



# ORINS

## OLD RELIGION AND NEW SPIRITUALITY

CONTINUITY AND CHANGES  
IN THE BACKGROUND OF SECULARIZATION

Conference program and abstracts

26–29 May 2015, University of Tartu, Estonia





# Welcome!

We are delighted to have you attend our conference! We would like to introduce you briefly to our location. Since 1632, Tartu has been a university town and as such has a vibrant tradition of student life that offers a creative atmosphere for intellectual exploration and research. Estonia is an extremely secular European country, characterized by the deinstitutionalization of religion and by de-Christianization, the decline of Christian practices and beliefs. Of course, there is a constant competition to be the world's "most secular country" and at this conference we are looking for opportunities to compare. In order to investigate the historical roots of the situation and clarify the characteristics of the current picture, the research project on religiosity in Estonia was started in 2011 in our faculty of theology (which hopes to become a faculty of theology and religious studies). The staff of the project welcomes the researchers studying the changing religious landscapes across Europe in order to make comparisons and contrasts among regions and countries.

Our main interests include:

- historical process of secularization and how it appears in different countries;
- combinations of religion and nationalism, the effects of nationalism on public religion;
- changes in the traditional religious groups and churches in the 21st century;
- atheism and nonreligion, their organized and individual manifestations;
- new spirituality, "New Age" and individual religiosity, mixed forms of organized and individual religion.

This is what we look forward to discussing in this conference, which features twelve panels with participants from sixteen countries. We are proud to have as our invited speakers, **Detlef Pollack** (University of Münster), **Paul Heelas** (University of Tartu), **Abby Day** (University of Kent).

The conference is organized in cooperation with the Graduate School of Culture Studies and Arts, therefore also many doctoral students are participating.

Enjoy your stay in Tartu and the conference!

## **Riho Altnurme**

Leader of the research group of religious studies of the Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory (CECT), target-financed research project "*Secularization (de-institutionalization and de-Christianization): Religion in Estonia from the Modern Period to the Present,*"

Professor of Church History, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, University of Tartu

## **Hosting institutions:**

University of Tartu, Faculty of Theology  
Estonian Graduate School of Culture Studies and Arts  
Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory

## **Supporters:**

European Union through the European Regional Development Fund  
European Union through the European Social Fund  
Nordic Network „Norms and Narratives in the Nordic Countries“ (NoNa)

## **Organizing committee:**

Main organizers: Prof Riho Altnurme, Dr Atko Remmel  
Organizational team: Monika Tasa, Tene Viiburg, Kaija Rumm  
Staff: Elise Nemliher, Kelli Põldsalu

