches which might help to grasp various forms of encounters of religions and discuss their place within the academic study of religions. We would like to discuss topics directly connected with particular interreligious contacts, and the contexts in which these took place. We invite contributions on some of the following topics:

- Theory and methodology of the study of interreligious contacts.
- Coexistence and interaction of several religions within one culture.
- Encounters and changes of religions in the context of exploration of new territories and colonialism.
- Missionary enterprises and their consequences.
- Accommodation and acculturation of religions in new cultural environments.
- Religions from the perspective of “the Other”.

Reading between the Lines: Textual Sources and the Study of Religions

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

Much of the work of a student of religion could be described as reading between the lines. A substantial part of the history of particular religions is documented mainly in texts, and source criticism continues to play a fundamental role as one of the methods of the study of religions. A scholar must *understand* the text, which means to have in mind not only the content, but also the conditions of its production, its background and its context.

Yet, the claim of understanding a text is always a claim of interpretative authority. Scholarly understanding of texts is thus inseparable from scientific, political, economic and cultural engagement of the discipline. Scholarly writing has rhetoric and contexts of its own. It follows particular scientific strategies, like handling differences in sources or discrepancies between sources and theories. It is also engaged in political, economic and cultural strategies, like handling cultural differences and conflicts (colonial ethnography being the most obvious example).

Texts have the power to control reality. They are the main sources for most topics of the discipline and, at the same time, writing is an almost exclusive mode of creating the truth in the study of religions. Thus, texts are a theoretical issue where self-scrutiny is imperative. In this panel, we invite scholars to discuss particular theoretical and methodological problems with interpretation of primary textual sources, but to focus also on the scholarly writing itself and on scientific and ideological strategies beyond its rhetoric.

The individual papers could deal, for example, with one of the following questions:

- Does the bare fact of literacy really separate cultures into two levels? If yes, what differences are to be seen between literary and oral cultures? What is the role of texts in their interaction? Doesn't the concept of oral culture itself make sense only in contrast to literary culture, being thus a legacy of "textualism"?
- What is the nature and extent of changes that the textual codification or canonization of religious knowledge causes in a particular culture or tradition?
- How does one define more precisely the power of texts to promote new forms of communication and coercion?

- Is “textualism” just a misleading methodology, or is it a cultural strategy with particular engagements?

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Approaches of the Academic Study of Religions in the Study of Archaic Religions

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • G31

WED 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

The aim of this panel is to present and discuss methods applied to the study of archaic religions that would place information coming from various sources into new perspectives and sound scientific framework.

In order to overstep the limits of traditional philological and historical scholarship, two main complementary approaches, social-scientific and cognitive, have been developed. This development might be considered in the following frames:

- How to compensate methodologically for the lack of textual sources?
- How to see through “official” levels of ancient religions (domestic religious life, private religious activities etc.)?
- To what degree can cognitive approaches provide a theoretical basis for the study of archaic religions in their complexity?
- How can methods used in the study of archaic religions be influenced by recent engagements of scholarship?

No periods or regions are favoured. Above all, papers considering theoretical aspects of the study of archaic religions or case studies with methodological implications are invited.



Reconsidering Identities: Religion, Nation and Politics

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

WED 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

“I don’t understand you at all. You have said before, you are not religious. But now you are recounting a story about how you as a Jew wanted to confess in a Catholic church on Good Friday.” This snippet from a chat conversation at a Transylvanian internet forum points to some crucial aspects of identity constructions at the everyday intersection of the personal and the public and opens up many relevant questions about scholarly understanding of these processes. On the one hand, the quoted example seems to support the idea of the incoherent and fluid character of “post-modern” identities as a consequence of the fragmentation of everyday life; on the other hand, it also questions the familiarity with such a hybrid identity formation and thus represents, if not evidence, than, at least, a normative expectation of coherent “core” identities.

At the panel, we will focus on similar methodological and theoretical dilemmas related to processes of religious, national and political identity formation. Questions can be posed about the relationship of religious, national and political identities, i.e. about their alleged overlapping, mutual exclusion or reinforcement in conditions of daily experiences. Nevertheless, these dilemmas are also relevant for the critical reflection on the ways the relationship between religious, national and political identities is articulated in the field of academic knowledge. Both the scholarly affirmation of coherent “core” identities and the scholarly celebration of fluid and hybrid identities can be questioned as ideological representations whose conceptual presuppositions prevent the recognition of contemporary complexity of identity formation processes.

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The Problem of Second Order Tradition in Religious Studies

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

Convenor:

Steven Sutcliffe (University of Edinburgh, Scotland)

At the IAHR special conference on methodology in Turku, 1973, Walter Capps drew attention to the lack of a clear “second order tradition” in religious studies. Capps argued that the field had difficulty “relating to its past in narrative form”. He was

concerned that lack of agreement on the field's theoretical and methodological "corporate intelligence" would sooner or later hamper its intellectual and institutional development.

The problem has arguably intensified in the light of postmodernist critiques of metanarrative and disciplinarity. Focusing on the recent and contemporary period (post-1960s), this panel addresses the following questions: Is RS a "field" or a "discipline"? How does RS relate to models of disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity? Does it have (or should it aspire to) metatheoretical coherence, and if so, where does this lie? How do wider social and cultural factors constrain the aims of the study of religion as an academic enterprise?

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The Study of Religions and Syllabuses for School Education about Religion

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

Convenors:

Tim Jensen (University of Southern Denmark, Denmark),

Wanda Alberts (University of Bergen, Norway)

In most countries, there is one or another kind of education about religions in public schools. In some of these, but far from most of them, the study of religions is regarded as the academic partner for school RE. In both cases, the study of religions, in the shape of its academic institutions as well as its scholars, is not or only rarely involved in the creation of syllabuses for school education about religions.

In this panel, we intend to invite scholars of religion to take a look at the representation of religions in syllabuses for school RE. We encourage analyses of syllabuses of any school subject in which different religions are studied. The panel intends to raise the question in how far these syllabuses correspond to a study-of-religions view of religion and religions. Furthermore, we would like to discuss the lack of or various kinds of involvement of departments and scholars of the study of religions in the creation of syllabuses and other practical issues concerning religious education. This entails reflection about compromises that may be made due to external factors providing the framework for this involvement.

As a further step, we would like to gather ideas and initiate a discussion about criteria for a study-of-religions approach to the representation of religion and religions in syllabuses for school RE. We invite papers from different countries and hope to contribute to establishing the involvement of the academic study of religions in school-related issues on a European level.

Rethinking Religion in India: Socio-Political Predicaments

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Convenor:

Sarah Claerhout (Ghent University, Belgium)

The major challenge to the study of Indian religions and traditions is its growing politicization. Scholars doing research on India are almost compelled to choose sides in the secularism–fundamentalism divide. Either one is a secularist and studies the Indian culture from this perspective, it seems, or one has to tend towards the *Hindutva* movement. These two positions and perspectives, we suggest, are faces of the same coin, which operate within one conceptual framework: secularism depends on western-Christian presuppositions about what religion is, how religion should be related to the state and how it should be studied; the *Hindutva* perspective reinforces this same framework by presenting Hinduism as the core religion of India. Both tendencies are the results of a western colonial legacy, which dictates not only the current academic study of India, but also India's self-understanding. Is a truly intellectual debate on the nature of the Indian traditions—which shuns such facile politicized positions—still possible? The panel will explore this problem through the analysis of some contemporary cases: the debate on religious conversion and the freedom of religion, the debate on Arian invasion theory, and the debates on colonialism, secularism and fundamentalism.

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Rethinking Religion in India: Historical and Methodological Issues

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

Convenor:

Jakob De Roover (Ghent University, Belgium)

To equate our conception of the Indian religions with British colonial discourse is commonplace today. Current scholarship on this issue focuses on nineteenth-century descriptions and major Orientalists (e.g. Halhed and Jones), missionaries (e.g. Ward and Carey) and administrators (e.g. Wilson and Elphinstone).

To what extent were British attitudes towards India developed in continental Europe? Does the rest of Europe play a role in the contemporary analysis? What about the chronology of the descriptions of South Asian religions and traditions? Did they predate the colonial enterprise? If yes, any study of the link between colonial discourse and the South Asian religions involves more than understanding the relationship between power and knowledge: it entails an examination of the historical and socio-cultural processes that shaped this discourse.

This panel invites papers that address these issues across the disciplines. Some of the questions we would like to see taken up are the following: what were the intellectual and cognitive problems faced by the different disciplines in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century humanities? How did these inform the nineteenth-century scholarship on the Indian religions? What is “colonial” about our contemporary understanding of India?

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The Political Temptations of Western Esotericism

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

Convenors:

*Marco Pasi (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands),
Osvald Vašíček (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands),
on behalf of the European Society for the Study of
Western Esotericism (ESSWE)*

The relationship between Western esotericism and politics is certainly not virgin territory. Just to mention two examples, Auguste Viatte in his classic work on illuminism (*Les sources occultes du romantisme*, 1928) discussed the political significance of esoteric ideas in the period preceding the French revolution, and James Webb explored the interplay of esotericism and politics in the 19th and 20th centuries in two important books published in the 1970s (*The Occult Underground*, 1974; and *The Occult Establishment*, 1976). Furthermore, since the mid-1980's the French academic journal *Politica Hermetica* has devoted its annual issues to this complex relationship. However, there is still much that academic research can say on this topic. One of the avenues which still have to be explored is the relationship that the research field itself may have with politics in the formation and the discussion of its object. How political is the study of esotericism? Which political assumptions may lead scholars to define esotericism in a certain way instead of another? How political is the choice of defining esotericism as specifically “western”, as opposed to “non-western” in a cultural climate impregnated by discourses on the “clash of civilizations”? During the 20th century esotericism has been often associated to radical politics, both left- and right-wing, revolutionary and reactionary. If esotericism has been for a long time a suspect and sensitive field of research in the academia, its relationship with politics has often created an explosive mixture. Is it possible to study this relationship while avoiding the Scylla of apology and the Charibdis of sensationalist condemnation.

Ex Oriente Lux: The Presence of Western Esotericism in Eastern Europe

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • G32

WED 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Convenors:

Marco Pasi (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands),

Osvald Vašíček (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands),

on behalf of the European Society for the Study of

Western Esotericism (ESSWE)

In recent decades the academic study of esotericism in the west (particularly France, the Netherlands, Germany and the Anglo-American world) has experienced a rapid growth. In academic institutions in Paris, Amsterdam and Exeter, specific chairs have been created, while increasing attention is given to this area of research also from other fields of religious, cultural, historic, and sociological studies.

Due to several difficulties—mainly linguistic, but also political until 1989—the status of research of esotericism in Eastern Europe is for the greater part unknown. The purpose of this panel is to discuss the development of the study of western esotericism in Eastern Europe and/or single topics related to the presence of western esotericism in the same geographical area. For this reason we have particularly encouraged Eastern European students and academics to share their research, knowledge and insight for this panel.

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Review panel: Gregory D. Alles (editor, 2008), *Religious Studies: A Global View*

MON 16:00–18:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

Convenor:

Steven Sutcliffe (University of Edinburgh, Scotland)

Respondent:

Gregory D. Alles (McDaniel College, USA)

This panel will discuss the new international survey of the field edited by Gregory Alles, who previously edited the “Study of Religion” section in the second edition of the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (2005), and has published widely on methodological and disciplinary questions. It consists in ten chapters divided into geographical regions which aim to cover the world as a whole. The editor provides an introduction and afterword in which he discusses key epistemological and cultural questions

raised by the different chapters. The volume as a whole is an important contribution to the historiography of Religious Studies, raising urgent questions about the relationship between disciplinary formation and cultural and political context.

The panel will be introduced by the convenor. Four reviews will be given by scholars who have published extensively on disciplinary formation and disciplinary histories. These will be followed by a response from Gregory Alles, and a period of general discussion.

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Discussion Panel: Genetics and the Study of Religions

TUE 9:00–10:30 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

Convenor:

Ugo Perego (University of Pavia, Italy & Sorenson Molecular Genealogy Foundation, USA)

Since the discovery of the double-helix in 1953 and the publication of the complete human genome in 2002, nearly all academic fields have been impacted, at least to some degree, by studies on DNA. Together with applications in the medical and pharmaceutical arena, DNA is also contributing new knowledge to archeology, anthropology, history, and genealogy, just to mention a few. All these disciplines have strong ties to an individual religious identity, which is often characterized by our ancestry, culture, and past. Therefore, new information made available through DNA testing could indirectly offer a new perspective, even a new approach, to the classical study of religions.

The lectures offered in this panel on genetics and religious studies will introduce to basic genetic principles and their applications to historical and ancestral research, and provide examples from the published and unpublished literature bringing a new dimension to the study of religions.

5 ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

Michael Aeschbach

Narrative and Vision: The Pilgrim Vision of Nicholas of Flüe (1417–1487)

MON 16:00–17:30 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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Nicholas of Flüe (1417–1487) was canonized by the Roman Catholic Church in 1947 and is the patron saint of Switzerland. He left his family at the age of fifty to go abroad. On his way, he had an experience which forced him to return to a place not far from his former home, where he did not resume family life, but became a hermit. Nicholas of Flüe himself could neither read nor write, according to the statements of his contemporaries. But soon after his death, the first narratives of his visions were written down. Some of these visions were reported by men close to Nicholas of Flüe, while others entered from anonymous sources into the tradition of the stories of the “Life of Nicholas of Flüe”. In one narrative of a vision, he is reported to have met a pilgrim (the “Pilgrim Vision”) who told him, among other things, about the nature of triunity. There are different versions of this narrative from the stories of the 16th-century “Life of Nicholas of Flüe”. In the middle of the 20th century, a manuscript with a much longer version of this narrative was discovered. This paper will use these narratives to reconsider the relation between narrative and vision, and to show the vision as a complex of acts of consciousness.

—

Kaarina Aitamurto

Conservative Politics and Egalitarian Utopias

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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Rodnoverie is a religion that seeks to revive pre-Christian Slavic spirituality. As majority of contemporary Pagan religions, Rodnoverie is characterized by anti-authoritarian spirit and avoidance of dogmatism. The egalitarian ethos of the religion also manifests in the organizational structure of the movement. Some Russian and international Rodnoverie organization are called veche, and numerous Rodnoverie

communities claim to follow the order of medieval Slavic popular assembly. Furthermore, *veche* is often presented as an ideal, and namely Slavic, model of governance. The aim of this paper is to examine Rodnoverie representations of *veche* in Russian societal and political context. On the one hand, the egalitarian utopianism attached to the idea of *veche* represents rejection of hierarchical authority, and consequently, may be employed to promote grass-root democracy. On the other hand, the ideal of *veche* has also been used by Rodnovers who are reflecting democracy highly critically. This criticism may base on cynicism towards contemporary Russian political system, but it also reveals the conservative and nationalist posture of many Rodnoverie groups. *Veche* can be taken literally as an assembly of free, Slavic men, and thereby connected to patriarchal, nationalist and even elitist political ideology. As a case study, Rodnoverie discussions provide an interesting outlook on vernacular political visioning. Rodnoverie representations of *veche* also reflect both the recent resurrection of Slavophil political tradition in Russia, and attempts to establish native roots for democratic values.

—

Muhammad Akram

The Legacy of Marburg and the Disciplinary Identity of Religious Studies

MON 16:00–17:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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This paper reviews the strategies of disciplinary identity of religious studies with special reference to the developments associated with Marburg. It argues that from the endorsement of the “basic minimum requirements for the study of religion”, in 1960 to the special conference of the International Association for the History of Religions on the theme of institutional and organizational constraints in the study of religion held in 1988, and still from a particular focus of the Marburg Journal of Religion to the contributions of Michael Pye—who has been based at the University of Marburg—to the method and theory debate points to at least one important line of developments in the disciplinary history of religious studies.

The legacy of Marburg reveals how religious studies were dragged into internationalism around the midtwentieth century as a result of the then changing geopolitical scenario but the lack of a clear and elaborate model of participation and/or representation of different regional and local knowledge traditions posed new challenges to the self perception of the discipline. Formerly, the theoretical tensions had been emerging from within the discipline, for instance the debate of phenomenological and historical approaches. From then onwards the non-European contexts of the study of religion and a variety of alternative academic perspectives

made religious studies, in general, alert to its particular cultural and historical contingencies. However, the legacy of Marburg indicates the continental European inclination towards a universally applicable religionswissenschaftliche (religio-scientific) method in spite of the pressing “external” challenges to a homogeneous conception of the enterprise of study of religion.

—

Wanda Alberts

The Syllabus for Compulsory Education about Religion in Norway

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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In Norway, compulsory education about religion was introduced in 1997 with the new subject *Kristendom- religions- og livssynskunnskap* (KRL). Since then, the character of this subject has been subject to debate, particularly with respect to the representation of Christianity, which is given special emphasis in the syllabus. In 2007, the European Court of Human Rights decided that the obligatory status of KRL is in fact in conflict with the European Convention of Human Rights. Therefore, the Norwegian government has decided to change the subject so that it is in accordance with this convention and can still be obligatory for all children. In this paper, I will analyse recent developments concerning KRL (or: RLE, religion, livssyn og etikk, as the subject will be called soon) from a study-of-religions perspective. Above all, I intend to discuss the way the syllabus has been changed in the course of the reform of the subject and the role that the academic study of religions has played in this process. Finally, I would like to address the general question what the study of religions can contribute to syllabuses for school education about religions.

—

Veikko Anttonen

Disciplinary Matrix in the Study of Religion: Rethinking Ideology, Theory and Practice

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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I shall look at in my paper some of the fundamental issues that representatives of the study of religion have raised regarding the boundaries of the common conceptual territory. The main issue has been revolving around theoretical frameworks by the

help of which the underlying structures of knowledge that justify the cross-cultural use of the notion “religion” can be delineated. In order to theorize and analyze the variegated forms of religious representations and to identify the quality that makes them a member in the category “religion”, scholars need to entertain a shared understanding of the corporate intelligence on which their academic expertise is based upon. However, common understanding of the boundaries of religion as well as the boundaries of the discipline of religion has been a difficult task to achieve. Since the notion of religion does not comprise only the most prototypical members in the category such as the historical traditions of Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, but also its non-prototypical, often referred as “negative”, members, such as so-called folk religion, magic and cultic practices, the subject area of the study of religion is hard to set into bounds. The diversity of religious traditions and the diversity of religious experiences and expressions call forth the diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches by which to explore their differences as well as similarities.

—

Egil Asprem

“Neutrality” vs. Critical Approaches in the Study of Western Esotericism?

TUE 9:00–10:30 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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As part of liberating itself from the disciplinary heritage of sui generis discourses on religion Religious Studies has over the last few decades seen the emergence of critical theory as a viable approach to its subject matter. It has become more legitimate to ask questions previously construed as “rude”, “impertinent”, or for other reasons out of bounds; relations of power, violence, political and economical benefit and loss, in short, the *cui bono?* of religious discourses are being called to question. Meanwhile, the institutionalisation of the study of Western Esotericism, coinciding with this development, has been largely founded on premises appealing to “methodological agnosticism” involving a practice of *epoché*. In recent years it has even been suggested that the subject matter itself is the product of a “Grand Polemical Narrative”, i.e. a polemical critical discourse targeted at historical currents that are today perceived as Esotericism. An implication, it has been suggested, is that current research should aim not only at unravelling historical complexity, but be conducted on a basis of “neutrality” too. Is there a place for critical approaches in the study of Western Esotericism?

Maya Babkova

Some Methodological Reflections on Translating of the Sacred Texts

MON 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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The difference between sacred texts and texts of belles-lettres lies in their functions. We read and enjoy literature, but if we take any sacred text we use it practically first of all. Sacred texts are intended to produce some actions or maybe some states of consciousness. Thus, when we translate them from one language into other, we must grasp the meaning of every detail. In my paper I try to describe briefly some methodological points of scientific translations of the sacred texts if we take it as a particular case of academic translation.

—

Vladimír Bahna

Disgust and Religious Beliefs

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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This paper deals with the importance of emotions within the cognitive approach to the study of religions. Emotions aroused by religious beliefs and rituals play a relevant role in their spread and stability, especially in archaic religions without greater doctrinal and institutional support. Decision making and motivation as well as remembering are affected by the emotions. This paper is focused on disgust, one of the basic emotions, and on fear and anger related to disgust. The paper suggests that two particular disgust elicitors—(1) contact with the dead and corpses and (2) breaking the social norms involved in notions about (a) vampirism and (b) taboos— affect notions in two different ways.



Ionut Daniel Bancila

**Iranian Dualism, “Spontaneous Generation” and
Theodicy in the Manichaean Attitude towards the Insects**

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The paper traces the Manichaean attitude towards the “insects” (as classificatory ethnocategory, cf. Eraldo M. Costa-Neto) against the background of Iranian dualistic ideas and practices (the status of the “noxious creatures”—*xrafstra*) and antique (zoological) theories on the “spontaneous generation”. In connection with these traditions of thought, there was developed in Manichaeism a complex and intricate worldview, in whose center stood the issue of the impure. The particular question of whether the insects and other noxious creatures originate (thus a question pertaining to Theodicy), was transformed by Manichaeans into a missionary technique of argumentation for the existence of two opposing Principles. Texts adduced to support this reading are fragments in Old Turkic, Parthian and Coptic, along with secondary accounts.

—

Gwilym Beckerlegge

**The Study of Religions—A Vehicle for Promoting
“Cultural Competence”?**

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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In this paper, I return to a line of enquiry into the challenge of the politics of multiculturalism for the study of religions, which I developed in my paper at the 2007 EASR conference in Bremen. In that paper, I examined the evidence of the impact of debates around multiculturalism for the study of religions with reference to a number of national settings.

In this paper, I return to the issue of pragmatic justifications for maintaining the study of religions in publicly funded schools and universities. The paper will examine what is meant by “cultural competence” and arguments that the study of religions has a contribution to make to developing “cultural competence”. It will then assess possible implications, which might arise out of this linkage, for the methodology and future development of the study of religions.

Luboš Bělka

Creation versus Evolution: The Role of the Academic Study of Religions in the Controversy

MON 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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Biological evolution and its scientific understanding is not solely a matter of biologists and other scientists dealing with live nature. Scientific field called evolutionary biology is traditionally a subject of numerous discussions and attacks by media, motivated by religion or politics. This is happening mainly in the USA where the revived “scientific” creationism has retained its popularity; almost half of Americans profess so called biblical creationism, understood as the “scientific” alternative to the evolutionary and biological explanation of the creation of the world, nature and man. Hence the last example of criticism of evolutionary biology from the standpoint of the “intelligent design” (often called “neo-creationism”) as a concept claiming scientific attitude to the evolution theory. What was originally molecular biology idea has grown, due to massive media influence, to the form, which in many ways is similar to the situation at the end of the 20th century, when the USA had to deal with the “scientific“ creationism. The “creation versus evolution controversy” is not only limited to the USA but nowadays it reached some states in Europe as well as Russia. The role of the academic study of religions in the controversy will be discussed.

—

Gustavo Benavides

The Invention of the Invention of Religion

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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The study of religion presupposes a number of meta-theoretical positions. According to one, “religion” is a self-contained domain, constituted by beliefs, rituals, gods and other sacred realities. This position has two variants. According to one, the elements just mentioned are real, even though that reality is said to be of a special kind. The defenders of the other variant are not committed to the existence of undefinable realities; rather, they assume that human beings function as if the elements that fall under the name “religion” were real and that, therefore, insofar as “religion” encompasses those components, “religion” is a legitimate category. The other extreme is constituted by those who, aware not just of the multitude of practices and

beliefs generally classified as “religious,” but also of the radically different manner in which these beliefs and practices relate to other aspects of life, refuse to recognize “religion” as a valid category. Rejecting these positions, I will approach “religion” neither as a self-contained entity, nor as the mere product of modern—especially scholarly—discourses, nor as being coterminous with Christianity. Instead of being understood as invented, “religion” must be understood as emerging at the intersection of human predispositions and long-term social developments, both of which involve processes of defamiliarization, aestheticization and meta-representation. Academic reflexivity itself must be understood as the exacerbation of our capacity to engage in meta-representations. We see this at work not just in the questioning of categories such as “religion,” but also of “myth,” “ritual,” “sacrifice” and “shamanism,” among others.

—

Jenny Berglund

Islamic Religious Education adapted to Swedish “fundamental values”?

TUE 11:00–13:00 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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In Sweden, Muslim schools, as other independent schools, have the “task of imparting, instilling and forming in pupils those fundamental values on which our society is based” in order to get funding from the state. This does not only concern the subjects that are mentioned in the national syllabi, but also extra curricular subjects such as Islamic Religious Education (IRE). IRE is a confessional subject that distinguishes a Muslim school from other schools in Sweden. Since there is no national syllabus for this subject, each school has to formulate a local syllabus for IRE. In this paper, I analyse two different local syllabi of IRE. Although these syllabi concern the same subject (IRE) as well as the same age group (primary school) they differ extensively in terms of form, aim and content. The differences are discussed in relation to different interpretative traditions within Islam as well as different understandings of the fundamental values that are mentioned in the national curriculum.



Jenny Berglund

Translating Islam: Admitting the Power of Educational Choices

MON 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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In the literature about Islamic religious education (IRE), the process of teaching Islam to the younger generation is often referred to as “transmitting Islam”. Obviously, there are certain “facts” that often are transmitted from one generation to another, such as names of prophets, the five pillars of Islam and the words of the Quran. But, what significance and meaning these persons and concepts have, is not necessarily “transmitted”. In this paper I argue that using the concept “transmitting” brings about several problems; such as giving a static view of the process of Islamic education, thereby neglecting the contextualisation that is an important part of all teaching. Drawing on Homi Bhabha I instead suggest that the concept of translation is more accurate to what teachers of Islamic education do, since translation includes notions of interpretation and thereby shows the power teachers have when they make educational choices.

—

Michael Berman

The Shamanic Story: An Armenian Example

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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independent scholar, United Kingdom

In view of the way that the definitions of traditional story types tend to overlap—epics, myths, fables, folktales, fairy tales—a case is made in this paper for the introduction of a new genre of tale, the shamanic story, which is either based on or inspired by a shamanic journey (a numinous experience in non-ordinary reality) or contains a number of the elements typical of such a journey. Characteristics of the genre include the way in which the stories all tend to contain embedded texts (often the account of the shamanic journey itself), how the number of actors is clearly limited as one would expect in subjective accounts of what can be regarded as inner journeys, and how they have the potential to provide a medium through which psychic states that might otherwise be difficult to put into words can be expressed.

After considering the characteristics of the genre, it will then be then shown how the Armenian folktale “The Fair Maiden Sunbeam and the Serpent Prince”, which features shape-shifting, descent to the Lower World, a meeting with a spirit helper, and an ordeal by water representing a form of initiation, provides an example of just such a story.

—

Maria John Bernardin

Religion Comes to Public Sphere: The Experience of People in a South Tamil Nadu Village

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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The Hindus account for 49 percent of the population and Christians for around 45 percent in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu. Among the Christians, the Roman Catholic Church has about two lakhs. It is significant to note that in times of conflict, the primordial loyalty of caste prevails with the Nadars, who form a sizable chunk of population in the district, rather than their religious identity. Christian Nadars join Hindu Nadars or remain aloof in such conflicting situations.

Conversion to Christianity in Kanyakumari district has been taking place since the dawn of modern era and as a reaction to Christian expansion, the RSS has been active in the region. At present they have 110 branches, the highest for such a small area with a relatively small Hindu Parishad and the Hindu Front are in the forefront. The Mandaikadu Bhagawati Amman “Masi Kodai” festival, with a customary bath of devotees in the sea, is an important occasion in Kanyakumari . In 1982, a rumour spread on the first day of the festival that men who had assembled in the nearby Roman Catholic Church molested women returning after their bath. This triggered a violent clash on 1 March 1982. A crowd collected in front of the church had turned violent and the police had to fire 46 rounds killing six persons (unofficially 14). Widespread violence, looting and arson followed in the neighbouring coastal villages. After a fortnight of the first firing, three more persons lost their lives, two in police firing at Keela Manakudi and one in the communal clash in Kovalam village. Churches, temples, hospitals, balwadis and convents were destroyed. The worst affected were the fishermen whose huts were set on fire 680 of them in Pallam thurai. Many catamarans, fishing nets and other apparatus for fishing were reduced to ashes.

Etched in the popular memory as “Mandaikadu Riot” this event is remembered for the communal disharmony it caused between the two social groups and for the lesson it taught that is how religion when politicized could lead to disruption of the normal social life. It is proposed to deal with this conflict in all its ramifications in the paper to be presented.

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Esther Bloch

The Caste System: The Results of the European Search for Religion in India?

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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Our understanding of India developed in answer to certain problems that arose within a European framework, rather than from Indian reality or from British colonial motives. One such problem is whether an intrinsic link exists between Hinduism and the caste system. Many suggest that Hinduism sanctions the caste system. Yet, a range of problems arise here: the content of texts, supposed to sanction the caste system, are unknown to most Indians; the Brahmin priests who are supposed to be at the top of the caste hierarchy do not form a uniform caste at the top of the social hierarchy, nor are they all priests; Muslims and Christians in India are divided into “caste groups”; etc. The question that arises from this is the following: given such difficulties, how did the idea about the relation between Hinduism and the caste system appear sensible at all?

I will argue that the fixed relation between Hinduism and the caste system crystallised in the late 19th century as an answer to the problem of identifying the Indian religion. This posed a problem to the European minds, expecting to find a native Indian religion, ever since their first encounters with India. At the same time it was not surprising either: the problem of identifying Hinduism was attributed to the degeneration of religion. Here, a new problem arose: how could such a degenerate religion have survived for centuries? We can see a search for a force that could have unified the corrupted religion. In the 19th century, the caste system was attributed such a role. By taking the problem of the relation between caste and Hinduism, we can show that our understanding of India developed against the background of cognitive problems that arose when the European Christian intellectual framework confronted the Indian reality.

Pierre-Yves Brandt

Religion, Spirituality and Schizophrenia

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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In the context of a pluridisciplinary research group, we have recently studied 115 schizophrenic outpatients at the University Hospital of Geneva and assessed whether and how religious commitment helps them to cope with their illness. We found a high prevalence of religious coping among these patients. Positive religious coping reduced the severity of symptoms by decreasing distress, anxiety and maladjusted behaviours. It has also been found that positive religious coping may affect social adaptation, act upon the use of toxic substances and enhance adherence to treatment. In spite of the strong involvement of patients into spirituality, clinicians often neglect this topic. Actually we are conducting a follow-up study to evaluate illness outcome. Therefore a new sample of 80 psychotic patients have been recruited, and half of them undergo a spiritual assessment with their clinicians. These 40 subjects are examined with respect to 1) acceptance of the spiritual assessment, 2) spiritual experiences, attitudes, practices, beliefs, 3) the impact of positive and negative religious factors on their physical and psychological development, illness and treatment, and 4) what arises in terms of a) potential problems and b) specific interventions. This group will be compared to the control group with regard to patients' compliance and satisfaction with care. The clinicians have been asked about their willingness to conduct the spiritual assessment, and their perception of their patients' acceptance of it. Since religion is embedded in culture, a replication has been conducted in an other cultural background (120 patients and their clinicians, Québec, Trois-Rivières).

—

Lisbeth Bredholt Christensen

Archaeology and Material Culture: The Indispensable Source to the Study of the Origins of Religion

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • G31

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Approaching archaic religions means approaching the origins of religion. Methodologically, analogy does not suffice, because it reproduces models made on the basis of the study of historical religions and thus misses exactly what incipient beginnings and origins look like. The present paper argues that the archaeological material is our

only access when working with prehistoric religion. Yet, the archaeological material poses problems for the study of religion, which is a textual science with no tools for working with material culture. Therefore, joint cooperation between scholars of religion and archaeologists is crucial.

Looking at the archaeological material, this first of all shows Change, due to the developments in material culture, particularly since the Neolithic. Houses, jewellery, weapons, statuettes, clothing only gradually became part of human life and identity, most significantly during the past 10,000 years after the beginnings of settled life. Realizing the great impact that material culture has on human perception and cognition, this means that the origins of religion as we define it today—consisting of myth, ritual, morals, symbolic and abstract thought, architecture—is closely linked to the development of material culture.

—

Olga Breskaya

Social and Symbolic Boundaries in Religious Field: Transdisciplinary Inquiry

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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Trying to discover new scientific concepts, which can help to grasp the dynamics of religious life in modern world anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists persistently apply today to the “boundary” thematic in religious sphere. “Boundary topic” existed permanently as some kind of imaginary opposition between the sacred and the profane (Durkheim), religious ethos and economical structures (Weber), social and symbolic religious capital (Bourdieu) in sociological analysis of religion.

But as a special subject of research “boundaries of religious communities and actors” appeared in the last decade in the shaping frame of transdisciplinary studies as the processes of shifting and crossing of religious boundaries actualized with the delocalization of religion, decrease of traditional institutions, globalization practices. The birth of “Boundary studies” as transdisciplinary field of study of religion in the last years was also connected with methodological shift from irrelevant to the religious subject description to the analysis of symbolic and social representations of religious subjects in public space.

In this report I would like to present theoretical positions of “2-B Theory” (Border-Boundary) and its application in the sociology of religion and also the results of case-study conducted by group of scientists in Belarus and Moldova in 2007 about social and symbolic boundaries of Orthodox communities in comparison with University and economical structures. We analyzed how the representatives of

religious community with comparison to different social institutions identify themselves with their groups and social environment; and how corporative value-systems and collective identities as symbolic boundaries in religious communities correlate with solidarity practices.

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Hrvoje Čargonja

From “Krishna’s Arrangements” to “Cultivated Consciousness”: Religious Experience in Vaishnava Community in Zagreb, Croatia

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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Institute for Anthropological Research, Croatia

The contents of my presentation is an overview of my PhD research on the religious experience among the members of Hare Krishna community active in Zagreb, Croatia since late seventies. Informants revealed a continuum of religious sensations with a variety of sensorial, cognitive and affective elements. The reports mainly conform to the injunctions from the vast scriptural background of this theistic Vaishnava tradition, especially abundant on the subject of cultivation of devotional and mystical consciousness. On the examples of several case studies I would like to show how intimate and subjective reality of the supernatural is shaped by social environment imbued with complex theological beliefs and practices systematically applied in the pursuit of the ultimate aim in Vaishnava theology—creating an experience of love of Krishna. To propose some interpretational models of these integrative experiences I would like to discuss several theoretical notions adopted in the line of phenomenological framework of my research. Concepts of “captivated consciousness”, and “cultivated imagination” as well as the Indian view of emotion in *rasa* theory will be discussed to show how the practice of inspiring ritual acts with devotional passion allows for experience conceptualization with direct impact on subjective and social aspects of an individual.



Gian Mario Cazzaniga

From Lodges to Political Secret Societies: The “Vendite” of Italian Carbonari

MON 14:00–15:30 ⑥ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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We will analyze the Italian case according a double point of view: the rituals and the political philosophy. In the tripartition of the degrees we discover the three currents of the political philosophy of the Enlightenment: the Christian evangelical equality, the liberal constitutional culture and the communist regeneration through the return at the Eden's Life. We are aware of the existence of an international center in Paris at '20 years (Le Comité Directif) with Lafitte, Lafayette and the money of Napoleon. We are aware of the existence of the network in the Americas too (the Canadian Free-Hunters), of the prosecution of the Carbonari's activity in Italy from 1861 to 1970, of the organisation of Portuguese revolution in 1905 by Carbonari. But the networks of Carbonari are still waiting a global international Enquiry.

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Aleš Chalupa

Why Did Greeks and Romans Pray Aloud? A Cognitive Perspective

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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The prevalent majority of prayers in the Graeco-Roman world was pronounced in an audible voice. Even though we know about many situations in which silent prayers were at least tolerated, this practice was generally seen as a highly suspicious and potentially socially disruptive. Reasons and motivations contributing to the perseverance of this practice are usually found in the social domain: prayers were said aloud because this ritual procedure facilitated social control. This conclusion seems to be generally correct. This paper, however, tries to evaluate this practice also from the perspective of cognitive science of religion and concentrates especially on two following questions: (1) are there any human intuitions that support the necessity to pronounce prayers during rituals in an audible voice? And in case there are such intuitions, (2) can a change in the perceived properties and abilities of an addressee (gods or God) lead to the growing acceptance of silent prayers?

Radek Chlup

On Non-Reductive Explanations of Religion

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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In the 1980–90's Robert Segal famously postulated an opposition between the “religionists”, who see religion as a category irreducible to other types of human activities, and the social scientists, who describe the origin and function of religion in secular terms. Segal has been opposed by a number of scholars, but none of them have quite succeeded in overcoming the split envisaged by him. I would like to re-appraise the issue and show that some of the social scientists too may aspire to being “religionist”. To achieve this, I shall re-examine the concept of reductionism. It has often been argued that religion can only be studied non-reductively if grasped on a plane of reference regarded as religious by the believers themselves. On this criterion, social scientific approaches appear to be to be irredeemably reductive, for the plane of reference they use for explaining religion is clearly nonreligious. I argue that we can avoid this conclusion if we do not expect the religious and the scholarly planes of reference to be identical but merely structurally analogous. Common to all explanations is an effort to re-describe other worlds by means of concepts meaningful within the world of the scholar. An explanation is non-reductive if in its re-descriptions it manages to preserve all the connotations religious phenomena have in their original world—including the crucial one of transcendence. While the social sciences may seem handicapped in this by their secular discourse, even they can recapture the transcendence by emulating it in non-religious terms (cf. e.g. Victor Turner's concept of *communitas*). The advantage of this approach is that it enables us to understand other cultural worlds instead of just demystifying them and subordinating them to our own secular categories.