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# Practicalities

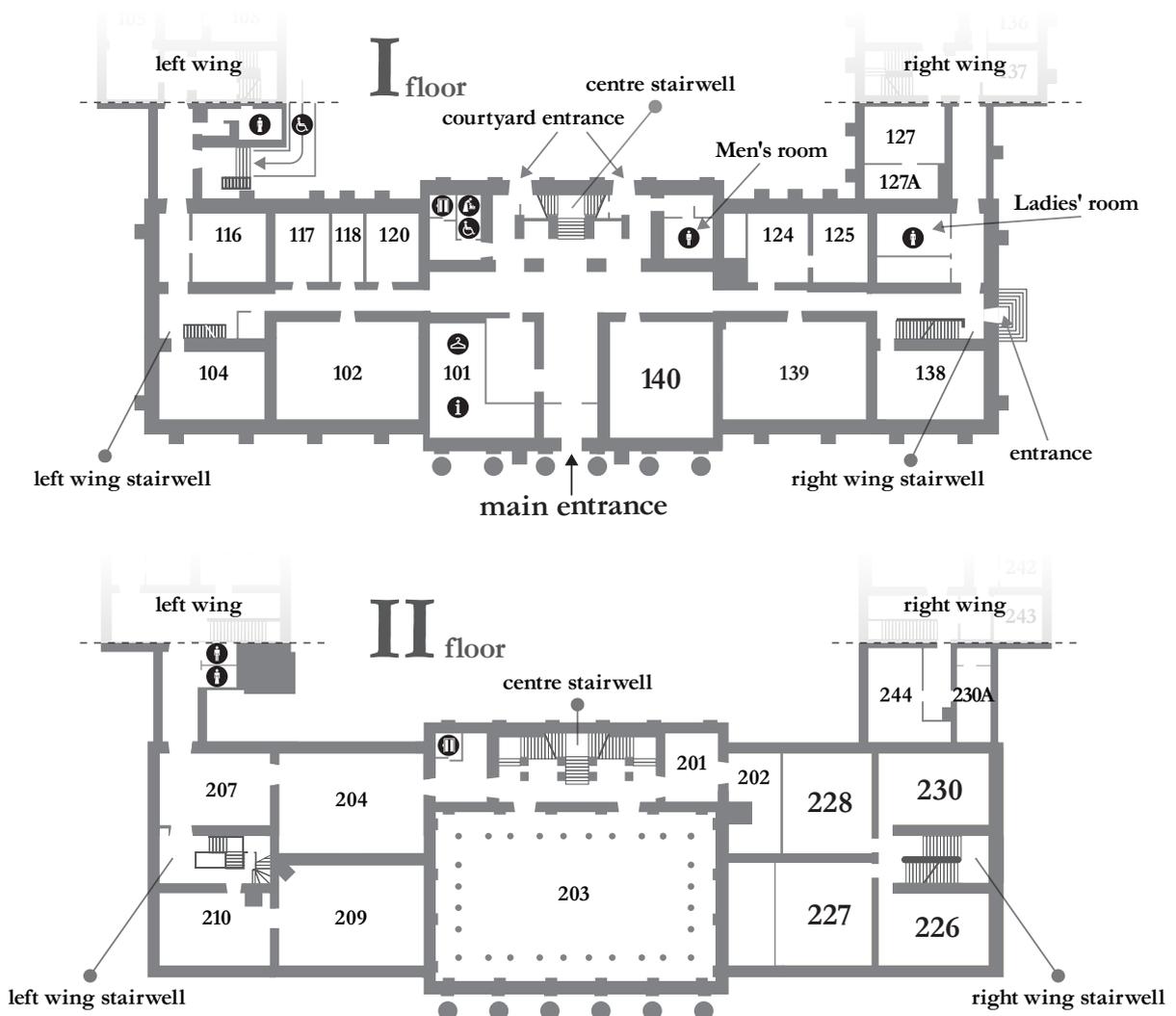
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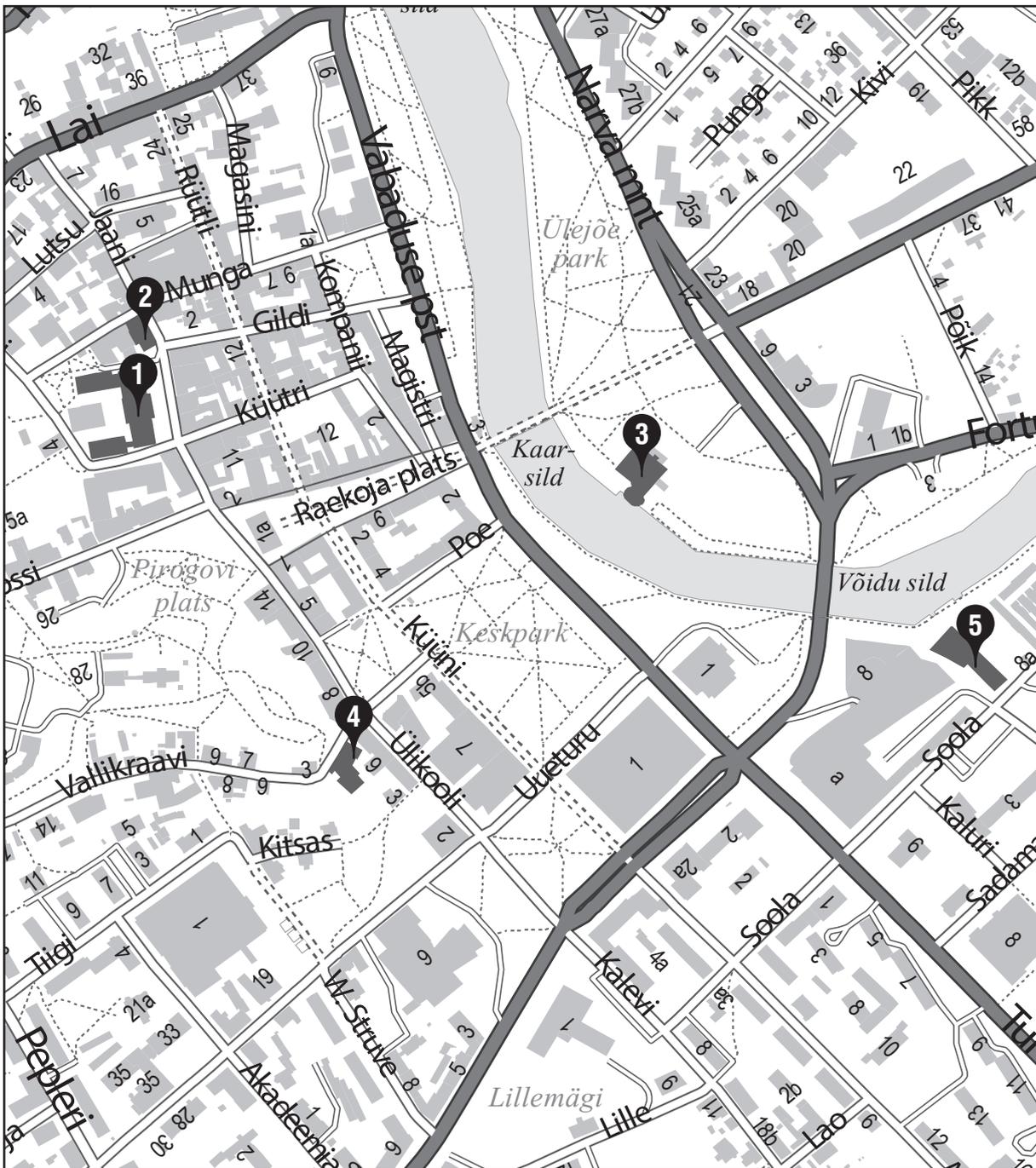
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## The map of the main building of the University of Tartu



## Tartu city center map



1. Venue of the conference
2. University Cafe
3. Restaurant Atlantis
4. Restaurant Vilde
5. Hotel and restaurant Dorpat

# Conference program

Conference venue is the main building of the University of Tartu (Ülikooli 18)

## Tuesday, 26 May 2015

**20:00–22:00**

Welcome reception in the University of Tartu Art Museum (on the ground floor of the main building of the university, Ülikooli 18. Tour included.)

## Wednesday, 27 May 2015

**9:00–10:00 | Foyer**

Registration

**10:00 | Room 139**

Opening of the conference

**10:15 | Room 139**

Keynote lecture by Detlef Pollack

Secularization theory and individualization thesis: Theoretically and empirically reconsidered

**11:15 | Room 227**

Coffee break

**11:45–13:15 | Room 226**

Panel "Secularization and politics"  
(Chair: Hartmut Lehmann)

Sławomir Kościelak

- Secularization processes in Gdansk (Danzig) at the turn of 18 and 19th CC.

Anna Vancsó

- Is politics religious or religion political? The appearance of Christianity in the contemporary Hungarian political sphere

**11:45–13:15 | Room 228**

Panel "New Age in contemporary Europe"  
(Chair: Marko Uibu)

Liza Cortois, Dick Houtman and Stef Aupers

- Mindfulness: New Age 2.0?
- Veerle Draulans and Wouter De Tavernier
- Shooting in the dark: Defining and measuring spirituality in 21st century Europe

Tatiana Chumakova  
- Orthodoxy and sacralization of power in the contemporary Russia

**13:15–15:00 | University Cafe**

Lunch

**15:00–16:30 | Room 226**

Panel "Secular state and religion"  
(Chair: Toomas Schvak)

Ali Kemal Doğan, Ümit Yazmacı  
- In between civil and official religion: the Turkish experience of secularism

Ernils Larsson  
- Secular religion: Shinto and politics in present-day Japan

Jerry Espinoza-Rivera  
- Costa Rica: Confessionality of state and public policies

Janneke van der Leest  
- Romantic divine inspiration and its relevance to modern spiritual identity

**15:00–16:30 | Room 228**

Panel "New spirituality in Estonia and Latvia"

(Chair: Riho Altnurme)

Lea Altnurme  
- Old religion and new spirituality in the mirror of statistics in Estonia

Normunds Titans  
- The new spirituality vs the old religion in contemporary Latvia: Decline in the traditional God-beliefs in face of a universal spirituality (legacies of the Enlightenment deism, 'New Age' eclecticism, etc.)