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Eugen Ciurтин

Professional Desiderata and Institutional Dynamics in the Academic Study of Religions in post-1989 Eastern Europe

MON 16:00–17:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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As I had the occasion to argue recently in a collective volume aiming at presenting the study of religions as a true global phenomenon (Alles [ed.] 2008), Eastern Europe is perhaps the part of the world that is both most promising and most deceptive for a

cultural history of the study of religions. There is no study of Eastern European intellectual history comparable to Nineteenth Century Religious Thought in the West (Smart et al., 1985), and there is also virtually no study of religious studies in Eastern Europe comparable to studies of the field in Western Europe, North America, Japan, South Africa and Australia by prominent scholars of religion aware of and interested in the history of their field. Curiously, many Eastern European scholars interested in the local background of their discipline can recount better the history of the field in Western than in Eastern Europe. Providing an extensive bibliography which complements *The Academic Study of Religion during the Cold War* (Doležalová, Martin, and Papoušek [eds.] 2001), I will try in this paper to focus on the scholarly desiderata that function as mutual goals for Eastern European national associations affiliated to EASR / IAHR. A comparative profile of institutions from this region (faculties, departments, institutes, centres, periodicals, etc.) will be provided. Particular attention will be paid to Central and Eastern European topics and scholars discussed in Lindsay Jones (editor in chief), *Encyclopedia of Religion* 2nd edition, Macmillan 2005.

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Sarah Claerhout

A Doubtful Match: Freedom of Religion and Anti-Conversion Legislation in India

MON 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The secularism-fundamentalism divide is the framework within which one interprets the Indian debate on religious conversion and the success of anti-conversion legislation. This debate is seen as a result of the struggle between Hindu fundamentalist groups, who want to strengthen Hinduism, and the secular powers of the Indian society, who want to safeguard religious freedom. Even though both opponents and defenders of conversion have accepted this today, so we will argue, our understanding of the issue will not advance one inch if we stay within this framework. On the basis of an analysis of the conversion debates in twentieth-century India (Gandhi's views on conversion, the debates during the Constituent Assembly, the Freedom of Religion Acts) we will identify some unsolved puzzles. (1) Today both parties claim to be the true defenders of the freedom of religion, but they have mutually exclusive understandings of what this entails: "an inalienable human right, necessarily including the freedom to convert" versus "freedom from external interference in one's traditions and practices". Who is right? (2) Gandhi (like other Indian intellectuals of the first half of the twentieth century) was very much opposed to conversion. Suggesting that he was a fundamentalist does violence to his position.

The current debate on conversion is barren because both parties have accepted the same limits of discussion (western-Christian notions about religion and conversion) and the boundaries within which conversion can be criticized (fraudulent, forced and induced conversion). This results from a western colonial legacy, which dictates not only the current academic study of India, but also India's self-understanding.

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Anna Corrias

The Enochian: A Language for Heavenly and Earthly Paradises

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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By the mid-seventeenth century the most popular stance in England was the quest for Paradise, which was not only a dream of soul salvation in a heavenly world, but was the hope of building a temporal ideality in concrete terms, that is to say a Utopia on earth. The many faceted dream of Paradise has been the most comprehensive organizing force in seventeenth century England political culture: the utopian pattern of a perfect socio-political-legal system was the earthly goal to be achieved with heavenly tools. The political thought in seventeenth century England was the Italian and English Renaissance's spiritual heir, that is to say that it was strongly defined by the legacy of the hermetic tradition. I would like to set out how angelology, as a science capable to link the vast web of correspondences that knit the cosmos together and to express the prophetic signs embedded in the natural world in any tongue e to any nation, was a powerful political instrument and how the project of regeneration of the social institutions was conducted with the help of voices coming "from above". In my opinion, whether the dream of political ecumenism is connected with the Renaissance magus's hope of mastering an universal science so that he could climb to heaven like the angels in Jacob's ladder, is a question worthy to be considered.



*Csilla D. Farkas*¹, *Gabriella Pusztai*²

Anthropological Approach to the Church Maintained Higher Education Research in CEE

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑥ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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In our presentation we focus on the question, how social research methodology, including qualitative one, enriches the investigation of church maintained educational institutions. Our presentation is mainly concentrated on higher education research questions, but from special religion-sociological point of view. After the millennium there is gradually declining contrast between the quantitative and qualitative paradigms in higher education research. Last decade the researches in CHERD aimed to interpret local social function of higher educational institutions, respectively the church maintained higher educational institutions. The applied quantitative methods (surveys and structured interviews) were not suitable to understanding some locally significant phenomenon. The investigated HE institutions are embedded in their symbolic field, and social science research needs more and more procedures in research work, revealing methods, observation technologies, interviews, which enrich previous one-ways quantitative approach. In our lecture to support the above mentioned tendencies in practice, we will demonstrate the application of power relation theory by Cohen Abner and Bjura Janet anthropologists via an example of higher education research at a church maintained university, at Partium Christian University in Romania and at a balkanise church-state maintained university, at Aristotle University in Greece by using discourse analysis method also used in anthropology.

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Zhargalma Dandarova

Cultural-historical Perspective in Psychology of Religion

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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The actual state of psychology of religion in Russia is determined greatly by the previous years of stagnation and ideological suppression, which practically completely excluded a possibility of theoretical and experimental psychological study of religion. At the same time, the modern situation in Russia is characterized by a sharp rise of old and new religious movements. Within the last decade, there's been observed a positive dynamics in the level of the religiousness in the country. The

share of people who consider themselves to be religious, has reached in 1996 more than 65 %. Thus, taking into account realities of modern Russia it is possible to say, that today, religion, while representing a very important part of public life, is not a subject of a deep and scalene examination in a domestic psychological science. The negative effect on the situation has also the fact that the domain of psychology of religion is limited by its research methods. Most of them represent objective-empirical approach, which relies on standardized measuring instruments and/or the use of experimental methods. But these methods give us restricted knowledge of religious person and his faith. So, a great part of religious phenomena is outside of psychological science. Another criticism of quantitative methods is its extra-historical, extra-cultural way of psychological knowledge's construction. In the case of religious study this criticism becomes very important. In Vygotsky's conception, psychology cannot be viewed as separate from the human history and human culture. The focus on cultural and historical processes could provide a set of elements that would be useful to increase and to diversify psychological understanding of religious life.

—
Jakob De Roover

Desperately Seeking Manu: Protestant Christianity and the Creation of Hindu Law

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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From the early seventeenth to the late eighteenth century, the British in India were obsessed with finding “the ancient law giver” of the Hindus. By the 1780s, they settled on Manu as the ancient law giver, who had given to the Hindus “the law of the caste system.” On the basis of this, the British constructed a codified body of “Hindu law” that was implemented in the civil courts.

Already in the nineteenth century, a scholar named J.H. Nelson began to challenge the notion of Hindu law and the belief that Manu was the ancient law giver. His arguments were cogent, but he was marginalized. Today, scholars again point out that the notions of “law” and “law giver” were absent in the Hindu traditions. If the data of the Indian traditions did not allow one to infer the existence of an ancient law giver and a body of sacred law, why were the British so intent on finding these? My paper will argue that this was the case because they approached the Indian culture through a theological template of nationhood and religion, which attributed the following properties to any nation: it would have a corrupt religion that expressed its thirst after the true God, but misdirected this towards false gods; this false religion would consist of human laws, which were prescribed as though they were the biblical

God's will; all nations had ancient lawgivers, who claimed that God revealed His will in the form of certain doctrines and laws; these laws would be sustained by a priesthood, which interpreted and enforced the laws on the believers. The notions of the "Hindu religion" and "caste system" were built within this Christian theological model of nationhood and false religion.

—

Steffen Dix

The Reaffirmation of Traditional Catholicism in a Secularized Society: A Case Study in Portugal

WED 10:30–12:00 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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Over the last decades European Catholicism was marked by structural transformation. The situation of European Catholic Church is generally explained by a loss of political influence, a drop of moral authority and a decline of religious practice. However, Catholicism continues to be an important source for the self-identification, especially in southern Europe. As an outstanding example for this situation, Portugal retains the traditional self-identification as Catholic country alongside the loss by Catholic Church of its societal functions. On the other hand, this decline of influence in public life and the relativistic attitude toward religious doctrines lead the Portuguese Catholicism to internal and external transformations. This means that Catholicism re-conquered over the last years a significant public space. Catholic messages in modern Portugal have not disappeared, but they are communicated in a different form. The aim of this paper is to explain the transformation of the Portuguese Catholicism and its strategy of reaffirmation in public sphere. The guiding line for this explanation consists of a series of questions, for example: How does the reaffirmation of the religious dimension work in contemporary Portugal? Where can we observe this religious renovation? What is the role of modern revitalization of local festivities: are they able to strengthen catholic identities? Can we verify a certain rise of religious and ethnic nationalism based on the famous cult of Fátima which has been recently exposed by the Portuguese Catholic Church as a kind of typical Portuguese Catholicism? To sum up, I will try to show the strategies of reaffirmation of the Portuguese Catholicism, and how it is acting as a national symbol system with regard to a highly secularized milieu.



Gordan Djurdjevic

**Hidden Wisdom in the Ill-Ordered House:
A Short Survey of Occultism in Former Yugoslavia**

WED 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The occult trends in the countries of the Southern Slavs were represented by Freemasonry, Theosophy, Anthroposophy and similar currents. Occultism gains its popularity in former Yugoslavia with Živorad Slavinski, who, since the early 70s, in addition to numerous publications, also develops his own techniques for spiritual growth. Since the early 1980s, the most vibrant occult activity is linked to Aleister Crowley's religious philosophy of Thelema and the initiatic order OTO. My article is in three parts. First, I provide a short historical overview. The second part focuses on Slavinski and his work. In the third part, I look into the activities of the Yugoslav OTO and especially into the literary work of Janez Trobentar, translator and biographer of Crowley, magazine editor, playwright, and theoretician of Thelema.

—

Baira Dyakieva

**New Media as the Tool of Political and Religious
Participation**

TUE 11:00–13:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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The 21 century is called the era of digital technologies and new media. Due to its extraordinary interactive character new media allows the fastest exchange of views and makes the communication among people the most true-to-life of all mass media. Such new online services as blogs, video-sharing resources, and social networks are broadly used as a recruiting and participatory tool in politics (for example, US presidential elections are called You-Tube '08 elections while new website technology invites every citizen contribute up to \$20 online to your favorite candidate). New media is getting popular among religious leaders and users as well. The recent example of a successful online campaign is the blogs of pastors Brian Baily and Ed Young "Fellowship Church" and "Creative Pastors" aimed primarily to attract new members and spread the Christianity.

New media is used not only by political and religious institutions to bring new followers; it is used by people to express their viewpoints and feedbacks on topical problems as well. Two out of six video nominees at You-Tube annual award are devoted to the problem of conflict between western and eastern cultures. New media is with no doubt is the offspring and cause of globalization. Using blogs, social networks and You-Tube one can express his/her views on any issues aloud and they may be heard in any part of the world. As a result new media makes us reconsider the borders of a nation broadening them to a global scope as a true global trend.

—
Francisco Díez de Velasco

Teaching Religious Education in the Spanish Schools: Some Non Religio-Centric Proposals

TUE 9:00–10:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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After a survey of the model of RE in Spain (revising the four confessional possibilities and the non-confessional option), the aim of the presentation is to show two proposals of a non religiocentric approach to the study of the subject in Spanish Secondary School system (educational level from 12–16 years) produced by a research group from the University of La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain).

The educational materials for the teaching of religions to be shown are:

1) An introduction published in book format as: F. Díez de Velasco (dir.), *Religiones y Culturas*, Madrid, Santillana / El País (Enciclopedia del Estudiante vol. 19), 2005, 359 pp. (ISBN 84.9815.202.X) / adapted for South-America as: F. Díez de Velasco (dir.), *Religiones y Culturas*, Buenos Aires, Santillana (Enciclopedia del Estudiante vol. 17), 2006, 320 pp. (ISBN 950.46.1606.2) and re-adapted in an e-learning resource format named Kalipedia: <http://www.kalipedia.com/religion-cultura/>.

2) An e-learning platform named *Religiones del Mundo* (World Religions), http://www.cnice.mec.es/profesores/asignaturas_optativas/sociedad_cultura_y_religion/religion_mundo/ available in Spanish and Catalan.

Christian Euvrard

**New Religious Movements and State Relations in France:
The Case of Mormonism, 1850–2000**

MON 16:00–17:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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When the first Mormon missionaries arrived in France in 1850, they thought they were coming to the land of freedom and civil rights, but they had to face the opposition of Napoleon III's dictatorship. From the Concordat to the Law of Separation of Church and State, in 1905, did the conditions change for the Mormon community in France? What were the challenges this new religious movement had to face? Since WWII, the Mormon Church has seen an obvious development in France but what has been the impact of the "Problème des sectes" that has occupied the French political scene in the past 20 years? The relationship between the French State and the Mormon Church can serve as a revealer of the difficulty a secularized country, such as France, still has with religious plurality. This paper will study three moments of this relationship to exemplify the difficulties, and the acceptance, an American-born Religion can experience in Old Europe.

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Martin Fárek

**"The Right Thing To Do"? On Restructuring
the "Hindu Law" in India under the British Rule**

TUE 11:00–13:00 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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Following the panel proposal, these are the starting points of discussion: What were the intellectual problems of understanding and structuring law in the 17th and 18th centuries England (and than Britain)? What questions and issues played major role in framing the understanding of justice and rights? And how these issues influenced the understanding of different traditions in India called "Hindu", but also how it had predated changes initiated by colonial rulers of the subcontinent in the 19th and 20th centuries? Given the fact, that famous Orientalists such as Sir William Jones, Nathaniel B. Halhed, Horace H. Wilson and others were engaged in a grand project of understanding the domestic "laws", in translations and interpretations of them, and also in reframing the traditional structures so that they would be useful for colonial rule; the paper aims at answering the questions: What the Orientalists exactly did with the notions of "just" and "right" in Indian environment, and how was their work

influenced by their homeland's discussions and struggles in the area of law and justice? Several points will be made: on the choice of Manava-dharma-sastra as the "Law Book of Hinduism", on the processes of restructuring the domestic complex notions connected with term dharma, and on the European and particularly British prejudices and understandings that played important role in the interactions that gave birth to modern system of law in India.

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Giorgio Ferri

Religion as Culture: The Lesson of Angelo Brelich

MON 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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Angelo Brelich, follower and continuator of Raffaele Pettazzoni's work, was one of the most important Italian and international scholars in the field of the History of Religions.

In Brelich's view, religion is just one aspect, albeit an essential one, of the culture of a society: therefore, it affects and is in its turn affected by the various elements of a cultural system, in constant tension with nature, to which society tries to grant a meaning—for example through mythology—and on which it tries to exert a "control", by dealing with the superhuman beings, through prayers and rites. It is after all history that defines the characteristics and establishes the differences: religion must be studied within history and exclusively within it. Hence, a historicism it is needed, that would exclude every fideistic component or ahistorical "before" and that would start from the conception of human history's unity.

An essential instrument of analysis is religious-historical comparison, required because the History of Religions deals with a multiplicity of religious, and hence cultural, systems: it studies the religious phenomenon in its historical context and its changes over time; through it can be determined what is specific in every culture, as well the way in which it has "reshaped" the most ancient elements of its own religious system or those imported from others: culture is a historical product resulting from "actions" and "creations", as well as "cultural" reactions to "psychical" ones, such as death. An important consequence of this position is the unceasing reaffirmation of every culture's dignity, against every form of primitivism, ethnocentrism and cultural evolutionism: every society has a creative faculty of its own.



Tatiana Folieva

Social Doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church in Modern Politic Conditions in Russia

WED 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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It is not characteristic for Orthodoxy to show any interest (with the rare exception) to the problems of social structure, interrelations among the state, society and religion. The tradition coming back from fathers of the church and Byzantium concerning the solution of social problems only calls for patience, humbleness and mutual assistance. Only in 2000 the Russian Orthodox Church adopted a document “Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church” in which it first tried to state its social doctrine. At first this document didn’t arise any interest in the Russian society, and a group of investigators pointed out that the document was declarative as a matter of fact and some of its provisions reflect thinking of the idle ages. However lately the transformation of the political system and the creation of a peculiar model of the state government accompanied by the formation of new ideology have made some provisions of the social doctrine of the ROC especially urgent. The ideas about the particular status of the ROC in Russia, its claims to the conglomeration with the state authority and its basic role in the society. In spite of the fact that some of these provisions contradict the legislation and current situation these statements have become widely used by state authorities to create national ideology. Thus for some years the doctrine the ROC has transformed from the document intended for the solution of social problems into the “manifesto” of political and clerical elite. All this makes it possible to assert that the gap between the ROC and the society on the whole will become larger and larger despite the keeping of the orthodox identity by the majority of the Russians.

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Stephanie Frank

Mauss, from Sacrifice to Gift: A French Post-Theology for the Third Republic

MON 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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Strenski (2002) situates Mauss and Hubert’s 1899 *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function* as an intervention into a French cultural landscape permeated by an “intransigent Catholic” model of sacrifice—in particular, as tempering “communitarian” values with

those of bourgeois “individualism”. I read Mauss/Hubert’s agenda more broadly: in a tradition of thought in which certain (originally theological) considerations excluded self-interest from “moral” motivation, they implicitly advance a post-theological ethics in which the fact that an action is “interested” does not preclude its status as ethical. While this position appears in *Sacrifice*—whose major theoretical advance is to highlight the role of the sacrificer, for whose benefit the ritual is performed—its formulation is much bolder in Mauss’ *The Gift*, some twenty-five years later. Mauss’ earlier move to ensure the preservation of the sacrificer through a substitute victim is only amplified by his incorporation of the obligation to receive in return into the structure of the gift; Malinowski’s “pure” gift is brought up only to be dismantled. If Mauss and Hubert in *Sacrifice* present a theology to compete with the “intransigent Catholic” model, Mauss in *The Gift* elaborates what we might call a French post-theology for the Third Republic: he replaces “sacrifice” with “gift,” inverts a scholarly derivation of something like original sin (so that gifts now beget our obligations, rather than primordial obligations calling for gifts in return), and renders visible the interest in apparently disinterested acts, all the while insisting on their probity. In this way, Sahlins’ sense that *The Gift* is a replacement for Rousseau’s *Social Contract* is correct, even if the details of his reading are not.

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Milan Fujda

Secularization and New Religiosity: Media as an Agent of Transformations of Religions in Modern Societies

MON 16:00–17:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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Debate on secularization mostly emphasized an aspect of rationalization and differentiation of society. Only occasionally relation between secularization and social effects of printed media was explicitly stated, and only recently Mark Chaves turned attention to issue of the authority in the debate.

Discussion on “new religions” developed independently on the secularization debate and in many aspects remained caught in cult controversies. As a result growing significance of new religions challenged the concept of secularization on one hand, and the debate on new religions was not able to provide useful tools to grasp general changes in the field of religion in contemporary societies. Confusions concerning “New Age”, “holistic scene”, “subjective-life spirituality” etc. are but one example. In my presentation I will try to throw some light on the subject by developing an analysis of the influence of modern media on religion:

1) I will deal with an erosive influence of printed media on traditional authorities, and on the way how the same media foster individual reconstructions of traditions and changes in organization of religious life.

2) I will utilize the studies of differences between orality and literacy to emphasize what features of contemporary religiosity/belief came into existence as a result of generalized literacy and as an impact of private reading of texts.

Backed by this analysis I will clarify some relations between changes in communication and social interaction and more general aspects of modernization of religion. In this framework, as I believe, many confusions concerning new religiosity and the role of religion in contemporary societies can be resolved.

—

Tomas Gal

Exploring Identity of Religious Group on the Internet

WED 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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In the last decade, most researchers mention, that the Internet, will provide possibilities to apply innovative religious manifestations. The cyberspace was open for various life styles and seemingly unlimited identities. After the consolidation connected with commoditization of net space, filling it with pointing advertisements decreases the number of enthusiasts considering cyberspace as cult. Also the standardization of net services, such as e-mail, google-like search, instant messaging or forums, turns the tendency of identity-switching marginal. Most of groups even changed to physical-mostly, kept up by cons, or ideologically perished, while became an e-shop, up to the minute. For the others, Internet is perceived as a media only, complementing the real-life agenda.

Another moment is, that internet changes too fast to shift religious visions to younger user. Creating a new project can be done without hitting older ones. Every new idea invokes the interest of few or many, but only for a while, never forms a stable environment for spreading the faith. It can be necessary to step aside from the idealization of the life-on-line concept and rather regard the statements of religiously commiserated groups as an additive to the ordinary life in media society.



Raf Gelders

Indian Traditions and the Lexicographic Project

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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It is historically inaccurate to equate the standard representation of Hinduism with colonial scholarship: this standardised representation was present in the European imagination long before the conditions of colonialism were established. Consisting of a cultural repertoire of images, it framed and limited what the colonial scholars wrote about the Indian traditions. This paper focuses on one such image: the Vedas as the sacred books of India.

A convenient way to study the distribution of this imagery in the popular imagination prior to the colonial era is to engage with the project of dictionary writing. The great lexicons that were produced at the turn of the eighteenth century already contain the imagery that would later inform colonial scholarship. This popular imagery itself can be traced back to an explicitly Christian-theological discourse.

The claim that the Vedas are the sacred books of India implies that they have the same status as the Bible in Christianity. This emphasis on scriptures—already central to the representation of India in the early dictionaries—comes from the widespread idea that the Indian texts were not just like the Bible, but were in fact spurious copies of the Bible. This paper thus shows how colonial discourse capitalised on a cultural imagery for long available in the popular domain, which was itself a reiteration of theological themes in a seemingly neutral garb.

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Ingvild Sælid Gilhus

The Return of Angels: Contemporary Religious Processes in Norway

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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Angels have a long history in the western monotheistic religions. How these creatures are conceived of varies with historical, theological, cultural, economic and social circumstances. After having been pressed on the defensive by the introduction of Lutheran protestantism and by the breakthrough of science more generally, angels are again prominently present in contemporary religious discourse in Norway. From

being in the main restricted to the sphere of childhood, Sunday schools and Christmas celebrations during the last century, angels are today actively promoted by the Norwegian Statechurch as well as by New Religious movements, with slightly different purposes and meanings. Not least are these “intermediate beings” used to mark the boundaries between Lutheran Protestantism and other types of contemporary spirituality. This paper will focus on the meaning and function of angels in contemporary religious discourse in Norway. Especially their flexibility and their fluctuation between metaphoricity and reality will be commented upon.

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Mariachiara Giorda

Educating People to be Citizen through the History of Religions

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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The theoretical premise to this experiment in Turin is based on the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century. According to its report to UNESCO, education throughout life is based upon four pillars. One of them is teaching different people how to live together: young people should learn and understand the history and the point of view of different religious groups; learning the history of religions could be useful for their future behaviour, because it is an important topic of the “education to citizenship” (J. Delors et al., *Learning: the Treasure within. Report to Unesco of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century*, Unesco, Paris 1996, p. 86).

From a cognitive point of view, education about religion as a scientific research on facts is a fundamental tool of education to global citizenship and a remedy against theoretical and practical drifts into fundamentalism and violence.

Our aim is to sketch out the teaching program of history of religions in high school (5 years). The related didactic aims are to introduce students to the world and phenomena of religions in history and the contemporary world regarding sacred texts and the traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. This project will be made possible with the collaboration of the Department of History at the University of Turin.

*Teresa Gómez Cerdeño*¹, *Luisa Marco Sola*²

“Caudillo by God’s Grace”: A Critical Linguistic Analysis of the Political Use of Catholicism in Franquist Discourse during the Spanish Civil War and Postwar (1936–1945)

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The 18th of July 1936 a faction of the Spanish Army rose up against the Republican Government in different points around the country. It was just another military coup d'état like the ones that had already conditioned the recent history of the country. However, this coup—as opposed to the previous ones—did not finally succeed mainly because of the opposition of a great part of the army itself. The failure of this raising gave way to three years of civil war that the Franquist rebels did not expect and were not prepared for. In a war where the propagandistic battle became essential at an international level, where could they find the legitimacy they yearned for? The Catholic Church provided the solution: Catholicism. From this moment on, and in the framework of war propagandistic campaigns, the Franquist political discourse became full of religious Christian representations. As a result, the National cause achieved a new legitimacy that put together religious and patriotic identities. This unification was well reflected in the different texts produced by the National party over the war years. These written items will be our starting point to approach Franquist discourse, in which Politics and Religion blend in a consubstantial and indivisible whole. For our study, we will analyse the most salient of these texts in order to find linguistic proof that puts into evidence their political use of religion. We will classify our texts into three different stages for their study, from the first war reports (when religion is barely mentioned); going through diverse texts of the war period; to finish with the radicalisation of National-Catholicism from 1943, when the Spanish regime distanced itself from the other European fascisms that had almost been defeated by that time.



Heiko Grünwedel

Tracing Shamans in Two Worlds: Some Theoretical Conclusions for the Study of Religions Based on the Linking of Methodological Experiences from a Bicontextual Investigation

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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Based on two field studies, which I carried out during the last year among shamans of the indigenous people of the Siberian republic of Tyva and neoshamans in Germany, I will outline a case study on common features and global interactions of processes of reconstructing autochthonous religious traditions. Linking the experiences of two empirical studies in connected but completely different contexts, I want to draw some conclusions on the relationship between the theoretical frameworks of methodology and the knowledge about “archaic” religions which is generated by means of this methods. Aimed at a sketch of an interdisciplinary approach of studies in religion my field report will concentrate on the following aspects of research in contemporary religious life:

1. Transformation of participant observation.
2. The necessity of adaptation of qualitative interviews concepts.
3. The desire for a body-centered dialogical field research. What perspective is opened up by the notion of the body as an interface of intercultural understanding?
4. The critical reflection on the role of the personal religious experience, especially when analyzing rituals.
5. The medial turn of the studies of religion in a double sense: First the medial turn of the subject of research (mediality of religious praxis). Second the method of research itself: Shifts of perception and description.
6. The role of the understanding process of a different culture for the studies of religion. Which contribution offers a cultural hermeneutics for the foundation of studies in religion?

Charles Guittard

**From Mythology to History:
New Prospects in Roman Religion**

TUE 9:00–10:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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The study of the ancient Roman religion changed considerably during the 19th century and new approaches appeared, especially based on the contribution of topography, archaeology and comparativism. Anyway, texts and inscriptions are still important. Scholars of European countries work closely together and new prospects are now established.

—

Eleonóra Hamar

**Memory and Post-Memory in 2nd Generational
Jewish Identity Narratives: Secular and Religious
Self-Understandings**

MON 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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Second-generation Jews are usually discussed as a more or less peculiar social group emerging at the cultural scene of USA, Israel and Europe during the 70's and 80's of the last century. This happens in times when Holocaust is already established both in academic and public discourses as a cultural symbol of evil and human suffering and when its meaning starts to be constructed in the narrative order of universal tragedy of humankind. It follows that the dialogue between different stories of the Holocaust and the interconnectedness of different memory works is crucial for the understanding of second generational life-stories. On the basis of my narrative analysis of life-story interviews with second-generation Jews from the Czech Republic I analyze the phenomena of intertextually connected memories of the Holocaust by applying the concept of post-memory. In my presentation I am going to show how both religiously and secularly framed 2nd generational Jewish identities are constructed narratively via integrating private and public stories about the Holocaust.

Thomas Hase

The Legacy of Joachim Wach

MON 16:00–17:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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German scholar Joachim Wach (1898–1955) is considered one of the most important theoretical precursors of modern Religionswissenschaft (academic study of religion) in Europe and in the United States. In many introductions and textbooks he is presented as the person who handed down to coming generations the concept of Religionswissenschaft which necessarily included both the study of the history of religions and the systematic study of religion. However, his understanding of the discipline appears to be very problematic. In this paper I will offer a critical look at Wach's theoretical comprehension and thus question the validity of his postulations with regard to the methods and objectives of Religionswissenschaft. I will argue that Wach's understanding of both the historical and the systematic study of religion is very far from what is done and can be done in Religionswissenschaft today.

—

Jakub Havlíček

Religion, Politics and Identity in Modern Japan: Examining the Case of Yasukuni Shrine

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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The presentation—based on the author's Ph.D. thesis—treats the topic of Yasukuni Shrine, a controversial Shinto sanctuary in Tokyo where the “souls” of Japanese war dead are worshipped. Many scholars have dealt with the case of Yasukuni shrine from the point of view of various disciplines: sociology, politics, history, anthropology, etc. The presentation brings a survey of the existing debate on the issue of Yasukuni Shrine as discussed by Japanese and Western English speaking scholars. It concentrates on the analysis of the relationship between religion and politics in contemporary Japan. The objective of the paper consists in outlining a potential contribution of the science of religions to the interpretation of the Yasukuni Shrine issue.

Lucie Hlavinková

Social Work as a Churches' Strategy for Finding Its Own Place

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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Churches in the Czech Republic have to face a latent question—What are they useful to in a society where a number of churchgoers is very low and still declining. Out of saturating religious and spiritual needs of their members, it is a social work, especially the care for seniors that is generally perceived as undervalued, difficult and unsatisfactory. The empirical study will present a social work as a churches' strategy of finding their places in contemporary society.

—

Willem Hofstee

No Crisis: In Praise of Theoretical and Methodological Pluralism

MON 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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In this paper I will argue that the idea of a theoretical and methodological crisis in the study of religion is a fiction which hinders our discipline. In fact presupposing the existence of such a crisis can be seen as a symptom of intellectual malaise. I intend to show that a theoretical and methodological pluralism is precisely what we need in order to proceed in the proces of gaining more and better insights in the development, function and meaning of religion in different societies and in different periods of time. It is therefore a waste of time to look for the ultimate theory, or for the ultimate method. These efforts, for instance, reflect the western idea that religion can be defined as a concept in general terms to be applied always and everywhere. It also reflects the positivist idea that religion can be and therefore should be explained, always and everywhere. It certainly reflects the at least disputable idea that it is possible to draw up general laws about human behaviour and thinking in matters religious. I will argue that method and theory are not matters of “free choice”. Instead, they are dependent of and subordinate to the questions one comes up with. This means that different questions ask for different theories and different methods. It also means that it is better to know some of the questions first, before jumping to conclusions and answers.

Bulcsu K. Hoppal

From the Phenomenology of Religion to the History of Religions: The Pathway of Religious Studies

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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The paper begins with a very simple claim: independently of how we define the origin of religious studies (whether historically, philologically, or phenomenologically, etc.), the definition of the discipline's nature will always be ambiguous. The self-identification and the forms that religious studies takes are as varied as religion itself is multi-faceted.

My paper includes two parts. In the first part, I will demonstrate how heterogeneity has always been characteristic of the methodology of religious studies since its inception as a discipline, and therefore, that the prevailing view that the discipline is in “crisis” is somewhat of an overstatement. In the second part, I will present some critical observations regarding the current state of mainstream religious studies.

In the argument, I will focus on two authors (Mircea Eliade and Gerardus van der Leeuw). I will argue that Eliade and van der Leeuw start their research from a pure philosophical notion of phenomenology. The first main point of the paper is to prove that the phenomenology (of religion)—in contrast to the history of religions—is the original aim and method of religious studies. The second aim of the paper is to show —by the help of a historical analysis—the real understanding of phenomenology of religion.

In the paper, I will contrast the historical-empirical method of history of religions to the method of phenomenology (of religion). My ultimate claim is that if the scientific study of religion wants to overcome its alleged crisis, it needs to go back to its original aim and method: to give a phenomenological account of the authentic nature of religion.



Milos Hubina

Christians in Buddhist Land

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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The main aim of the proposed paper is to suggest a model for understanding of cultural, political and individual identity of urban Thais, through the analysis of Christian missions in historical Siam and the situation of Christians in contemporary Thailand. The proposed paper will bring forth the results of archive and bibliographical research I had accomplished in Thailand during the last year together with the results of my fieldwork carried out subsequently in Bangkok. Thai commoners as well as Thai political elite during the fourth and fifth reigns (lasting for 60 years from middle of the 19th century) were supportive to Christian missions and their activities—this included offering a space in Buddhist monasteries for delivering the message. In spite of that the missions eventuated in thorough failure. Such a situation provides us with useful backdrop for analysis of the role a religion (Buddhism) played in forming social, political and personal identity of Thais. The common motif connecting these three forms of identity with Buddhist religious thinking is, as I will argue, the concept of power understood in Buddhist milieu as “independence”.

Analysis of these aspects of religious life within two historical epochs—that of opening of Siam to Western influence and that of contemporary global cultural, political, and religious interconnectedness—carried out within relatively small area of Bangkok also allows us, I hope, to use the proposed model in broader inter-cultural studies.

—

Annika Hvithamar

Textual Pictures: Icons in the Orthodox Church

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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In the Western European Study of Religion textual analysis has served as the main methodological approach to understanding religion. However, even in cultures with a long and strong written tradition, texts are not necessarily the most important source for gaining knowledge of the content of beliefs and dogma. In the Russian Orthodox Church icons have played a central role since Christianity was introduced to the lands in the 10th century. During the history of Russia we learn from chronicles that icons have played a part as protectors of principalities, monasteries, cities, churches houses

and persons. Council documents enlighten us about how to behave in front of icons and about false and true motives and liturgical books inform us of the use of icons in liturgy and church buildings. But it is only in the late 19th century that a defined icon theology emerges and it is not until the first half of the 20th century—after the Russian revolution has caused the bulk of theologians to emigrate to the West—that the academic study of iconography takes form. But does this mean that icons have not been objects of consideration until recently, or is it just the texts which have not been regarded of paramount importance in the Eastern Christian tradition? In the presentation I will discuss the role of iconography as primary sources to Orthodox Christianity. As not only theological experts, but also secular professionals paint icons, the content of the icons document the diversity and disparity of religious imagination. Thus, on the one hand icons illustrate Orthodox dogmatism, but on the other they challenge the very idea of a delineated religious system. As such icons may serve as a more truthful source to understanding religion.

—

George Jarvis

Hope for Religious Freedom

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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The pattern of religious freedom is changing in the world. Some developing countries in Latin America and other parts of the world are now judged to have greater religious freedom than European nations that once helped to teach the world about religious freedom. Some formerly communist nations in Eastern Europe have excellent records of granting religious freedom. In other states, reaction to post-communist freedom is leading to the re-establishment of favorite relationships between governments and state churches. New peoples and new religions are entering Europe. Both hostility and indifference to organized religion are increasing. The freedom to practice organized religion is under attack, especially for those who choose an unusual pattern of religious activity. Are Europeans facing a future of decreasing freedom to practice or not to practice religion? Nations of the world are now held accountable at the United Nations in Geneva for their practice of religious freedom. As the principal modality of the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review calls each of 192 countries to account for their adherence to standards of freedom of religion or belief. This paper examines how the Universal Periodic Review operates and, now that thirty-two nations have been examined, whether nations seem to be willing to comply with efforts to encourage greater

freedom. We also examine the content of the deliberations and seek to ascertain the importance of freedom of religion to nations compared with other aspects of human rights.

Frans Jespers

A Paranormal Offensive?

TUE 11:00–13:00 📧 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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About twenty years ago, the paranormal circuit of clairvoyants, alternative healers, and astrologers became more visible in Western Europe. A wave of movies and television programmes on witchcraft and divination (many of them originating from the USA) raised a daily, public supply of clairvoyants in newspapers and television. All this looks like a strategy for an offensive, but who is organizing it and for what kind of public, or purpose?

It is not obvious that such practices of divination are religious, certainly not in comparison with the practices of the world religions. Most clairvoyants, however, proclaim a definite religious worldview with divine energies, personal destiny, rituals, and an ethics. I can show this with Dutch examples. In a tradition of centuries the paranormal circuit is a type of popular religion, that now has returned in an innovated presentation of re-enchantment. What is fascinating about the paranormal circuit is the overt combination with commerce and entertainment. For this reason, many scholars conclude that this cannot be religion. I will contend, however, that the borders between religion and entertainment or commerce are no longer sharp. In our cultural period of de-differentiation this type of cheerful and magical popular religion maybe has got its momentum.

Roman Kečka

Can the 21th Century Study of Religions Be Inspired by the 20th Century Crisis of Theology?

MON 16:00–17:30 📧 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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During the first half of the 20th century, many of the major themes of the study of religions were inspired by the theological questions. For the theology, the study of religions was a study of the history of the natural theology and was understood a

preliminary stage to the Christian theology itself. After the second world war, however, various fields of sciences as sociology, history, anthropology, linguistics or psychology started to influence theology which tried to adopt new methods and to develop in the frame of multiple disciplinarity. The unexpected result was a crisis of theology and the question concerning its very nature. In the Catholic theology, the problem deepened with the Second Vatican council in 1960s. The issues of the competencies of theology were discussed, but remained unresolved. Since 1980s some new solutions have come out that have given an updated positioning to the theology and its identity.

Can this effort of the theology to find its identity be in any way of interest for the study of religions? Even if the study of religions does not depend on the theological questioning any more, are there any points in which the study of religions could observe the struggle of the theology for its identity at the beginning of the 21st century?

The paper deals with the *raison d'être* that the Christian theology has found for itself in order to come out of its crisis of identity and depicts possible challenges for the study of religions in its search for identity.