Marko Uibu  
- The fluid forms of contemporary religiosity: The modes of participation in Estonian spiritual milieu

**16:30 | Room 227**

Coffee break

**17:00–18:30 | Room 226**

Panel "Traditions, modern practices and secularity"

(Chair: Ringo Ringvee)

Laura Stark  
- The unorthodox sacred in Portuguese urban spaces

**17:00–18:30 | Room 228**

Panel "New spirituality in Finland"  
(Chair: Tiina Mahlamäki)

Outi Pohjanheimo  
- Spiritual-based healing – a gateway to de-institutionalization in Finland

Ergo Hart Västriik

- Contesting national history: Alternative rhetoric of the Estonian maau-sulised movement in media representations

Henno Erikson Parks

- Modern shamanic practices and belief systems in Estonia: terms, practices and historical overview

Reeta Frosti

- Became an Ascended Master. New Age and the Church Universal and Triumphant.

Katriina Hulkkonen

- Resistance and reinterpretation: The role of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland in the lives of women channels

**19:30 | Restaurant Atlantis**

Dinner

## **Thursday, 28 May 2015**

**9:30–11:00 | Room 226**

Panel "Atheism and Nonreligion in contemporary Society"

(Chair: Roland Karo)

Ethan G. Quillen

- Doing away with theoretical abstractions: A discursive analysis of the definition of Atheism and critical analysis of the positive vs. negative paradigm

Zdeněk R. Nešpor

- Somewhat spurious Atheism: historical roots of contemporary Czech irreligiosity

Atko Remmel

- The impact of forced secularization on nonreligious sphere in Estonia

**9:30–11:00 | Room 228**

Panel "Sacred and secular spaces"

(Chair: Olga Schihalejev)

Marcin Jewdokimow

- From secularization to restitution. A fate of monasteries in Poland in the context of contemporary transformations of religion

Adam M Klupś

- Closing and converting churches to alternative uses: challenges in finding lasting solutions for places of worship in the light of diminishing need

Andrea Marcuccetti

- New attraction between Sacred and Sanctified in the Smart Cities.

**11:00 | Room 227**

Coffee break

**11:30 | Room 139**

Keynote lecture by Paul Heelas

Life force

**12:30–14:00 | University Cafe**

Lunch

**14:00–15:30 | Room 140**

Panel "Varieties of Atheism and Nonreligion"

(Chair: Atko Remmel)

Marianna Shakhnovich

- Religious Studies during the Soviet Cultural Revolution: Myth and Reality

Mikko Sillfors

- Atheistic Spirituality

Tiina Mahlamäki

- Nonreligion and Gender

**15:30 | Room 227**

Coffee break

**16:00–17:00 | Room 140**

Panel "Relationships between traditional and new"

(Chair: Anne Kull)

Matti Rautaniemi

- History of Yoga in Finland

Robert T. Ptaszek

- Philosophy on relations between religion and spirituality

**17:30–18:30 | Meeting at the foyer**

Town excursion

**19:00 | Restaurant Vilde**

Dinner

**Friday, 29 May 2015**

**9:30–11:00 | Room 140**

Panel "Roman Catholicism and secularization"

(Chair: Priit Rohtmets)

Christopher Korten

- Forced secularizations during the Napoleonic period in Italy and the effects of this policy on society

Valentina Ciciliot

- The Catholic Charismatic Renewal: a new form of spirituality within the Catholic Church

Luca Lecis

- From political Catholicism to the collapse of the Catholic milieu. Religion and the Roman Catholic church in Austria between partisanship and civil emancipation

**11:00 | Room 227**

Coffee break

**11:30–12:30 | Room 140**

Keynote lecture by Abby Day

Generation A and the downfall of Christianity: how Generation X grandmothers brought down the Church

**12:30–14:00 | University Cafe**

Lunch

**14:00–15:30 | Room 140**

Panel "Protestantism and Secularization"

(Chair: Zdeněk R. Nešpor)

Priit Rohtmets

- Secular State, religious society. The perception of secularisation and the discussions about the social position of the Lutheran Church in Estonia from the early 20th century to 1940

Dirk Schuster

- Volk, Reich, Führer, God – Religion and racist nationalism of German Christians

Hartmut Lehmann

- The quincentennial commemoration of the Protestant Reformation in secularized Germany

**15:30–16:00 | Room 227**

Coffee break

**16:00–17:30 | Room 230**

Seminar for doctoral students

**19:00 | Restaurant Dorpat**

Dinner, closing of the conference

# Keynote lectures

**Detlef Pollack**

Professor, Institute of Sociology, University of Münster (Germany)

## Secularization theory and individualization thesis: Theoretically and empirically reconsidered

In the social sciences a new discourse on religion in modern societies has established itself. It is no longer the master narrative that religion is waning in significance that dominates the perspectives in the social sciences. The new key words are 'Return of the gods' (Friedrich Wilhelm Graf), 'Re-enchantment of the world' (Ulrich Beck), Desecularization (Peter L. Berger) – or individualization of religion (Thomas Luckmann, Hubert Knoblauch, Grace Davie). Since criticizing the secularization theory often has a great deal to do with scaremongering, what is required firstly is as precise a reconstruction as possible of what secularization theory and individualization thesis are actually saying. The talk in its first part provides a reconstruction of the propositional content of secularization and individualization theory and deals with the various meanings and criticisms of these concepts. The second part focuses on the social and historical developments of religion in selected European countries. By looking at the changes in religious belongings, attitudes and practices in the last decades it tries to find out which empirical data speak in favour of the secularization theory and which ones in favour of the individualization thesis.