Marianne Keppens

The Case of the Aryans

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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In most standard textbooks the cultural and religious history of India is still described in the framework of the so-called Aryan Invasion theory. Amongst other things this theory tells us that the religion of India, Hinduism, as well as its social structure, the caste system, were brought to India by a Sanskrit-speaking people that came from the North around 1500 BCE. The last few decades, this theory has given rise to a fierce debate. The AIT, some scholars have argued, is not based on scientific evidence. Its origin, they say, was intrinsically related to the goals of the colonial project. Some of these challenges have taken the form of an opposing theory that claims that the Aryans, their religion and culture, never came from outside but were indigenous to India. The claims of the opponents of the standard version have largely been discarded as being Hindutva oriented and ideologically inspired. As such, the studies and facts presented on both sides of the debate are considered, not for what they tell us about the history of India, but on the basis of the alleged political or ideological agenda they are taken to defend. In my presentation I will argue that one of reasons for this situation is the fact that the theoretical framework in which both the defenders and the opponents of the AIT make their claims is determined by

Western Christian assumptions. Both sides accept that religion is always the religion of a people, that religion has a core sacred text, that language people and religion are intrinsically linked to each other, etc. In order to have an intellectual debate about theories like the AIT we need to challenge the theoretical framework in which the results of linguistic, archaeological and other studies are used in hypotheses about the Indian history.

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Mohammad Hassan Khani

Bringing Study of Religions from Margin to Mainstream in Academic Sphere: A Case-Study of Interdisciplinary Studies at Imam Sadiq University (ISU) in Iran

MON 16:00–17:30 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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Religion and religious studies used to be on the margin of academic sphere in the past. So far study of religions has been the focus of traditional schools and theology faculties at universities at most. There are those who argue against the possibility of including religious studies in the circle of academic disciplines denying any logical connection between religion and other academic fields. But in recent decades there have been attempts to look at this relationship differently. In post revolutionary Iran, and since 1982 to be exact, a new and pioneering way of looking at the issue has been raised trying to find some communalities and similarities between these two, and moreover to combine them and establish a new synthesis out of them. Now after 25 years of hard working at ISU a promising experience is on display. Five faculties with highest standards of academic disciplines are offering MA & PhD degrees in a number of interdisciplinary fields namely Islamic Studies & Management, Islamic Studies & Political Science, Islamic Studies & Economics, Islamic Studies & Law, and Islamic Studies & Communication. The ISU case, according to its founders, is a good example to show how religion and study of religions, in this case Islam, can contribute to developing of humanities and other scientific disciplines making them more functional and relevant to the needs human societies and promoting tolerance, understanding, peace, justice and all other positive functions of religion. This paper is an attempt to introduce this innovation in combining religious studies with other academic subjects at ISU and to examine its success and failure in terms of bringing religious studies from margin to mainstream. It will be also the aim of this paper to explore the challenges facing it.

Martin Klapetek

Religious Organisation as an Equivalent of Social Structure of Family: The Example of Turkish Muslims in Germany

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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Religious organisation as an equivalent of social structure of family is very interesting theme for Muslims in Germany. Owing to work migration of the 1960s and several waves of political refugees since the 1970s, Islam became a visible religion in Germany. As of 2006, there are 3.3 million Muslims (4.0 % of the population). Of these, 1.0 million are German citizens (1.3 %). The large majority of Muslims in Germany is of Turkish origin (over 90 %). Only a minority of the Muslims residing in Germany are members of religious associations. The ones with the highest numerical strength are: Diyanet İşleri Türk-Islam Birliği (DITIB): German branch of the Turkish Presidency for Religious Affairs, Cologne, Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş: close to the Islamist Saadet Partisi in Turkey, Kerpen near Cologne and Verband der islamischen Kulturzentren: German branch of the conservative Süleymanci sect in Turkey, Cologne. They emphasize the importance Turkey's and Muslim identity of their members in Germany. The basic unit of Islamic society is the family, and Islam defines the obligations and legal rights of family members. In Muslims Countries, family is the basic unit of social systems. In Europe, rather Muslims organisations have this status.

—

Theodore Kneupper

J. Krishnamurti's Critique of Religion

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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Here we attempt to delineate J. Krishnamurti's views on religion, whose articulation developed in three phases.

The first phase focuses on the psychological and social problems central to "actual" or organized religions, and their intimate connection with national identity. His primary criticism is that religion so understood hinders its participants from understanding truth and generates inner and outer fragmentation, with numerous negative consequences.

The second phase focuses on what Krishnamurti calls “true religion,” centering on the process of recognizing the actual truth of the mind’s fragmented state and its liberation therefrom, particularly a shift from national to planetary identity (“You are the World”).

In the last phase, this is clarified as involving continuous meditation, the gathering of attention to understand “what is.” This leads to “radical revolution” that entails living interiorly at peace in communion with the sacred, action directed by intelligence, functioning creatively with love and compassion, and the eventual transformation of society.

Finally, we make some critical observations about these views, particularly in relation to national/planetary cultural identity and religion divested from the negative consequences of institutionalization and organization.

—

Attila Kovács

Picturing Hamas: Palestinian Islamic Movement and Visual Representation

WED 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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In the propaganda of the radical Palestinian Islamic movements, specially Hamas the visual representation plays a central position. In those areas as the Gaza Strip where hopelessness and desperation reign, these “graffiti and poster heroes” inspire the young Palestinian generations. The “visualization” of this kind of the radical Islamic propaganda has helped to make the ideas and goals as well as the key figures, specially “martyrs” more nown an popular as ever. It is also to be stated that beside the usual means (as e.g. ideological booklets or pamphlets, discussion circles, summer camps etc.), the visual means as “martyr posters” or other visual and audiovisual expressions have become a part of the technical equipment of the radical Palestinian Islamic movements. These visual means as media of the ideology of these movements are becoming more and more important. My paper is focused on that development and offers a short typology of the visual production of Hamas and its subgroups.



Radek Kundt

Can Cognitive Science of Religion Help Us to Better Understand the Reasons for Nestorius' Downfall?

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • G31

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There are many reasons for Nestorius' personal downfall and this paper explores most of them. But the main aim is to look at the possibility of employing cognitive science in this exploration. In other words: Is it possible that Nestorius was not successful, at least partially, because his “theological correctness” went against the “cognitive optimum”?

One of the main reasons that influenced the result of the Nestorian controversy was the popular opinion of the masses (“vox populi”). This claim may sound as too big an exaggeration but if we take a better look we will find out that it is not. Could this opinion have been formed, among other things, because of natural unintentional human tendency to anthropomorphize god concepts?

I try to show that it is in fact not necessary to go into the analysis of theological concepts and debates to explain why this controversy ended as it did. Nestorius' unpopularity both in the eyes of aristocracy and the people of the city is sufficient for the understanding of Emperor's final decision.

Might there have been a cognitive optimum involved, patterns of mental activity, rooted in the biology of brain functions with direct effect? Could we make a hypothesis where we would see the increasing devotion to Mary as an aspect of underlying cognitive anthropomorphism?

—

Jean-Pierre Laurant

Politica Hermetica: A Laboratory for the Study of Esotericism and Politics

TUE 9:00–10:30 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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Politica Hermetica is an annual review published by L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne and Paris, since 1985. Each issue includes the papers of an annual academic meeting at the Sorbonne and reviews the main books of the field in French, English, Italian, German, Russian...

Our approach is both historical and sociological. The rise of esoteric thoughts had been tied to the establishment of democracy throughout the 19th and the 20th centuries. Secrecy, conspiracy theories went with the setting of the European political landscape. Recently, the French “loi antisecte” had been the cause of new difficulties for the tenants of esoteric thoughts.

—

Christopher Alan Lewis

Religion and Life Perspectives among Young People in the Republic of Ireland

TUE 11:00–13:00 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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Over the last 25 years Ireland has undergone dramatic social transformation as a result of unprecedented economic growth, the “Celtic Tiger”. An area of particular change is the role of religion and the central position of the Catholic Church. Despite these recent changes, there has been little research focused on examining the religious and social attitudes of young people in contemporary Irish society and relating these attitudes to those obtained among comparable European samples. A sample of 1,065 Irish 16–20 year olds completed measures of religiosity and social attitudes as part of a large cross-European study. These results describe the religious perspectives of a sample of young people in contemporary Irish society, in which religion plays an active part in their lives. The religion and culture of Ireland seem secure. Whilst on the one hand traditional and Catholic, the religion of young people in Ireland can be seen on the other hand as modern and adventurous. Personality and gender remain important factors shaping values and orientations, within the context of a religious setting. The results also show how these Irish young people are orientated towards social integration alongside critical integration, which organisations they trust and distrust, how they are generally positive towards Europe, and how their orientations and values may be explored through the themes of individualisation, pluralism, and Europeanisation. Moreover, they are generally apathetic towards politics, and inclined to turn instead to their private and social worlds. Personality and gender remain important factors shaping values and orientations. Subsequent analysis is required to determine how distinct Irish young people are in comparison to other young people in Europe.

Helmut Maassen

Religious Experience in William James and Whitehead and the Question of Truth

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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Whitehead relies to a large extent on William James' concept of experience, which was a rejection of a purely mechanistic understanding of reality. In doing so James particularly stresses the importance of religious experience. Though not explicit, the cosmic ocean, in which the experiencing "I" finds itself embedded, is one of his major metaphysical presuppositions.

For Whitehead and for James, the question remains of how to evaluate experience and, especially in our context, religious experiences. In my view, it is not sufficient to measure religious experience in a Jamesian way purely based on pragmatic results. Whitehead seems to go beyond this. But are his criteria for truth claims adequate? My aim in this paper is to point out some difficulties as well as possible solutions in his metaphysics of experience.

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Tiina Mahlamäki

A Study of Swedenborgian Elements in the Spiritual Orientation of the Finnish National Poet J. L. Runeberg

WED 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The impact of Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1771) on well-known artists—for instance August Strindberg, Edward Munch, Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe—has been widely surveyed. His influence, however, on Finnish literature and art is still an unexplored domain. In this paper some glimpses will be offered to this field, in respect of swedenborgian elements in the art and thinking of the national poet of Finland, Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804–1877). A source which explicitly proves that Runeberg was familiar with, and even deeply impressed by, the spiritual philosophy of Swedenborg, is a letter to his friend Bernhard von Beskow in 1859. Implicitly the influence can be found in several of his essays and poems, of which the very last poem he wrote, "The-lily-of-the-valley" (1877), is analyzed in this

paper. This paper is part of a larger study that is mapping swedenborgian elements in Finnish 19th century literature at a time that was crucial in the construction of the national identity.

Ivar Maksutov

Reconstruction of Anthropological Lexicon as a Method for the History of Religions

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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In my paper I will propose a new method for the History of Religions—a reconstruction of anthropological lexicon, or a “method of anthropological lexicon”. The ultimate subject of this method is considered to be a “human being as a text”. Thus, the method consists of three elements: 1) distinguishing (explication) of key anthropological themes and terms of a meta-language; 2) reconstruction of anthropological terms through description of their semantic fields; and 3) determining links between semantic fields and in this way an organizing the terms in a complete system. In the History of Religions the “method of anthropological lexicon” is to be used primarily in “religious anthropology”, i.e. a comparative study of religious concepts of human being. In the paper I will examine step-by-step five major topics (themes) of “religious anthropology”: anthropogenesis (creation of human being, its primordial state and gender); hamartiology (corruption of human being, mutated or defective state); thanatology (space of death, afterlife); soteriology (state of defeated death and/or corruption); and hyper-anthropology (state of perfect or super-man). The theory will be provided with several examples from historical and contemporary religious traditions in order to prove a usefulness of the method.

Mar Marcos

The Debate over Religious Persuasion and Religious Coercion in Ancient Christianity

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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During the time of persecution (2nd to early 4th century AD), Christian apologists developed an elaborate discourse in favour of religious freedom and against religious coercion. They founded their claim on arguments of varying nature, basically: 1) the

praxis of Roman policy, which had always respected and preserved the religious ethos of the peoples under its rule; 2) the idea that religion was a personal and intimate choice, which could not be imposed by force; 3) the superiority, in philosophical terms, of persuasion over coercion.

The end of persecution after the conversion of Constantine and the increasingly prominent position of the Church in the Christian Empire which ended with the legal prohibition of paganism at the end of the fourth century, led to the introduction of important changes in the Christian discourse of tolerance. The claim to religious liberty was abandoned while the advantages of coercion started to be appreciated. The conviction that Christianity was the true religion, with the mission of converting those in error for their own salvation—even if they did not want it—justified the use of coercion, especially in the case of “inner” enemies, i.e. heretics. Although persuasion was always considered a licit instrument to facilitate conversions and violence was never openly authorised, the use of coercion for the purpose of correcting pagans and heretics was justified with appeals to Biblical examples.

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Xicotencatl Martinez Ruiz

108 Verses (Ślokas) in Context: Mapping Methodological and Theoretical Scenarios for a Tenth Century Sanskrit Text

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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The purpose of this paper is to simply outline how the *Mālinīvijaya-vārttika* written by Abhinavagupta, philosopher and theologian (fl. c. 10th–11th CE, Kāśmīr), plays a central role to elucidate that which I consider one of the most essential concepts to understand the non-dualist philosophical claims of Abhinavagupta, in particular; and his philosophical and religious tradition, in general; that concept is *saṃvit*; which we can simply translate as “consciousness”. My proposal will contend that at the structure of that Sanskrit text underlies the methodology, the scriptural map, and the theoretical ground to gain access into the complex scriptural hierarchy of Trika Śaiva tradition of Kāśmīrī and its main non-dualist claims. My strategy to do so is by develop an exegetical model grounded on the analysis of Sanskrit textual material, especially by analysing and presenting the first translation into English of verses 1-108, second *kānda* of *Mālinīvijaya-vārttika*. The picture of this paper is simple. It will follow two main questions. Can the structure of a tenth century Sanskrit text be a map to analyse a non-dualist philosophical model and its practical implications into the soteriological project? How does the concept of consciousness, as it is presented

by Abhinavagupta in his *Mālinīvijaya-vārttika*, can be the theoretical ground to understand the soteriological project of Trika Śaiva tradition of Kāśmīr, i.e. the accomplishment of the highest goal in life (moksha or liberation)?

—

William Lee McCorkle Jr.

The Fate of Religious Studies: The Future of an Illusion

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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Over the course of the last hundred or more years, scholars have debated whether “religion” can be studied by scientific methods. More importantly recent theorists working within the discipline themselves have questioned the phenomena of religion as an actual category that can be studied. Many of the arguments against a “science of religion” call into question Judeo-Christian paradigms and a post-colonial bias for such an endeavor. While other cultural experts have claimed that there are multiple definitions used by scholars at any given time for religion.

On the other side of the spectrum, cultural anthropologists, evolutionary psychologists, and cognitive scientists have recently started to develop their own “scientific” study of religious phenomena. Based upon archival, ethnographic, and especially experimental research, these scholars view the study of religion in naturalistic terms where religious ideas, practices, and artifacts are a product/by-product/spandrel of an evolved cognitive architecture spanning the last several hundred thousand years.

In this paper, I will argue that the cognitive science of religion (and culture) is a necessary step in theorizing about the nature of religion scientifically and is a progressive movement toward fulfilling Friedrich Max Muller’s call for a *religionswissenschaft*. Furthermore, I will argue that it is not necessary to have a category like religion (outside of heuristics) to proffer explanatory theories that can be empirically tested concerning the vertical and horizontal transmission and distribution of human religiosity.



Andrej Mentel

Folk Model of the Mind in the Contemporary Christian Orthodox Hagiography

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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Folk models of the mind are systems of culturally shared, mostly implicit knowledge that members of particular culture assume about the human psyche. They provide people with explanations concerning the question, how the mind works.

Following the ideas of two cognitive anthropologists—Naomi Quinn and Roy D'Andrade—any kind of discourse produced in particular culture enacts shared cultural models. This should be particularly true for narratives constructed as the medium of cultural transmission. On the other hand, there exists an elaborate explicit expert model of the mind provided by the Christian Orthodox spiritual theology. Thus, I can formulate my hypothesis in following two steps:

1. There exist a coherent folk model of the mind shared through contemporary Christian Orthodox hagiographies and other religious narratives.
2. This folk model of the mind need not to be consistent with the explicit, expert model articulated as the part of patristic spiritual theology. Rather, these two models can be treated as separate and qualitatively distinct systems of beliefs.

Methodically, I apply the kinds of discourse analysis based on the extraction of fundamental propositions and metaphors. As for the textual base, I use the popular hagiographies of the contemporary Christian Orthodox saints written in Slovak and Serbian language.

—

Attila Molnar

Peace and/or Truth Claim of Religion

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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The separation of religion and politics, church and state is typically discussed in terms of freedom. This intended separation prefers privatized and civil religion, while this intention would marginalize the critical truth claims of religion.

The paper presupposes that transcendental knowledge may undervalues the immanency (naming it unjust, servile and the like) which is connected to imperfection, enforcement and lying. Commonly, there may be conflict between these

immanency and transcendence (see the returning philosopher's problem with cave dwellers). Whilst the first values peace, tranquility, security and problem-free life, the transcendence may invade into the immanent world as truth claims, or absolutely other, unspeakable, unthinkable. The ambiguous character of these truth claims involved in the meaning of mania, and there no certain measure or method can be seen to solve this ambiguity, to separate pure chaos from perfect order or eternal peace.

—

Alex Ntung

The Influence of Beliefs in Witchcraft and Prophecy on Modern Political Processes in the Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): Case Studies from South Kivu

TUE 9:00–10:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has endured political and social turmoil since gaining independence from Belgium in 1960. Different forms of violence, as a result of conflict and political oppression, have been used to foster strategies of political control, and have important social dimensions. However, dynamics of conflicts have often been interpreted simplistically, and conveying the complexity of the situation has remained an issue. Unlike Western concepts of its diverse political forces which can often be empirically studied, in DRC, as in other parts of Africa, some causal factors of conflict and political events are concealed. Unrecognized or undermined by the UN peace-making or peace-building initiatives, when planning the intervention strategies these concealed dynamics act to undermine their efficacy. In this paper, I will explore the significance of occult beliefs dynamics (the beliefs in “invisible worlds”, the world of ancestors, “evil” or “good spirits”, and belief in religious supernaturalism) in the construction of modern political ideologies, modern conflicts and the instruments used to obtain and understand political results (Schatzberg, M. 2000:33).



Susanne Olsson

Egypt Between Privatisation and Islamisation

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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This paper discusses the area of Islamisation and secularisation/privatisation in Egypt. An Islamisation of the public sphere seems to occur in Egypt. Religion again takes more space in various spheres that earlier seemed to become more differentiated. Loyalties to the Egyptian state seem to be important, but religion appears to claim a larger portion of people's loyalties and identity constructions, which may be an effect of globalisation processes and the effects these have on the country. The Egyptian state attempts to make citizens accept a privatised version of Islam. Naturally, there is opposition to this and there are also some trends that seem to comply with such politics. In the course of this, religious traditions, and ways of mediating these, have been transformed. In this way, new religious publics can be seen as taking part in an active and creative construction of religious traditions. All of this implies a question of who holds, or try to hold, interpretative authority of Islam and how is it negotiated. What implications does this have for the transformation of religious traditions? What place may religion get in the Egyptian public sphere? This paper wishes to problematise such aspects more thorough.