**Paul Heelas**

Visiting Professor, Faculty of Theology, University of Tartu (Estonia)

## Life force

Countless ethnographies from around the globe refer to life force or similar notions; life force is central to CAM (Complementary and Alternative Medicine) and what the World Health Organization calls TM (traditional medicine); EU surveys demonstrate the popularity of 'life force' in a numerous countries, with Estonia being the leader. Yet there is just one publication devoted to the cultural study of life force: *The Spirit of Vitalism* (2011) in Denmark. Clearly, far more interpretative, analytic, systematic, comparative, explanatory work is called for.

I'll dive in at the deep end to tackle the most neglected of issues: theorizing life force. This serves to illuminate the elementary nature of life force, its dynamics, how it regulated, why high life force is valued; and to explain its universal compass. I'll then identify four main varieties of life force (inherent, theistic/polytheistic, non-personal transcendent, secular). Attention is then focussed on Estonia: to explore the validity of the life force thesis (above), to ascertain the popularity of the four varieties (above); to explore the significance (or insignificance) of life forces for cultural, social and personal life; AND: why is Estonia the life force capital of Europe?

**Abby Day**

Senior Research Fellow, Department of Religious Studies, University of Kent (United Kingdom)

## **Generation A and the downfall of Christianity: how Generation X grandmothers brought down the Church**

Such studies that do consider older Christian women tend to regard them briefly as part of something else or dismiss them altogether: the focus in the literature has been mostly on their children and grandchildren, the so-called baby-boomers, and, increasingly, their grandchildren, the Generations X and Y, and nearly Z. What we do not know enough about are their grandmothers, the Christian 'Generation A', a diminishing generation who will not be replaced in churches worldwide or in the communities that depend on their voluntary and mostly invisible labour.

The paper reflects on ethnographic fieldwork relating to the author's theories of embodied and performative belief and belonging in, particularly, late modern northern countries of the Global north.

# Abstracts

**Altnurme, Lea**

Senior researcher, Faculty of Theology, University of Tartu (Estonia)

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## Old religion and new spirituality in the mirror of statistics in Estonia

The presentation is based on the representative survey made in 2014 in Estonia. The survey measured traditional Christianity, new spirituality, nature worship (maausulised) and anti-religious attitudes among the inhabitants of Estonia. The results showed that the popularity of the traditional Christianity and new spirituality are on the same level, but the former is decreasing and the latter increasing. Also the nature worship has a growing tendency, although it is less popular than the former two. The widest spread has the individual religiosity that can be characterized on one hand by the hostility towards the organized religion and on the other hand by the influence of the new spirituality.

**Chumakova, Tatiana**

Professor, Department of Philosophy of Religion and Religious Studies, St. Petersburg State University (Russia)

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## Orthodoxy and sacralization of power in the contemporary Russia

The major part in the expansion of the tsar's power cult in the contemporary Russia belongs to those groups which considering themselves the only "guards" of true Orthodoxy. Among them there are members of the Russian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, as well as the members of the other nationalistically-oriented organisations in the contemporary Russia. What all of them have in common is the idea of the revival of antisemitic Orthodox ideology of the beginning of XX century, also known as «Black Hundreds» ideology. Both antisemites and monarchists, they claim to be Orthodox, but worshipping rulers of the past as the saviours of the Russian people, they are acting in fact not as Christians. They replace the Saviour (Jesus Christ) with the figures of rulers, i.e. tsar Ivan the Terrible, Russian Emperors Pavel and Nicolas II, Stalin, even Hitler etc. They worship them as rulers, whose power was given them by God to protect the world from enemies

(Jews, Americans, etc.), but enemies supported by the "world masonry" have killed them. The most radical ones worship "God-given Fuhrer" – Adolf Hitler. They treat him as "God-chosen" person, called to liberate the world from Jews and communists. Orthodox marginals have a special devotion of rulers' allies as well, venerating, for instance, Grigory Rasputin ("New Martyr Grigory") and Himmler. Simultaneously they demonise Masons and Jews. They reckon that their common aim is to destroy "Holy Russia" and the Russian people. All marginal groups of this kind have almost the same structure. They tend to create "spiritual centres", travel around the country, provoke, confront with Church and state authorities (nevertheless it doesn't deprive them high patronage), organise processions like the "Russian marches" and etc.

**Ciciliot, Valentina**

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## **The Catholic Charismatic Renewal: a new form of spirituality within the Catholic Church**

Founded in the late 1960s in the United States of America, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (hereafter, CCR) is a movement within the Catholic Church which spread rapidly around the world, and that today has more than 120 million followers. For the most part secular, multi-faceted and non-hierarchical, it fits into the broader charismatic movement that had already affected Protestantism, especially Pentecostalism, as well as that of spiritual renewal in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Due to its emotional and shared spirituality and an intensive evangelisation, the CCR expanded dramatically, soon coming to the attention of the pontiffs who perceived it as an effective tool for the dissemination of the Catholic message, useful to some extent in competing with the rampant Pentecostalism in the Global South, but in Europe too. The paper aims to understand the transformation of Catholic religiosity over the last few decades in Europe through the lenses of the CCR, analysing the reaction of the Catholic Church hierarchy to the movement. Papal official pronouncements made during meetings with the charismatic groups and other authoritative documents will show the significance given to the CCR by the ecclesiastical apparatus. It will also be examined the work of Cardinal Léon Joseph Suenens (1904-1996), the first intermediary between the CCR and the Vatican and among the movement's leading figures in its expansion from the U.S. to Europe, and the Malines documents – six texts outlining the theological and pastoral profile of the renewal. Finally, the paper will focus on the

particular way in which pope John Paul II (1978-2005) welcomed the renewal, very much part of his strategy of “new evangelisation”.

**Cortois, Liza; Houtman, Dick; Aupers, Stef**

FWO-aspirant, Centre for Sociological Research (CeSO), Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium)

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## **Mindfulness: New Age 2.0?**

In *The Invisible Religion* Thomas Luckmann (1967) brought new life to the sociological study of religion. By disconnecting religion from the traditional institutions such as the church, he could elaborate a new perspective opposing the all-pervasive diagnosis of secularization in Western European culture. Instead, he redirected the attention of sociologists of religion to individual religious experience to such an extent that modern religion came to be considered as a strictly private phenomenon (Besecke 2005). According to this understanding, modern individuals shop in a modern spiritual supermarket in order to construct highly personalized compounds of meaning. Especially with concern to New Age spirituality, this idea of a highly privatized and individualized field without a shared cultural logic sparks notions of ‘pick and mix forms of spirituality’ (Possamai 2011: 230) or ‘do-it-yourself religion’ (Baerveldt 1996). The reverse stance that considerable cultural coherence exists within New Age religion has however also gained adherence (Hanegraaff 1996, Hammer 2004). This coherence consists of two principles that are basically uncontested in the spiritual milieu, i.e., the anti-institutionalist conviction that truth cannot reside in pre-given external orders and the notion of an alleged deeper self that is rooted beyond culture and history (Heelas 1996, Woodhead 1993, Aupers & Houtman 2006).

It is often maintained today that contemporary Buddhist-inspired forms of spirituality of the ‘mindfulness’ variety differ radically from this type of New Age spirituality, because they are aimed at a detachment from the self by learning to observe one’s thoughts from a detached point of view (Maex 2006, Kabbat-Zin 1996). Against this background, this paper explores the relationship between mindfulness and New Age spirituality on the basis of semi-structured interviews with New Agers and mindfulness coaches. More specifically, we address 1) respondents’ adherence to the two aforementioned principles of New Age spirituality, i.e., anti-institutionalism and belief in a ‘deeper’ self; 2) their understandings and legitimations of their positions vis-à-vis religion, spirituality and science, with special attention to (dis)identifications of New Agers and mindfulness trainers with mindfulness

and New Age, respectively; and the histories and experiences of Mindfulness trainers in the New Age milieu. Our leading hypothesis is that Mindfulness constitutes a secularized version of New Age spirituality that displays continuities as well as discontinuities with the latter.

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## **In between civil and official religion: the Turkish experience of secularism**

Neither the process of secularization nor the process of laicization started with the republican project in Turkey. The Ottoman sultans have themselves initiated the modernization period in the 19th century, resulting in deep political changes known as “Tanzimat” and reached its peak with the instauration of the Republic. What has been unprecedented in the republican period was that these two processes were put into the heart of the project of modernization. This project not only aimed to create an enlightened republic but also enlightened citizens who adhere to the “universal reason”, or to, what we can call the civil religion of the republic. However, Islam has also played a central role in this project, accompanying the young republic either in legitimizing the republican ideology or in the nation building as a “melting pot”.

This paper does not aim to have a historical analysis of religion and politics in Turkey, but having this historical perspective on mind, it seeks to understand the role and the influence of religion in contemporary Turkish politics and the eventual transformation of the religious politics under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government in Turkey. Created in 2001 as a result of a political cleavage within the banned Prosperity Party, representing the political Islam, the AKP or the “conservative democrats” is considered both nationally and internationally either as a major impetus of democratization or as an actor of “Islamism” in Turkey.

Analysing the developments in the realm of politics of religion under the AKP government, this presentation will focus on the influence of the political Islam, if any, on the reconfiguration of religious politics in Turkey and on the implication of AKP politics on the evolution of secularism in Turkey.

**Draulans, Veerle; De Tavernier, Wouter**

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## **Shooting in the dark: Defining and measuring spirituality in 21st century Europe**

Many studies originally developed based on a Christian inspired frame of reference or enrolled in an originally Christian inspired context have been occupied with the idea of spirituality, especially in a context of declining institutional religiosity. Grace Davie's research finds 'a disproportionate presence of women' in religion and spirituality.; Linda Woodhead suggests a transition from adherence to institutional religiosity towards spirituality, especially among women participating in the labour market, as a means to cope with the divergent, and often conflicting, roles and expectations women are confronted with.

However, there is a large disagreement between studies on what spirituality exactly is. Moreover, spirituality is usually considered as an alternative for institutional religion, neglecting the fact that spirituality can be, and often is, a component of institutional religion and that the degree of spirituality can differ across and within religions – also among individuals, dealing with the same religion. Moreover, large social surveys such as EVS and ISSP contain indicators on spirituality, using items referring to e.g. reincarnation or lucky charms. Hence, their interpretation of spirituality is very peculiar and open to debate.. Without a solid definition of spirituality, and a corresponding system of measurement, research on spirituality remains 'shooting in the dark': it makes testing theories very difficult. A core issue in this regard is the separation of spirituality and spiritual praxis – corresponding with Halman and Draulans's (2005) separation of religiosity and religious practice –, a division that so far remains largely overlooked, especially concerning measurement.

The aim of our study is to analyse, based on an inclusive definition of spirituality, a corresponding battery of items for quantitative measurement, and figure out whether or not Davie's and Woodhead's theories hold true regarding spirituality.

**Espinoza-Rivera, Jerry**

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## **Costa Rica: Confessionality of State and public policies**

Costa Rica is often considered as a model of democracy and respect for Human Rights in Latin America. This image is not completely accurate. At present, Costa Rica is the only Confessional State in Latin America. The current Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica explicitly declares the Confessionality of the State. In its article 75 it establishes: *“The Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Religion is the religion of the State, which contributes to its preservation, without preventing the free exercise in the Republic of other forms of worship that do not contravene universal morality or good customs”*.

This paper analyzes the characteristics of the Confessional Costa Rican State and its consequences for Public Policies. Initially, it describes the historical and political conditions that explain the persistence of this condition during the last 500 years in spite of the Liberals efforts to secularize the State in the 19th Century. Especially, it remarks the lack of a defined border between the political and the religious powers during the Spanish Colony and the strict control exerted by the Catholic Church over schools and universities during this period.

Finally, it discusses the contradiction between the Confessional State and the reproductive rights of women since 2000, when the Costa Rican Supreme Court banned the *In Vitro* Fertilization (IVF) technique justifying its decision on the Catholic doctrine which establishes that a human life begins “from the moment of conception”. For this reason, in 2012 the Inter-American Court of Human Rights condemned the Costa Rican State and considered the ban on IVF as a clear violation of Human Rights.