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Boniface Omatta

Constructing Yoruba Religion Through the Internet: Between Authenticity and Fakeness

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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There is no doubt that the internet, more than any media type, has widened religious landscape in the global world. As Lorne Dawson (2004) acknowledges, media are bearers of messages that influence our religious dispositions and way of thinking. Hence, they are not passive avenues for the dissemination of information. With the internet, new religious communities are being created and the existing ones are passing through transformation. The impact of computer mediated communication and social transformation on religion pose serious challenges to the study of religion. Since religions are transforming in the course of history, and more especially with the presence of internet, to what extent can we determine what is authentic or fake about a religion. Yoruba Religion, like other religions, utilises the presence of the internet to

gain recognition and visibility by undergoing transformation. But, this “necessary” transformation through the new opportunity offered by the internet is viewed as fake at the local communities. In this paper I want to evaluate the championing of Yoruba traditional religion through the internet a long side the case study of Mutwa as analysed by Chidester, in order to problematise authenticity and fakeness of ATR.

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Lieve Orye

In Search of Metatheoretical Reflexivity Type Theories of Religion: The Parochialism of Religious Studies Lies in Its Global Outlook

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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The last decennia globalization has become an important topic in religious studies. The argument has been made that paying attention to religion in its globalizing context will help religious studies to shed its parochial, ethnocentric character (e.g. N. Smart). I will however turn this argument somewhat on its head: the parochialism of religious studies lies precisely in its global gaze. Starting from anthropologist Tim Ingold’s reflections on the globe and the global outlook, I will first give an outline of what this global outlook entails and explain why it is problematic. I will make clear that Ingold’s analysis is not one more variation to the argument that a global view overlooks the local and that paying attention to glocalization is the solution. Ingold’s work allows me to expand Mendieta’s reflections on the conceptual links between theories of globalization and conceptualizations of religion. Mendieta’s litmus test for the appropriateness of theories for the global age is taken seriously but rephrased for theories of religion. That is, the degree to which a particular conceptual reflection on the “religious” and on the concept of religion dispenses or incorporates a reflection on the “globalizing” and on the concepts of globe-global-globalization indicates the appropriateness of the theory for this global age. In other words, religion theories should strive to be of the second order, metatheoretical reflexive type, reflecting not only on the concept of “religion”, but participating in the endeavor to think “the unity of society” as well as “planetary unity” anew, attempting in this exercise to see how we have come to see ourselves looking at ourselves from afar.

Gatis Ozoliņš

The Set of Values in the Contemporary Latvian “Dievturi” Movement

TUE 9:00–10:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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The Latvian Congregation of “Dievturi” was registered by the Spiritual Affairs of the Republic of Latvia on July 26. “Dievturība” was officially reconstructed in Latvia on April 18, 1990. The most significant idea that unites the “dievturi” movement according to the contemporary Latvian “dievturi” group members is “dievturi” faith as a Latvian religion. The major activities of “dievturi” groups are exaltations, annual festivity rituals, family festivals, historico-cultural tours, folklore group concerts, exhibitions, communal labour, preparing publications and articles in mass media, organizing summer camps, intense cultivation of Latvianness, meditative rituals, celebrating the great annual festivals—autumn, winter, spring, and summer solstices and significant events of the Latvian history; their aim is public profession of “dievturi” faith.

Among the most significant values are kindness, truthfulness and accord, world cognition and joy, honesty, respect towards the values of other people as long as they do not interfere with the individual freedom of the human being to openly express his or her world view. Among the positive values are also family, veneration of the ancestors’ virtues and generally human values, healthy lifestyle, respect towards nature, ability to become part of the world processes and the cosmic rhythm, wish to pass over the Latvian virtues and the traditional culture legacy to the future generations. Many of “dievturi” emphasize the significance and worth of tolerance inviting to give a closer attention to the philosophy of Latvian folk-songs, instead of engaging in social and political activities. The participants’ desire to place their personal interests above the aspects of social involvement is treated negatively.



Panayotis Pachis

Redescribing the Oriental Cults of Graeco-Roman Age According to the “Modes of Religiosity”

MON 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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The “Modes of Religiosity”, proposed by the Oxford anthropologist Harvey Whitehouse, are applicable to the study of the so-called cults of the Graeco-Roman age. Taking into account all the characteristics of these cults and especially those of Isis/Sarapis and Cybele/Attis, we may consider that they can be assigned to the so-called “imagistic mode of religiosity”. The imagistic modality can clearly be seen to develop when these cults attained their innovative form as mystery cults (1st century B.C. – 1st century A.D.) with the initiation rite as their dominant component. Could this specific proposal apply to all rituals of the above cults (for example, those described by the frescos of Herculaneum, the Navigium Isidis, the rituals of Cybele/Attis cult) or only to their mystical rituals? Or, on the contrary, could the former be considered *mutatis mutandis* as a kind of “orthopraxy” (?) that characterizes the Roman religion? Is it also possible that D. L. Smail’s ideas (*On Deep History and the Brain*, 2008) on “teletropic” and “autotropic mechanisms” could be applied to these specific rituals?

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Dalibor Papoušek

Christian Origins in Perspective of Academic Study of Religions: The Concepts of Heikki Räisänen and Burton L. Mack

TUE 9:00–10:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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During the 1990s two parallel research programmes concerning the earliest Christianity were proclaimed: the programme of “non-theological” New Testament Studies by Heikki Räisänen, embodied in his book “Beyond the New Testament Theology” (1990), and the project of a “Redescription of Christian Origins” pronounced by Burton L. Mack at the SBL Consultation in Philadelphia (1995). Both these programmes found their inspirations within the academic study of religions. While Räisänen’s programme follows the Wredean conception of the

Religionswissenschaft as an alternative context for the New Testament Theology, Mack strives to establish a radically new research framework disengaged from theological demands.

The paper compares theoretical and methodological outlines of two projects following the mentioned programmes explicitly: a theory of early Christianity proposed by Gerd Theissen and the SBL Seminar “On Christian Origins” arranged by Mack’s circle.

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Ugo Perego

DNA, Genealogy, and Religious Identity: Overcoming the Concept of Race while Exploring Our Unique Heritage

TUE 9:00–10:30 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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Family history is a popular past-time among people from many nations thanks to the great abundance of genealogical and historical data that has become available in the past few decades through personal computers, digital imaging and the Internet. Even more recent is the application of DNA testing with the objective to extend, verify, or reconstruct previously unavailable family history information. In fact, it is estimated that over half million people have already purchased a recreational DNA test with the expectations to learn something about their own ancestry. Due to the inheritance properties of DNA, it is possible to identify informative markers that have survived in our genome from past generations and often take a glimpse into one’s lost heritage. Similar genetic profiles (haplotypes) have been grouped in clusters (haplogroups) that are in turn found at high frequencies in particular geographic regions and ethnic groups. For example, a DNA test on the male Y chromosome could result in a specific marker (the Cohen Modal Haplotype) that has been linked to the Jewish priestly class descendant from Moses’ brother, Aaron. A recent research on Ashkenazi Jews also identified maternally inherited genetic markers linked to four founding Jewish “mothers” (Behar D. et al., 2006). Individuals testing positive for this marker may indeed have Jewish ancestry and lean toward Judaism as a once lost and now rediscovered heritage. Other groups are using DNA testing to complement what they knew about their ancestry and to supplement records that have been lost through centuries of persecution. An example is a recent project involving over a thousand individuals with Mennonite ancestry that are experiencing a renewed interest in their past thanks to genetic links to the homeland of their forefathers. This lecture will focus on the impact of DNA testing on personal and religious identity, family history, and the concept of race.

Ugo Perego

Using Genetic Testing Techniques in Religious Studies: Examples from Mormon History

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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Traditionally, the study of history, including the history of religions, has relied on man-made records, such as written documents, art, oral histories, etc. However, during the past two decades, advancements in the field of DNA research introduced new disciplines such as archaeogenetics and genetic anthropology that are also branching out into the study of religious-related topics. For example, DNA obtained from fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls provided new insights about the Qumran community (Woodward S.R., 1999) and DNA analysis of skeletal remains attributed to the Evangelist Luke was used to infer his ancestral origin (Vernesi C. et al., 2001).

The purpose of this lecture is to present novel findings with regards of two highly debated events in the early history of The Church of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons), namely the practice of polygamy and the Mountain Meadows Massacre, through DNA analysis.

Joseph Smith Jr., founder of the LDS faith, officially introduced polygamy as a higher form of marriage in 1843 (D&C 132) stating, among other reasons, the need to raise a righteous posterity to the Lord. The practice was eventually discontinued toward the end of the 19th century. It has been recorded that during his lifetime Smith himself married at least 33 women (Compton T., 1997), but the question remains: Where are the children, if any, of Joseph Smith by his plural wives?

DNA samples collected from a number of Joseph Smith's descendants (both from his first and subsequent wives) are providing an unexpected scenario to the long-standing question about Smith's posterity. DNA testing was similarly employed to solve a 150-year old matter about the paternity of a child linked to the infamous massacre that took place at Mountain Meadows in Southern Utah.



Gabriel Pirický

**Academic Interpretations of Islam in Communist
Czechoslovakia: Rudolf Macůch, Karel Petráček
and Ivan Hrbek**

MON 16:00–17:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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Due to the bipolar division of the world until 1989 there has been in wider Europe only a superficial knowledge of the interpretations of Islam behind the Iron curtain, and the orthodox Marxist presentations, mainly by the Soviet authors, were considered ever present in Central Europe, too. This is, however, an incomplete and to a large degree false view. As major academic works on Islam published in Czechoslovakia between 1948–1989 were, albeit for very specific reasons, without references to the classical Marxist-Leninist formulas and contained ideas elaborated within the Western intellectual debate, I suggest that despite numerous limitations there was a clear connection between the Czechoslovak and Western scholarship in the field.

This contribution examines the works of three outstanding Czechoslovak Orientalists and Islamicists, Rudolf Macůch, Karel Petráček and Ivan Hrbek, in order to show that writing on Islam in communist Czechoslovakia, although sparse, did not occur in isolation from Western scholarly debates. In so doing this essay further suggests that Czechoslovak scholarship in the area of Islamic studies did openly and widely borrowed from western concepts on issues of methodology. More concretely, the paper deals in detail with two issues as presented in the writings of the three authors: biography of the prophet Muhammad and issues confronting 20th century Islam. Also, on the basis of examples taken from their writings, this contribution attempts to ask to what extent did these three Czechoslovak Islamicists escape the “errors of method” for which Orientalists generally have been attacked by the Palestinian-American theorist and and cultural critic Edward Said and his followers.



Barbora Polífková

Issue of Primogeniture in the Sagas of the Hebrew Patriarchs: Possibilities and Limits of Anthropological Approaches

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • G31

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Primogeniture, or succession by the eldest son, seems to have been the preferred rule in ancient Israel as this institution is explicitly promulgated in one passage (Dt 21:15–17), and is implicitly assumed in many accounts of individual cases. However, biblical acknowledgement of primogeniture usually occurs in contexts where the rule is broken as in the life stories of important religious and political figures, including Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and David.

The paper will discuss possible interpretations of these transgressions with the help of textual analysis confronted with archaeological picture of the times, where the crucial textual redactions were done. Basically the main concern of the paper is not a historical or anthropological “correction” of biblical text but a deeper understanding of the editorial intensions which undoubtedly transformed the ancient traditions about ancestors.

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Rasa Pranskevičiūtė

Utopian Communities—Ideality and Transformations: The Case of Vissarion and Anastasia Movements

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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The paper focuses on the Vissarion religious movement and the Anastasia “spiritual” movement classifiable as a New Age ideology. Both of these groups arose in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, spreading throughout Europe from the East. Both movements studied, in their self-presentation and self-understanding, relied upon the perceived failure of the cultural mainstream in Eastern Europe and the turn to the self as critiques of modern society. The largest community of Vissarions, known as the United Family, has established what they call “Heaven on Earth”. The aim of establishing such a community, involved the gradual disassociation from what Vissarions term the “Old World” (civilized society) by means of creative arts and crafts as well as intensive physical and spiritual work—all of which

have the approval of their leadership. Similarly, the Anastasian understanding and definition of space, both secular and religious, results in the creation of “Love Spaces”, family homesteads about one hectare in size, conceived of as linking “person, nature, and cosmos.” The Space of Love provides the context for an alternative system of individual social structures. Anastasian groups comparatively open to outside social influence evidence significant growth, while more conservative and insular Vissarion groups tend to fade away and die. The paper presents results of fieldwork research on Vissarion and Anastasia groups in Lithuania, Latvia and Russia concerning the reasons of establishing, the mode and the transformation of ideal utopian communities in these movements (2005–2008; project “Society and Lifestyles”; Project coordinator: Centre for Cultural Studies, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania).

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Janis Priede

Educational, Cultural and Political Engagement of the Theosophical Groups in Latvia

WED 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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Contemporary Theosophy forms a wide network of values, beliefs and activities in the countries that have undergone the process of emerging from Soviet and post-Soviet influence in the political, cultural and economic sphere. The Living Ethics or Agni Yoga groups are an essential part of this network. Our research as part of the project “Society and Lifestyles: Towards Enhancing Social Harmonisation through Knowledge of Subcultural Communities” has been focused on the members of three theosophical movements in Latvia: (1) Latvian Roerich Society, composed mainly by ethnic Latvians; (2) Latvian department of the international centre of the Roerichs, composed by ethnic Latvians together with other nationalities, mainly Russians; (3) Garda’s group of the extreme right, characterized by the presence of “outsiders” who brings various ideas, for example, the call for a castration of drug-users and alcohol-dependants. The core values by the members of these three groups are based on selected common beliefs that becomes central for the members of the group and group’s activities. From the comparison of the corresponding values of the theosophical groups results that it is possible to point out culture as the axis of core values mentioned by the members of Latvian Roerich Society, education as a keyword for the members of the international centre of the Roerichs, and politics as the axis of values of Garda’s group. The most surprising is that the different orientation of the core values is so evident in spite the same source of the beliefs (the Living Ethics or Agni Yoga) present in each of these groups.

Monika Recinová

Study of Religions as a Philosophical Discipline

MON 14:00–15:30 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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Study of religions is definitely one of the social sciences. The base of these sciences always was philosophy. The present methodological doubts of religious studies concerning appropriate methods are part of general methodological uncertainty of social sciences, mainly caused by interrupted contact with philosophy. The study of religions should turn back to its beginnings, which were laid in Greek philosophy (passing from mythos to logos by Presocratic philosophers and followers in their rational approaches). The study of beginnings of ancient philosophical interpretation of religious phenomena can instruct our modern encounter with religious facts. It does not mean to restrict study of religions into philosophy of religion only. History of religions, ethnology, anthropology of religions, sociology, psychology and others can provide us with necessary material. But the comparison and interpretation of these data can be only accomplished on the basis of philosophical approaches. Otherwise we would have an amount of religious data, but no device how to understand them. The philosophical approach does not mean the usage of history of philosophical ideas or prepared philosophical theories, neither submission of religious studies to “philosophical” preconceptions. Philosophy does mean rational understanding and explanation of religious data. It allows “mute” religious data, as they are in themselves, to “speak”, which means to show their rational meaning in anthropology, ethics, epistemology and metaphysics. Philosophy also provides inevitable plurality of interpretation and has its own instruments of critique and internal sublimation of ideas. Back to philosophy can be our way from doubts.

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Britta Rensing

Individual Expression in Practitioners’ Poetry

MON 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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The paper deals with the importance of focusing on texts produced by individual practitioners in addition to the study of holy scripts, and especially in religions which do not operate with holy scripts at all. As an example the paper shows how lyrical texts of practitioners of neopaganism unfold the variety of neopagan belief and expression. By stylistic devices like e.g. metaphor, sound and attraction of the senses,

lyrical texts of practitioners become poetic pieces of art. As poetry in neopaganism is a basic technique of spiritual expression, the trans-disciplinarity between the field of religious studies/the study of religion(s) and lyrical analysis in the field of English Literature becomes obvious as in this case the methods of analysing lyrical texts necessarily enter the study of religious texts. This is especially true of neopaganism, because here individual texts are explicitly meant to be religious poetry. The paper gives some examples of how differences in belief (eg. holistic concept and polytheistic concept) and basic assumptions of the worldview (eg. congruence of the sacred and the profane) can be derived and understood from the lyrical analysis of the practitioners' lyrical texts. The paper aims to show that poetry written by individual practitioners is an important textual source for the study of religions.

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Isabelle Rieben

Spiritual Coping and Attachment in Schizophrenia

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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Several researches show a high prevalence of religious coping among patients suffering from psychosis. The aim of this exploratory research is to better understand that phenomenon. Besides, there is evidence of high levels of insecure attachment in individuals with schizophrenia in comparison with control groups. In Bowlby's normative attachment conceptualization, the term "attachment relationship" does not refer to any type of close relationship but exclusively to those that meet four criteria: proximity maintenance, safe haven, secure base, and separation distress. The present study is based on the assumption that these four criteria are reasonably met as concerns the relationship of the believer with a spiritual object/figure (i.e., proper to the believer's personal spiritual system). Hence, it is suggested that some aspects of attachment are similar for the believer in relation to his/her spiritual object/figure and for the child in relation to her parents, that is, they serve the function of obtaining/maintaining a sense of felt security when in distress (Sroufe & Waters, 1977). Moreover, attachment theory allows for predictions, linking earlier interpersonal experiences, especially early child-parents interactions and current interpersonal styles, and the way in which maladaptive patterns of relationships are maintained. Ten patients with schizophrenia or schizo-affective disorder have therefore been interviewed in order to measure their attachment style, to assess symptomatology and to explore their relation to a spiritual figure as a form of spiritual coping. Results of this research will be present at the conference.

Jason Rose

Astronomical Astrology: Calculation and Conjunction in the Work of Cyprian von Leowitz

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑥ FACULTY OF ARTS • G32

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The Czech mathematician Cyprian von Leowitz (1514–1574) developed a unique system of astrology based upon highly-accurate astronomical observations and calculations based upon the methods of Nicolaus Copernicus and Erasmus Reinhold. Leowitz linked positions of celestial bodies and other astronomical phenomena to key historical events (thus forming “conjunctions” between the two) in an effort to predict future events during similar astronomical phenomena. Leowitz was thus attempting to base his astrological predictions upon mathematically-grounded calculations. His work earned him the respect of such figures as Tycho Brahe, John Dee and the patronage of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II. This study will examine the memoirs and published works of Leowitz in order to present a detailed analysis of his theory of conjunctions and its place in his work, as well as Leowitz’s place in the history of astronomy.