**Frosti, Reeta**

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## **Became an Ascended Master. New Age and the Church Universal and Triumphant.**

In my paper I discuss the definition of New Age in the case study of the Church Universal and Triumphant. In their article “Church Universal and Triumphant” (*Religions of the World. A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices*, 2002) W. Michael Ashcraft and Leah Shaw say that this American organization, formerly

called the Summit Lighthouse (nowadays a part of an organization which includes also the Church Universal and Triumphant), is not a New Age movement because it doesn't allow for "individualistic and eclectic doctrinal experimentation". It is true that the Church Universal and Triumphant is a well-organized movement with a lot of rituals and doctrines, which makes this movement resemble a church. But I argue that this "church" is closer to New Age than any other religious movement or spirituality. The problem and my question is how do we today call an organization which is not exactly a New Age movement or an established world religion? Or do we need a specific word for that kind of new religiousness and spirituality which is mixed with many traditions, philosophies and esotericism? I will show that the Church Universal and Triumphant should at least partly be seen as individualistic and eclectic in its doctrines but at the same time having the main purpose of helping people become ascended masters. I have studied the book *Saint Germain on Alchemy. Formulas for Self-Transformation* (Mark L. Prophet & Elizabeth Clare Prophet, 1985, 1993) published by Summit University Press which is part of the Summit Lighthouse organization and [www.summitlighthouse.org](http://www.summitlighthouse.org) website. Through this analysis we see the difficulties of defining the Church Universal and Triumphant with traditional terminology.

**Hulkkonen, Katriina**

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## **Resistance and reinterpretation: The role of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland in the lives of women channels**

In New Age spirituality, traditional religion and external authority are typically rejected and personal experience is regarded as the most essential value (e.g. Houtman & Aupers). This can be seen highlighted in channeling, which is a central phenomenon in New Age spirituality. Typically it refers to an ability to receive and transmit messages from higher or other levels of being.

Christianity is usually seen in a negative light in the New Age thinking but at the same time, there are some features that are quite important such as Jesus and Virgin Mary. In the Finnish New Age spirituality the Christian teachings are not totally rejected but reinterpreted (Sohlberg & Ketola). Also people who are part of the New Age milieu have different kinds of religious backgrounds and many of them belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

In this paper I shall examine the relationship between New Age spirituality and the institutional religion in Finland from the perspective of individualism. In particular, I shall concentrate on what kind of attitudes women channels have toward Christianity and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. How do the women channels define their relationship to the church and what kind of meanings do they give to it? I shall also attempt to discuss more general questions about the channels' understanding of the term religion, the relationship between spirituality and religion and channeling and religion.

**Jewdokimow, Marcin**

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (Poland)

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## **From secularization to restitution. A fate of monasteries in Poland in the context of contemporary transformations of religion**

The aim of the proposed presentation is to reflect on the role of religion in contemporary societies taking as a point of reference a fate of monasteries in Poland in 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. In the first part I will outline the problem of monasteries' dissolution on Polish terrains in 19th century and their selected restitutions in 20th and 21st century. In the second part I will focus on two selected monasteries which fate will exemplify the movement from secularization to restitution. What one may observe in the local context is a process of inscribing secular meanings into a sacral institution (a monastery). The two monasteries under scrutiny are being treated as bearers of meanings vital for local communities, they function as relevant signifiers in local collective memories and their future is being synchronized with the development of towns (mostly in the context of tourism). Concluding, I will relate the process under scrutiny to the contemporary, theoretical and empirical, discussions on transformations of religion today. I will state that a monastery today may be interpreted as a post-secular institution which means that it merges and embedded both sacral and secular meanings. This is the very instance of post-secular understanding of religion today proposed by Jürgen Habermas.

The presentation bases on field researches carried out in Wąchock, Poland (2013) and in Opatów, Poland (2014)<sup>1</sup>. The research is a part of a broader project "The cul-

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<sup>1</sup> The study was carried out together with dr. Barbara Markowska. I am thankful for allowing me to present parts of our observations and conclusions.

tural legacy of the monasteries resolved in the former Polish Commonwealth and in Silesia during 18th and 19th centuries: the fate, importance, inventory” implemented under the National Programme for Development of Humanities, Module 1.1, from the funds of Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

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## **Closing and converting churches to alternative uses: challenges in finding lasting solutions for places of worship in the light of diminishing need**

Churches are tangible signs of the presence of the Christian religion in the community. Often oldest, most prominent buildings in a neighbourhood, acting as a visual and physical focal point, they can also be a source of civic pride. For centuries churches have been defining the urban and rural character of European countries and they are continuously important both to their landscapes and for their congregations, as well as other users and stakeholders. Nevertheless, as a result of the process of secularisation, along with a number of social and demographic changes, the demand for Christian places of worship across Europe has reduced and the scale of closure and repurposing has increased over the past decades.

Closing a church is never an easy decision, however converting it to an alternative use can give it a new lease of life. Nonetheless, closure and adaptation of churches can often prove controversial. The arguments employed to support such decisions, namely the need for rational management of built assets, are often hard to accept for congregations and other stakeholders. For many people, churches, beyond their primary purpose as places of worship and contemplation, are also community resources, which they do not wish to lose. Whilst there have been some excellent examples of church conversions across Europe over the years, going ahead with inadequately thought through conversion schemes can lead to loss of the aesthetic, architectural and historic values of church buildings.

Closure and conversion proposals can give rise to objections, however, consultations with stakeholders have frequently proven to be a positive exercise, provoking thorough debates on challenges posed by the new circumstances and possible solutions to any issues and controversies.

Many of the points to be touched upon in this paper are relevant to Christian places of worship regardless of the denomination their congregations belong to. Nevertheless, due to the author's research interest, the discussion will concentrate on the ways the Church of England engage in the debates on church closure and on alternative uses for closed places of worship. The challenges faced during consultations and communication with various stakeholders and their role in making informed decisions concerning the future of churches threatened with closure, and those already closed, will be the main focus of this paper.

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## **Forced secularizations during the Napoleonic period in Italy and the effects of this policy on society**

This paper is a historical enquiry into the forced secularizations of monastic orders within the Catholic Church in Europe generally and Italy in particular during the French/Napoleonic period, 1796-1814. French policy decreed religious clerics of both sexes to cease practicing their profession and secularize, and encouraged a more utilitarian vocation, such as education, health care, or aiding the poor.