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Andrea Rota

Religious Education in the French-Speaking Switzerland

TUE 9:00–10:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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In Switzerland religious education varies greatly between cantons (Swiss regional governments). However, some harmonization can be found in the French-speaking part of Switzerland due to teaching materials edited by the publisher ENBIRO (Enseignement Biblique et Interreligieux Romand). Indeed, the methodology suggested by ENBIRO often constitutes an actual syllabus. In this paper we first analyze the methodological, thematic and deontological lines suggested by ENBIRO, in order to understand its orientation. Next, religious education in French-speaking Switzerland will be analyzed not only from a pedagogical point of view but also under its political and social aspects. The cantons of Neuchâtel and of Valais serve as examples for this study. Apart from the Canton of Geneva, Neuchâtel is the only secular canton in Switzerland. In its school programs no kind of religious education was contemplated until 2003. On the other hand, the Canton of Valais has a strong catholic tradition and the introduction of ENBIRO textbooks generated large

controversies. This paper is based on the first empirical research undertaken within the Swiss National Fund's project "Religious education between state and religious communities" under the direction of Dr. Ansgar Jödicke.

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Galina Rousseva-Sokolova

Teaching Religion in Bulgarian Schools: A Psychodrama in Search of a Plausible Ending

TUE 11:00–13:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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The public debate about the place of religion in Bulgarian schools has been slow to take off. Though arguments in favor of the reintroduction of religion have been heard soon after the democratic changes of the early 90s, they failed to reach the list of vital priorities on the agenda of Bulgarian society. The necessary legislative regulations pertaining to school curricula took ten years to get effective and even today are scarce and partially inconsistent. Meanwhile, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which could be expected to take a strong position in this debate, was weakened by years of internal fighting and dissent. Today "Religion" is taught throughout elementary and secondary school as an optional subject coming in two variations: Christianity and Islam. The perspective is definitely confessional, though it is supposed to allow for some form of inter-religious dialogue in the higher grades. Now voices are being heard in favor of turning Religion into a compulsory subject. The church is more assertive and vocal on this matter than ever, tending to use indiscriminately "Religion" for catechism and speaking of its "restoration" to the position it held in state education before 1947. Indeed, there is a feeling among the decision makers that the church should be somehow compensated for the injustices it suffered for forty years. This feeling of guilt has prevented them so far from taking the side of nonconfessional education about religions. On the other hand the position of the academic study of religions was not firmly established at the university, leaving the professional training of school teachers of religion exclusively to the theological faculty. A newly created Centre for the Study of Religions might change the balance in the future.



Jana Rozehnalová

Exploring the Theories of “the Other” in the Context of European Medieval Travel Accounts

MON 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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The paper will discuss several influential theories of “the Other” (J. Smith, T. Todorov, S. Greenblatt) with the intention to show their applicability, limits and prospects for further elaboration on the example of medieval European attitude toward its “Others”. The aim of this analysis is to find significant features which played an important role in the process of the development of the concept of “the Others” in European Middle Ages.

The analysis is based on European medieval descriptions of Asian “idolates” which can be found in travel accounts of such authors as Marco Polo, William of Rubruck, John Plano Carpini, Odoric of Pordenone etc.

Detailed exploration of particular constelations in which such conception of “the Other” arose, also enable us to evaluate the actual relevance of these reports and discuss their potential not only for the study of described religions, but also for the study of the authors’ own background and conceptions, including the term “religion” itself. However, I argue that the study of representations of “the Others” cannot be restricted to the application of the theory of orientalism on a historic material, but it must be treated in a way which recognizes the specificity of these encounters.

—

Csongor Sarkozy

Sunny Life: A Case Study of a Bricolage Religious Group

MON 14:00–15:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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Sunny Life Foundation is a Hungarian “esoteric Christian” community which holds all the qualities of a new religious group, or even a cult, but without ever officially declaring this. The group’s sole leader defines himself as a lecturer, who has educations like study of religion, psychology, anthropology, alternative healer and illusionist. His very frequent lectures attended by thousands include almost everything from the New-Age market from angelology and fairytales through anthropology, Eastern spiritualities, natural healing therapies, until old Hungarian neopaganism, but everything is included in a frame of a so-called esoteric

Christianity. This case study and analysis using the method of social representation of a “wholesale” bricolage religious group, may show a new approach on how a crypto-religious leader could fulfil the spiritual needs of very different individuals by creating an old-fashioned community.

—
Jacob Senholt

Sinister Strategies: Political Insight Roles in the Order of the Nine Angles

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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The Order of the Nine Angles has long been infamous among scholars as well as among practitioners of the so-called “Left Hand Path”, for its explicit combination of esoteric doctrines of “Traditional Satanism” and far right National Socialist politics. This combination of esotericism and politics is exemplified both in groups led by the order such as The Black Order, as well in the order’s own political branch the Temple 88. Likewise the various order manuscripts such as *Nexion—A Guide to Sinister Strategy*, describe the order’s preferred method of influencing world politics, namely the adaption of political insight roles. This paper will examine the concept of insight roles according the Order of the Nine Angles, as well as provide concrete examples of how the order has influenced the political discourse through both National Socialism and Islam. Secondly the paper will attempt to give some methodological considerations on how scholars studying radical political groups should approach their object of study in order to avoid unwilling participation in the often covert and manipulative strategies of such groups.

—
George Sieg

Illumination and Enlightenment

MON 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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Anti-Semitic conspiracism evolved from the milieu of anti-Illuminatist and anti-Masonic conspiracism in the 18th century. The myth of a “world conspiracy” was ultimately applied to such constructions as the Learned Elders of Zion after already having been elaborated in a variety of forms during the Enlightenment period. The infamous Illuminati were a primary target of these projections, especially because

they actually did exist as a socio-politically focused esoteric conspiracy. The Jesuits themselves sometimes subscribed to anti-occult conspiracist ideas but were also frequent antagonists in such conceptions, sometimes even being regarded as secretly behind various occult plots. Jews came to be seen as beneficiaries of, and therefore associated with, the demise of throne and altar in part because of the progress of Jewish emancipation. Some Jews had also been actually admitted to certain Masonic and esoteric groups, ranging from the somewhat reactionary (the Gold-und Rosenkreutz) to the non-reactionary (such as the Asiatic Brethren). They ultimately came to be regarded as either agencies of the Masonic world conspiracy or even its authors. My paper will consider the conspiracism of Robertson, Barruel, de Mousseaux, and Chabauty, and its contribution to the mythology of a Jewish world conspiracy once combined with classical and medieval anti-Semitic traditions. I will also suggest the evolutionary psychology of Kevin MacDonald as a potentially useful model for understanding the development of anti-Semitism through these various esoteric political and conspiracist forms.

—

Ondřej Sládek

From Prague to Paris and Back: Structuralism Revisited

MON 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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Structuralism, which arose and expanded in social sciences in the last century, surely represents one of the most influential approaches to the study of language, myth and religion. Claude Lévi-Strauss is considered one of the founders of this specific methodological approach. Today, the connections between linguistic and literary structuralism and Lévi-Strauss's anthropological structuralist theory are well known, however, the decisive influence of the Prague School on general structural anthropology and especially on Lévi-Strauss's structuralism is permanently ignored, in spite of the fact that the conjunction between Prague School and Lévi-Strauss was mediated by Roman Jakobson, who "passed down" the theoretical heritage of Prague School. Nevertheless, many questions still remain: What was the connection between Lévi-Strauss and Jakobson? What ideas did Lévi-Strauss really borrow from Jakobson and Prague School?

The first part of the paper focuses on the (a) analysis of transmissions of both versions of structuralist theory—from Prague to Paris (and back), and (b) transformations of their theoretical concepts and their foundations. The second part of the paper introduces a revised version of Czech structuralism (after post-modernism and poststructuralism) and how it may have been an inducement for the contemporary study of religions.

*Vladimír Smékal*¹, *Irena Ocetková*², *Ladislav Koubek*³,
*Josef Stuchlý*⁴, *Jiří Vander*⁵

Spirituality and the Quality of Life

MON 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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This essay has summarized the results of several empiric researches of the authors of statements that have surveyed the relationship between the practice of Christian religions and the quality of life. The surveys were carried out on university students of various subject matters as well as on converts with university education.

The term Christian religious practice in the surveys means the effort of the respondents to respect the demands of given religion, or at least admit them and accept as important for life. The specific emphasis was concurrently put on the spiritual dimension of religious practice—i.e. as experiencing their own relationship to holiness and internal pleasure from the new life dimension. The quality of life means satisfaction with conducting own life, respecting justified interests of the others, sharing positive values of the community and the joy of life. The important information from monitoring the adult converts has been a change of their behavior in the reference group that—based on the evaluation by other group members—either positively supports their quality of life, or even disconcerts.

The results are not unique and mainly prove on the statistically important level of conclusiveness, that practicing religious belief has cultivated the personality. In the discussion of research, the authors think of the indefiniteness of the results and come to the conclusion that the respondents whose religious practice does not contribute to the positive quality of life were given the interpretation of God as a strict judge, or with derision, even jeering on the part of the members of their study or profession groups, and the religious community has not functioned as the source of support.

In more general conclusions the authors think about the function of religion in the life of individuals as well as the society and they consider the extent to what the positive religious inputs for the life quality can be replaced by the ideals of humanism or other interest societies.

Barbora Spalová

Reflexive Steps During an Anthropological Research in the Christian Communities

MON 16:00–17:30 ⑥ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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Since 2000 I have done the anthropological research concerned by memory and the regimes of power in different Christian communities in Northern Bohemia (Catholic parishes, Unitas Fratrum community, Baptist churches, Apostolic church community etc.). I took part in many religious activities such as masses, gatherings, prayer groups, confessions, catechisms, spiritual trainings, repetitions of liturgical music... For me as for a practicing Catholic these research experiences were also religious experiences, sometimes quite problematic religious experiences. I want to discuss following reflexive steps I find important during the research, the analysis and the entextualisation:

— Investment of personal identities: In accordance with feminist methodologies I do invest my personal identities including the religious one into the relationships with research participants. My field notes are full of the descriptions of our interactions which can be read as translation processes.

— Dangers of proximity: To do as a Christian a research in Christian communities can be dangerous because the researcher should be aware of mixing up one's own personal interpretations of the experience with possibly different interpretations of research participants.

— Dialogical entextualisation: In order to be comprehensible and meaningful also for the research participants (and not only for my social science auditorium) I stopped to „secularize“ my scientific texts. I try to put the emic and ethic formulations in dialogue. To write one text for different publics is a demanding reflexive experience.

—Work with the reflections from the field: The questions what to include (and how) from the reflections of the research participants in my final text is a last part of the analysis.

Anita Stasulane

Yoga of the Roerichs in Practice

WED 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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Daugavpils University, Latvia

Theosophists have a particular role in the popularization of Eastern religious ideas: they interpret Buddhism and Hinduism in the light of Western Esotericism. Roerichs have created a new variant of Yoga by supplementing H. Blavatsky's doctrine on the evolution of the spiritual sphere with a key notion of energy. Nevertheless the Roerichs did not elaborate a systematic and detailed exposition of their Yoga methods. The presentation treats the ideas and methods of Agni Yoga in a systematic way to prepare the ground for comparative analysis of the Yoga practices in the original context of Hinduism, and the Yoga by Roerichs as practised in the Eastern-oriented esoteric circles and theosophical subcultures of the Eastern Europe. The presentation is based on the research that has been done in the EU Sixth Framework Programme research project „Society and Lifestyles: Towards Enhancing Social Harmonisation through Knowledge of Subcultural Communities”.

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Zrinka Stimac

Religious Plurality in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Issue of Religious Education

MON 16:00–17:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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Bosnia and Herzegovina, the country with approx. 4,5 million inhabitants, is known as the country of complex ethnic and religious composition. The religious plurality has been “defined” within the Law on Legal Position of Churches and Religious Communities from 2004 which says that there are four legally equal historical religious institutions in the state: the Islamic and the Jewish Religious Community, the Catholic Church and the Serbian Orthodox Church. The ratification of the Dayton Peace Agreement and following processes such as the political transition, (re)building of the civil society and the steps toward the EU integration—many of them introduced by the International Community (OHR and OSCE)—influence the spatial spread and institutional reorganisation of religious majorities and minorities.

In my presentation I will focus on the internal and external concepts of religious plurality in the educational sector. On the one hand the ministries of education introduced the confessional religious education; following there is Islamic, Catholic

and Serbian-Orthodox Religious Education in public schools. On the other hand the International Community has criticized the confessional Religious Education as the “national” and reflecting not the religious plurality. Consequently the OSCE in cooperation with the Goethe-Institute in Sarajevo started its own school subject “Culture of Religions” which is teaching about religions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also this conception must be criticised. Who created it, why to learn only about the religions of one country and whom is this subject going to reach? The sources for my presentation are the state laws, documents, religious press, curricula and the textbooks.

—
Hermann E. Stockinger

Esotericism in the Habsburg Empire under the Emperor Leopold I (1658–1705): A Survey

TUE 11:00–13:00 ⑤ FACULTY OF ARTS • G32

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The departing point of this speech is the question whether “occultism” is the “main problem of the baroque era” of the Habsburg countries in the 17th century, as EVANS suggests in his startling book “The making of the Habsburg monarchy 1550–1700”. In this survey I discuss to which amount the three disciplines of esotericism: magic, astrology and alchemy can be found in the era of Leopold I., whether there exists a sort of “tradition” and which are the most important influences and intellectual connections of Habsburgian esotericists which thinkers throughout Europe. I stress the discipline of magic, especially 1) the relation of magic to the natural sciences, 2) the distinction between magia licita and magia illicita, 3) the doctrine of sym- and antipathy and 4) the mains subjects which are treated in magia naturalis.

—
Steven Sutcliffe

Second Order Tradition as an Epistemological Problem: “Culturalists” Versus “Naturalists”

TUE 9:00–10:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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Recurring uncertainties about the disciplinary identity of Religious Studies stem from two interconnected problems: the status of “religion” as a category, and the methodological constitution of “religious studies” as a practice. Disagreement on the

epistemological status of “religion” has split the field into interpretative and explanatory streams, which coexist uneasily. The problem of identifying “second order tradition” (Capps) is thus an historical effect of unresolved epistemological tensions between “culturalists” and “naturalists”. I sketch their main features with reference to contemporary debates, before concluding with a brief exploration of possible common ground. This would retain focus on an “evidence-based” methodology while seeking to incorporate differentiated levels of understanding and explanation from the biological-cognitive to the socio-cultural.

—

Eva Szolar

Church-Owned Higher Education and the Democratization of Romania

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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The re-appearance of the Church-owned higher education has specific functions in the democratization process of post-socialist Romania. The Soviet cultural and educational policy has build a monolithic, uniformalized and state owned national education system based on the sole legitimized Marxist and anticlerical scientific ideology. After 1989/90 the main priority of Romanian educational policies it was to rebuild the higher education system based on the value of pluralism, democracy and freedom. The legitimization process and the specific challenges faced by the Church-owned and autonomous higher education in Romania inform us about the state of the social, political and cultural transformation. The churches and their institutions has been the main promoter of the education of a new religious and secular intellectual elite, the re-development of the freedom of thinking and choice between different values, identities and academic perspectives. Church-owned (Protestant) and minority (Hungarian) autonomous higher education institutions has become in the transition process an alternative of the still state monopolized and national higher education system, especially in traditionally multicultural (religious and ethnic) Transylvania. Contemporary Europeanization reforms has moved toward a new homogenization and uniformization the higher education systems, where the church owned institutions has again the main role in the inheriting process of traditional European culture and identity, trough their higher autonomy and academic freedom.

Jesper Sørensen

The Construction of Ritual Efficacy: Why Magic Won't Go Away

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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During the last decades numerous attempts have been made to purge the study of religion of the concepts of magic. It has been argued that the concept merely reflects presuppositions about traditions other than one's own and that the concept of magic has been instrumental in the construction of otherness. At the same time, however, as a second-order representation magic does seem to point to a restricted range of widespread phenomena centered on representations of ritual efficacy. Based on studies into human action representation and conceptual integration this paper will argue that representations of ritual efficacy are a natural consequence of cognitive processing of ritualized actions. As a result of a specific range of cognitive processing, magic thus constitute a natural mode of ritual interpretation focusing on context near ritual efficacy, in contrast to more symbolic interpretations of ritual meaning.

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Sara Møldrup Thejls

Esoteric Yoga: The Case of Gregorian Bivolaru and MISA

WED 14:00–15:30 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The tantric yoga organization MISA (Movement for Spiritual Integration in Absolute) founded by the Rumanian Gregorian Bivolaru, called Grieg, has become one of the most successful European yoga schools. This however has not been easy due to its location in Rumania where the school and especially its founder has been subject to insistent persecutions from the government, leading to Grieg's flight to Sweden where he finally gained political asylum in 2006.

This paper will deal with two main aspects of MISA.

1) An exposition of the political intrigues and agendas surrounding the movement. This involves problems ranging from the hostile attitude to MISA expressed by the Rumanian government to accusations of human trafficking and anti-semitism and MISA's own political agenda towards their goal of "unmasking freemasonry".

2) An examination of the teachings of MISA as they appear in the outer and inner circles of the movement, taking the case of their Danish headquarters as an illustrative example. Generally MISA is a tantric yoga school with ordinary yoga classes combined with theoretical tantric teachings. After following some of the outer courses one can apply to become a member of the movement thus gaining access to the inner teachings and initiations.

—

Pavel Titz

Pompeian Archaeology and Pompeian Religion

TUE 9:00–10:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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The unique state of preservation and two and half century of archaeological excavations and other studies in Pompeii make this Campanian city for many scholars possibly the best place to approach the religion of the time and region. Almost three quarters of the city area is revealed from volcanic material of the Vesuvius lethal eruption in A.D. 79 at the moment. Besides serious historical reconstructions we also dispose of many personal stories and other details from the everyday life of the 1st century Pompeians. There is a good chance to capture their religious manners as well.

But the city of Pompeii was officially Roman only last one and half century of its existence. The diachronic picture of some seven or eight centuries of the city history suffers from the lack of well based and modern information. Last decades excavations are about to change this imbalance. But there is a striking inequality of the amount and quality of the record available. While we can study rich iconography and movable artifacts (frescoes etc.) related to the religious taste of the last Pompeians, there is nothing we can compare with belonging to the previous centuries. While destroyed Pompeii was Roman city for one and half century buried layers underneath are coming from non-Roman settlement, originally formed at least by the Greeks, Oscans, Etruscans and Samnites.

The paper deals with our contemporary possibilities as well as difficulties to trace changes and continuities in religious habits of the Pompeii inhabitants in accordance with the city development and some key moments of the region history.

Kalle Toivo

Desirable Rituals, Acceptable Rituals and Uninteresting Rituals—Remoulding Public Religious Practices within Hegemonic Religious Organization: The Case of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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In Finland, where approx. 80 % of the population are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, public practice of religion has diminished during the last decades. Despite remaining Christian beliefs, Lutherans have fled the churches, only attending occasionally some “rite of passage”. This creates a problem for the Lutheran Church and one popular solution has been the renewing of “religious product” by offering adapted rituals and other public practices. In my presentation I’m concentrating on the change of the ritual structure within the religious organization in a hegemonic but weakening market position. I’m addressing questions such as

- 1) Why is there a constant need for ritual change?
- 2) What kind of public religious practices in Finland are considered to be desirable, acceptable or uninteresting?
- 3) What is the role of a religious leader, bishop? A Lutheran Bishop is a key decisionmaker when it comes to defining, changing and making new religious products—such as the rituals—for the organization. Bishop’s power is also to determine whether some religious behaviour is suitable and acceptable within the organization or not. This power is however restricted by administrative practices which need to be clarified to understand the systemic structure of the Lutheran Church.

In my paper I’m arguing that further investigation for the religious products, religious markets and religious leadership is needed. My goals are to 1) evaluate the concept and activity of a religious leader in relation to public religious practices and to 2) examine the meaning of administrative and organizational structure of a religious organization as demarcating/enabling factors for the changing public religious practices.

Kryštof Trávníček

Cham: Are There Any Transformatory Processes of the Tibetan Religious Dances under the Influence of Western Contacts?

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J22

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The conference paper is devoted to religious tantric dances of Tibetan Buddhism, which are called cham (tib. /‘cham/), and their contacts with Euroamerican Western touristic culture. These sacral dances are performed predominantly by monks in a cloistral area, in the open air in front of the eyes of the Buddhist—and today also touristic—audience and play the important role in the religious practise of Vajrayana Buddhism. They have been preserved for many centuries, relatively isolated from Western influences, in the form of the pantomimic performances in masks (tib. /‘bag ‘cham/), in dances accompanied with singing and music (tib. /rol ‘cham/ or /dbyang ‘cham/) and in gesture sacred dances (tib. /gar ‘cham/). The presentation of cham by monks outside their home monastery (in the “Western world” for example) has been a relatively new phenomenon. The discussion about the desacralization, degradation, transformation, decontextualization and secularization of the dance ceremonies comes up in connection with these “cham tours” and the invasion of the tourists to the cham dances performed in cloisters as well. These interactions are potentially transforming some cham dances, especially in the area of Indian Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. The text of the paper is devoted to such new phenomenons and brand new questions emerging from this new situation. The paper will deal with following issues: western commercialism, moving of some cham rituals from traditional winter time to summer touristic time, production of brand new textual sources for touristic purposes, turning the sacred dances into a regional entertainment for tourists, ritualised sponsorship and a new global context of cham.

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Zdeněk Trávníček

The Role of the Buddhist Monk in Contemporary Sri Lanka

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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The contribution presents a wide range of buddhist monks’ activities in Sri Lanka today. These activities define the monks’ role in the society at the present time. There are three types of monks mentioned who represent the various roles of monks in Sri

Lanka by their activities. The particular activities were observed by the author during the field research in Sri Lanka in 2002–2004. The first type is the politically engaged monk who takes part in the social service as well. To understand the activities for socially and politically engaged Buddhist monks it is crucial to view the historical context of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, especially the recent history of monks' sangha that has undergone several significant changes. These processes were influenced by the Christian missionary work, the Sinhala nationalism, by the invasion of modernism but also by the left-wing ideologies. They have been expressed by the activities of some outstanding personalities of Buddhism in Sri Lanka such as Anagarika Dharmapala or Walpola Rahula. Along with social and political engagement, the traditional role of a monk is still very important. This activity, apart from the political and social engagement, respect and preserve the principle of the reciprocal dependence between lay people and monks which has been the crucial principle for preserving the Buddha's teaching in Theravada tradition. The potential disruption of this principle brings into question the purpose and function of the monks' sangha. The second type is a monk of European origin who lives in Sri Lanka. This monk also represents one of the monks' lifestyles in this traditional Buddhist country. This monks' training style can be one of those, that can inspire the young Sinhalese who are confronted with the challenge of modernism.

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David Václavík

Religious Pluralism in “Atheistic” Society after 1989: Social and Religious Process, Trends and Legislation

MON 16:00–17:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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The development of alternative religious movements took place in atheistic countries after 1989. Those alternative movements have still rather low position in the society in comparison with traditional religious groups. On the other hand the alternative movements are in comparison with traditional church much more successful in missionary activities, mainly with younger age groups. Activity of these groups after 1989 created the situation of religious pluralism in a very new form the Czech and post-DDR society was not used to in previous years. Although the reason was not only in atheistic ideology of former regime but also the religious monopoly of catholic church in the Czech countries since the middle of the 17th century. Therefore it is not a wonder in that sense that this new situation of religious pluralism in the nineties of 20th century for many people showed to be more problem than benefit. A part of society becomes confused by this situation. The public perceives absolute majority of alternative religious groups in the Czech Republic and post-DDR more negatively or,

in better situation, with certain suspicion. It involves not only groups denounced as sects or cults but also great non-Catholic religions such as Islam. Those groups have in Czech homogenous society character of alternative religious groups.

—
Ülo Valk

Were-Tigers and Magic of Mayong: Contextualizing the Belief Legends of Assam

WED 10:30–12:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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In January 2008 during the field trip to Assam I visited the village of Mayong on the bank of Brahmaputra River, well-known in North-Eastern India as a centre of black magic. Folklore of the region is rich in legends about wizards (bej) who can transform themselves and other people into tigers and other animals.

The paper is a reflection of my experience about these narrative traditions that discuss the relationship between human beings and animals. I look for the relevant contexts of interpretation of these legends, such as the social setting (e.g. endeavours to develop tourism and “sell” magic to visitors), genre system of folklore, religious foundations of Hinduism, including the Tantric traditions, where the distinctions between humans and animals have been relativized due to symbolic expressions and metaphoric use of language (e.g. pašu “animal”, referring to “soul”). The paper argues that the Tantric heritage of Kāmarūpa (historical name of Assam) together with the spread of manuscript manuals of magic forms an important context for understanding these legends.

—
Paul van der Velde

White Elephants, Kings and “Buddhist Animism” in Myanmar

WED 14:00–15:30 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P32

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Recently the world was shocked by the incidents in Myanmar (Birma). First there were the uprising of the Buddhist Sangha and of civilians, next there was the typhoon that struck large parts of the coastal area. Strangely enough outside help was refused by the military Junta. The behavior of the government at first sight seems rather

incomprehensible. Yet there is more to it. The government of Myanmar is deeply involved in the world of “Buddhist animism”. As such it is connected to the ancient tradition surrounding the dynasties of both Pagan and Mandalay that were equally involved in practices that in the west may be considered to be of superstitious nature rather than Buddhist. Yet these practices have their place within the Buddhist tradition.

In this paper we will try to connect the reactions of the Junta of Myanmar to the recent events to certain phenomena that originate from the world of “Buddhist animism”. The Junta seems to regard itself as the inheritor of the ancient royalty of Myanmar, above all of the Konbaungset dynasty. The Junta tries to justify its’ policy on the basis of amongst others miraculous white elephants from Arakan and the appearance of wondrous marble Buddha images for instance.

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Iris Vandeveld

Hindutva’s Discourse on Hinduism: A Western-Indian Blend

MON 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The concept of Hindutva is a core value of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad or VHP. This Hindu nationalist organization was established in the 1960’s as a subsidiary affiliate of the RSS and functions till date as its religious wing. One of the main reasons for founding the VHP was to counter the threatening conversions to Christianity and Islam in India. However, the VHP defense of Hinduism draws very much on the same western concepts of religion it is arguing against. This paper will examine how these colonial-Christian ideas on the one hand and typically Indian elements on the other hand were combined to form a new discourse on Hinduism. To exemplify this issue, I will focus on conversion and how this Christian characteristic of religion was transformed into its Indian variant “reconversion”. The paper is based on the analysis of pamphlets and books edited by the VHP and its affiliates. While books are mainly used by upper-class leaders and workers of the Hindutva movement, pamphlets are distributed among common people in rural and remote areas. Hence two different levels of discourse will be examined and compared. Beside this written material some recent fieldwork results will be included. Finally I will explain how notions like conversion could become part of Hindu traditions, as happened in the VHP, and are even regarded as originally Hindu.

Jan Váně

Adaption and Implantation of Non-Institutionalized Religious Communities in Public Sector

WED 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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The object of the conference paper is to demonstrate the research in religious, non-institutionalized communities—with prevalent orientation to the Roman Catholic confession. Although they are not a part of the Roman Catholic Church, with time they in certain aspect become integrated into the church or state structures. The project examines and analyzes the reasons of their occurrence and of transformation of their life, as well as of their incorporation into social system, which is conditioned by requirements and expectations of economical and political nature. The adaptation strategies are studied in the light of findings of modern sociology of religion; the project also focuses primarily on the qualitative empirical research. The research examines not only the forms and ways of the legitimating reasoning of the existence of these communities, whose formation is one of the ways to “oppose” the raising level of privatizing and de-traditionalizing of religious forms, but also transformation of the original suppositions and expectations of the new communities. A complementary part is a study of reactions of the official structures of the Catholic Church to the activities of these communities and their acceptance by the “denizens” of the given region where the communities have found their home and where they act.

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David Vaněk

Reflexivity and the Study of Religion

MON 10:30–12:00 ② FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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As the subject of the conference is the study of religion itself, the author highlights several historical preconditions that are implicitly inherent in the very intention of science to turn upon itself in an act of reflexivity. At the same time, he attempts to analyze consequences of those preconditions upon the scientific study of religion and its disputed future.

Chelsey Vargo

The Disservice of Favouring Canon

MON 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P23

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With regards to textual sources, they have always been of the utmost important within the study of religion. This is especially true with regards to ancient religions, as we are rarely left with the rituals which were performed, but in some cases are lucky enough to have access to textual sources, either through re-duplication through the ages or through re-discovery.

Within this paper I will examine the relationship which exists between the scholar and the primary textual sources available at his or her disposal. As an example of this, I will use the area of early Christianity, as it is my area of study. More than just examining the important relationship between a scholar and the primary sources (as opposed to secondary sources), this paper will examine the idea of canon within academia, and the idea of whether or not it should be favored over other primary sources which have not achieved the status of canonization. I will argue that textual sources which have come to be canonized should not be held in higher regard than those which have not. The majority of my paper will attempt to show how although many scholars may hold this to be true, (at least within the sphere of early Christianity) many are not practicing what they preach. With reference to the works found at Nag Hammadi, and other early Christian Gnostic writings, I will give examples of the way in which scholars of early Christianity are still biased with regards to the gospel accounts found in the New Testament, as well as the letters of Paul when it comes to attempting to eke out an “authentic early Christianity.” I will argue that favoring canon writings does a disservice to the study of religion, particularly early Christianity.

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Roman Vido

The Concept of Secularization in the Academic Study of the Modern Religious Situation

WED 10:30–12:00 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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The focus of the presentation will be centered on the popular as well as controversial concept of secularization as an analytical tool for academic study of religion in the context of modern (European) societies. The primary perspective for presentation of

the topic will be sociological, but others (especially a historical one) will be mentioned briefly too. The author will distinguish between the concept of secularization, the secularization thesis, secularization theories, the secularization narrative and the secularization paradigm and emphasize the important differences between them. The question of applicability and analytical usefulness of them will be also reflected. The main argument lies in the assertion that “secularization” as a concept should not be abandoned in sociological study of religion in modern societies. But it must be: 1) restricted to a specific historical and temporal context; 2) separated from ethnocentric and hegemonic tendencies of the secularization paradigm and/or the secularization narrative resting upon the presupposition formulated in the secularization thesis; 3) viewed in its multi-dimensionality (societal, organizational, individual levels). The presentation will conclude with a short reflection on the problem of secularization in the context of past and contemporary religious development in the Czech (Czechoslovak) society.

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Franz Winter

Religion in Pictures: The Use of Manga and Anime in Japanese New Religious Movements

TUE 11:00–13:00 ③ FACULTY OF ARTS • J31

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University of Vienna, Austria

The question how religious messages are presented in public is a major area of interest in the study of religion. Instead of focussing exclusively on written “texts” other methods of presentation are to be studied. One of the best examples of a special kind of the transmission of religious content is the use of Manga and Anime in Japanese New Religions. These media became very important in the new religious movements in Japan. Some of them, especially the newest ones (the so called “New New Religions” shin-shinshūkyō), are publishing Manga and Anime on a large scale. This paper tries to give an overview and concentrates on the question whether the presentation of a religious message “in pictures” changes the content. This problem is presented with special reference to the Manga of the religious movement Kōfuku no kagaku, which is now one of the most important producers of “religious mangas” (shūkyō manga).

Ina Wunn

**Methods of Natural Sciences in the Humanities:
A Way to Reconstruct the Religion of Non-literate
Societies of the Past**

MON 14:00–15:30 📍 FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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University of Bielefeld, Germany

New approaches, particularly originating from the biological sciences, have opened new perspectives in the study of religion. A combination of exact methods based on empirical data allows the reconstruction of the world-view of non-literate societies of the past.

Archaeology: Often a lack of familiarity with the habits of primitive cultures has led to false assumptions in the reconstruction of religions of the past. The archaeologist Lewis Binford (1984) investigated the every day life of hunter-gatherer communities and described habits, which were dictated by their natural environment and economic basis.

Art-history: Only when an object or image is properly identified, can its probable symbolic meaning be questioned in a secondary stage. The basis of such an investigation was main topic of research of Aby Warburg, who focussed on the appearance of images and symbols in various cultures throughout history.

Ethology: The singularity of signs and symbols in completely different cultures is explained by human ethology. Human adaptation of the faculties of perception, instinct, emotion and intellectual facilities determines non-verbal communication and finds its expression in art (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1997).

Religion in sociological perspective: A sociological typology of religions and related societies is a valuable aid in reconstructing the religion of prehistorical communities.

Religion from an evolutionary perspective: By drawing parallels between biological and religious evolution the evolution of religions is described as the adaptive modification of religions throughout history (Wunn 2002). Evolutionary classification therefore leads to the reconstruction of genetical relationships among different religions.

Anna Yudkina

Shifting Boundaries of Sacred in “Folk Orthodoxy” in Post-Soviet Russia

WED 10:30–12:00 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P21

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“Folk Orthodoxy” is very heterogeneous and ambiguous phenomenon of contemporary Russia. In consciousness of contemporary Russian believer incongruous elements are connected. Thus, the Sacred and the Profane are so deeply intertwined, that it is too complicated to definitely distinguish them from each other. On the one hand, one can identify himself as an Orthodox in terms of his ethnic and cultural background (e.g. Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian). However, a belief doesn't play any role in his life and he uses profane scientific knowledge (e.g. “a monkey creates the man”), but not religious experience. On the other hand, profane elements can invade a consciousness of true believer, while his life is still completely subordinated to religion (liturgy, prayer, fast, sacraments). In other words, a co-existence of several conflicting points of view becomes possible, e.g. an idea of immortality along with an idea of reincarnation or metempsychosis. An extraordinary significance of religious holiday is deeply rooted in Russian culture and as so is very indicative for our topic. Thus, a way of celebration is up to degree of religiosity: from a prohibition for working (on Sunday and main religious holidays) and celebration of religious holiday as a secular event to a deep perception of sacred significance of this day in Church life. At the same time, boundaries between Sacred and Profane could shift, when all spheres of life become subordinated to belief. Thus, we may see shifting boundaries of the Sacred and the Profane in consciousness of believers in contemporary Russia.

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Jan Záhorkík

Ethiopia: Christian or Muslim Identity? Some Historical Views on Religion and Ethnicity in the Horn of Africa

TUE 9:00–10:30 ● FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES • P22

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This paper is focused on some historical and contemporary views on religious identities of Ethiopia as discussed by contemporary Ethiopian and European scholars as well as media. The basic idea of the paper is that while the historical Ethiopia was built on an undoubtable Christian identity, its present character tends

to be more plural in religion. The present day Ethiopia is formed of about 55% of Christians and 45% of Muslims and the number of Muslims is still growing. The main purpose of this study is to show how religious affiliation still coincides with political positions. Ethiopian Orthodox Church still plays an important role in Ethiopia's everyday life while Saudi Arabia's backed Muslims seek to develop a wide net of mosques in areas where Christianity is perceived as a part of colonial history. Religion and ethnicity in Ethiopia are closely related. This means that when the Amhara ruling class began to conquer remote areas in Southern Ethiopia, these became hostile to Christianity and rather converted to Islam. This historical process of political, ethnic and religious dichotomy prevailed for all the 20th century and still is not overcome. The major difference between the present situation and the past lies in the perception of religion. In the past, the ruling class and Christianity formed an inseparable unit. In the present time, the question of religion seems to be continually outshined by the question of ethnicity. This does not mean, on the other hand, that religion plays no role in contemporary society of Ethiopia. It only became a question of private organizations, both Muslim and Christian, which can be seen in establishment of new churches and mosques even in the remotest areas. I will thus discuss these shifts in detail.

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David Zbíral

The Inquisitorial Concept of Religious Group and Its Resonance in European Historiography

MON 16:00–17:30 📍 FACULTY OF ARTS • J21

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The inquisitors had a specific view of “heretical sects” as relatively isolated communities defined by particular beliefs and rituals. This paper claims that the inquisitorial construct of monadic “heretical sects” is an important innovation in the history of European scholarly writing on religion. From 16th century onwards, this view fitted well the denominational situation of Christianity and it was adopted as a standard paradigm for representing not only medieval heresy, but also religions in general. Indeed, the inquisitors could be seen as forerunners of the modern, “sociological” common-sense view of religions as monads defined by specific rituals and beliefs.

NOTES







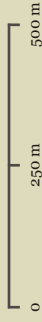








Brno



City Centre Plan

UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS

- 1** Rector's Office
Žerotínovo nám. 9 • 601 77 • Brno
- 2** Faculty of Social Studies
Jošтова 10 • 602 00 • Brno
- 3** Faculty of Arts – buildings G & J
Gorkého 7 • 602 00 • Brno
- 4** Faculty of Arts – main building
Arna Nováka 1 • 602 00 • Brno
- 5** Faculty of Law
Veveří 70 • 611 80 • Brno
- 12** New Town Hall
Dominikánské náměstí 1 • 601 67 • Brno

ACCOMMODATION

- 1** UNI Hotel at Rector's Office
Žerotínovo nám. • 601 77 • Brno
- 6** Continental Hotel
Kounicova 6 • 602 00 • Brno
- 7** International Hotel
Husova 16 • 659 21 • Brno
- 8** Garni Hotel
Vinařská 5 • 603 00 • Brno

TRAVEL

- 9** Central train station
- 10** Central bus station
- 11** 'Grand Hotel' bus station



<http://www.phil.muni.cz/relig/easr2008>