The number of men and women who were told to leave monasteries in Italian lands was significant at the time – around 15,000. But beyond that, the policies instituted by Napoleon also effected societal attitudes, especially since this policy remained in effect, in some areas, for a whole generation. The effects of this forced change from the top is visible in societal attitudes towards monks and nuns, who in some places were even discouraged from revealing their former identities in public for fear of public revile. In other ways, one can measure evolving attitudes, as fewer ennobled families felt the need to encourage one of their offspring to join a religious order, a common practice earlier.

Clerical secularizations at this time are an understudied phenomena; the results or consequences of this mass 'defrocking' which takes place in the subsequent period is even more overlooked, especially in the Italian context. In analyzing the effects of this extended Napoleonic policy, this paper will look at the effects of this policy in Italy, both on societal attitudes and strength of religious authority. In many ways, the Napoleonic reforms both prefigured and coincided with the aims of nationalism, an area much discussed and debated in talks on secularization. And

concerning Estonia, when analyzing the effects of religious policies instituted from an outside or 'foreign' political authority, comparisons with its experience of the mid-20th century are apt.

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## **Secularization processes in Gdansk (Danzig) at the turn of 18 and 19th CC.**

In December of 1804 George Burnett, Englishman, teacher and traveler, visited Gdansk (Danzig), former "free" city and the part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, few years earlier – during the second partition of Poland – incorporated into the Kingdom of Prussia (1793). He noticed that the religion in Gdansk "wasn't in fashion". Gdansk's elites were – he wrote – atheists, who ignored the matter of religion and didn't go to the church. In Lutheran and Catholic churches the most number of believers were poor people – workers, journeymen, servants and peasants from the suburban settlements. Even they were not too numerous and too zealous. (See: G. Burnett, *View of the Present State of Poland*, London 1807).

Proposal of this paper is to examine how credible was that image in reality of Gdansk at the turn of 18 and 19th CC. How many people were using the services of the church, what forms of religiosity existed in the old Hanseatic city and how deep the people involved in these forms and matters of faith. On the other hand – what were the signs of infidelity, anticlericalism, loosening of morals and ecclesiastical disciplines. For this purpose I'm going to use not only the documentation of individual churches, but also the daily newspapers of those days (*Danziger Erfahrungen*, etc), relations of private persons. It seems, that next to the new trends of the Enlightenment and influences of the Great French Revolution there were still old habits and strong religious values.

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## **Secular religion: Shinto and politics in present-day Japan**

The aim of this paper is to explore the attempts in modern Japan at excluding Shinto from the discourse of *religion*. Since the Allied Occupation of Japan following the Second World War, Japan has been governed under a strictly secular constitution, in which Articles 20 and 89 ban the State and its organs from participating in or promoting religious activities. Also as a consequence of the Occupation, Shinto, which had been excluded from the discourse of religion in Imperial Japan, was forced to organize in the same fashion as religious organizations, and lost those privileges it had previously enjoyed as a state-endorsed national ideology.

Through a number of Supreme Court cases during the post-war era, public officials participating in Shinto rites have often been exonerated based on the argument that such rites constitute *social customs* or *secular action*, and that the constitutional ban on religious participation therefore does not apply. This line of argument, promoted by interest-groups on the political right such as the *Shinseiren* and the *Nippon Kaigi*, is also reflected in the politics of the ruling Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP), in particular in their 2012 draft for a revised constitution.

By exploring the genealogy of the discourse of Shinto as non-religion, I attempt to show how such a discourse is used in Japan to evade constitutional restrictions. Even without a revised Constitution, ministerial visits to shrines like Yasukuni and Ise are being promoted as *social custom* in order to avoid the ban on religious activities. Under the current Prime Minister Abe Shinzō, who has close personal connections to many right-wing nationalist groups, the ties between Shinto and the State are growing stronger.

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## **From Political Catholicism to the collapse of the Catholic milieu. Religion and the Roman Catholic Church in Austria between partisanship and civil emancipation**

The historical process of secularization in Austria, both in the social and in the political debates, has often meant to speak about relationship between religion(s) and secularization in a fundamentalist dichotomy, in which religion(s) have to adapt

themselves to the modern secular society – in order to become more liberal – or to resist the pressures of secularization and trying to play an antagonistic/conservative role vis-à-vis the secular liberal mainstream political agenda. Religion(s) do(es) not seek to overthrow democracy, but want(s), through the political conservatism, to give shape to the local-national political system. In the European context Austria, giving a look to its history and to the roots of its political development through the XIX century, has a specific role; religion(s) in the Austrian society has played a significant role in the political space since the constitution of the First Republic (1919), and marked by different approaches during both postwar periods (1919-1938 and 1945 to nowadays), and shaped by multiple actors, both political, economical, social and religious. The goal of this research focus is to explore the ways in which the European contemporary history impacts the relationship between religion and secularism, trying to intertwining the perspectives of different political cultures. In conclusion the main topic of this research is to underline the role of the religion (Catholic religion) in Austria in a wide historical context, from 1918 to nowadays, and its efforts in creating social cohesion across the scenario of ethnicity and nationality.

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## **Romantic divine inspiration and its relevance to modern spiritual identity**

Nowadays it is not easy to understand contemporary spiritual identity and to give it interpretation. The concept of divine inspiration in romantic poetry, its remembrance, transmission and reception can possibly contribute to insights into spiritual identity constructs today.

English and German romantic poets were receptive to the philosophical and religious critical views of their days, which coursed a variety of world views. Some of them accepted orthodoxy and remained churchgoers, others became deists, pantheists, or advocated atheism, others were fascinated by pagan religions, developed unique religious views or mixed belief and philosophy in order to transcend the here and now, or mixed religion and nationalist feelings in anti-napoleonic war poems or through the interest in (local) folk songs. Despite these very diverse views, the interest in Christian religion and religious experience is present in romantic poetry. The concept 'divine inspiration' holds together all those various beliefs.

The romantic concept 'divine inspiration' points to an individualized spiritual experience. It derives its origin both from separation from institutionalized religious traditions and from the development of the individuality of the modern person, whose experience is authentic and its expression original. This kind of spiritual experience and its expression show parallels with new spiritualities of life, as Paul Heelas demonstrates. In addition to experience and expression themes like universal energy, nature, creativity, love, revelation, human values, holism, freedom, the sacred as immanent, subjectivity and uniqueness play an alternately stressing, but continuous part from Romantic poetry till new spiritualities.

Comparing religious experiences in romantic poetry and in contemporary new spiritualities, with special emphasis on 'divine inspiration', gives insight into the connection between the identity which the romantic poets assumed to themselves and the spiritual identities within nowadays new spiritualities. This contributes to a better understanding of spiritual identity constructs in a secular society.

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## **The quincentennial commemoration of the Protestant Reformation in secularized Germany**

Since 2008, together with the German state (the federal government, several state governments and several cities with a special connection with the history of Martin Luther) the Protestant Church of Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, EKD) is preparing the quincentennial commemoration of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in 2017. For this purpose, a so-called Luther decade was proclaimed. Each year, from 2008 until 2017, a special aspect of the heritage of the Protestant Reformation and of the legacy of Martin Luther is being highlighted. In my paper I plan to discuss how the organizers attempt to address the various sectors of the multireligious and secularized society in Germany already during the Luther decade and then in 2017.

Which is the image of Luther that is being presented to the German public since 2008? Is there a difference between the strategy followed by representatives of the church and representatives of the political bodies? How successful is the campaign now that two thirds of the Luther decade have already been passed, in particular: To what degree has the Protestant church been able to convey their message to

members of other religious bodies in Germany and to the growing sector of society consisting of non-church members?

Even though the internal discussions between state and church representatives as well as the internal discussions within the Protestant church have not been made public at this point, there is enough material to show the dilemma of commemorating an event which is primarily religious in a society which is overwhelmingly secularized.

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## **Nonreligion and gender**

In this paper, I discuss the issue of gender-specificity in nonreligion (a concept defined by Lois Lee), based on a survey I conducted among first-year students of comparative religion at the University of Turku. My specific focus is on students who, in one way or another, consider themselves nonreligious. Nonreligion takes many forms among the respondents, and the boundaries between nonreligion, spirituality and religion are vague. As has been shown in international studies, a nonreligious person is more often a man than a woman. Men are also more likely to define themselves specifically as atheists rather than agnostics. Women, on the other hand, are more likely to describe themselves as agnostics and to hedge their personal definition of nonreligion. Most of the respondents to my survey pointed to an individual interpretation of faith, away from institutional religion. Nonreligion was also defined in terms of Christianity: the God in whom the relevant respondents did not believe or in whom they were trying to believe, was specifically the Christian God. The young adults I surveyed sought values, morals and spiritual experiences through discussion, reading, science, philosophy, art and nature. Many of those beginning their studies in comparative religion have already established nonreligion as their life's philosophy.

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## **New attraction between Sacred and Sanctified in the Smart Cities.**

Nowadays, religions became the excuse for antagonisms that have nothing to do with the Sacred, negating that God is one, and mistaking Him, probably with a subjective and patrimonial Ego projection.

Which issues does it imply for a reflexion about the concept of the Sacred and the Sanctified?

Consequently, has the secularisation of the Logos (Word) inescapably brought down the limits with the profane? Which questions does the building of a church of the third millennium raise in the urban fabric?

Which are, currently, the places of worship, more or less visible, able to attract believers, citizens, but also visitors and migrants in transit?

Which type of conflict the building of a space of the Sacred could generate in a neighbourhood, and which could be the solutions to avoid it ?

Places of worship contribute to reinforce the feeling of belonging and/or identity, at the same time giving a sense of direction to the city, and in some cases, exceeding the boundaries of their community in opening themselves to other religions.

This work questions the idea of the Sacred and the Sanctified so such from the cultural and the special point of view, with an analysis whether of the language of communication or through the analysis of the places of worship build in the Smart Cities.

Between tradition and future, attractiveness and repulsion, beyond the symbolic dimension (brand) of the worship buildings, this text asks the question of the methodological processes which drive to the erection of a space, so such real than virtual.

Today the sacred is a very diffuse demand that everyone tries to liberally render in a very personal mode, which allows its manipulation beyond the personal requirements.

Consequently, new parasitic or inconsistent sacralities emerge through the media and advertisement that reduce and dilute the religiosity of the sacred into the consumerist ideal.

A multiethnic society needs religious freedom, where the communities can express their diverse religious sense, in order to create, in the urban fabric, places of worship for different religious sensitivities, to achieve the necessary enrichment for the evolution of the Smart Cities of the Future.

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## **Somewhat spurious Atheism: Historical roots of contemporary Czech irreligiosity**

Modern Czech society is, similarly to the Estonian, considered mostly irreligious and atheistic, while only 14 per cent of population declared religious faith in the last national census (2011). However, deeper sociological surveys including the ISSP 2008 witness that Czechs might better be considered unchurched than atheist, with various forms of modern spirituality steadily gaining in popularity. Even more important is the fact that this is not entirely new phenomenon. One-and-a-half million people (almost one fifth of the Czech lands' population) ostentatiously left the dominant Roman Catholic Church in the interwar times, half of them remaining entirely "without religion". At the same time, however, many of these unchurched "nonreligionists" proved broad spiritual interests. Communist regime and post-communism in the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries only strengthened and widely disseminated the outchurching process, opening space for the spiritual boom rather than real atheism. The paper will examine historical roots of Czech anticlericalism, briefly describe its development in the 20th century and focus on sociological analysis of contemporary state of Czech (ir)religiosity.

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## **Modern shamanic practices and belief systems in Estonia: Terms, practices and historical overview**

This article will focus on two main areas: Firstly, it will attempt to tackle the complex and problematic issue of how to define the term *shamanism* within an Estonian, or even Northern European context. Because the term *shaman* has become an all-encompassing description in contemporary ethnological and religious research, and has come to represent so much more than its original native Siberian meaning that describes a specialized type of wise person, it does not take into account the various forms of existing shamanic practices and beliefs, nor how specific cultures interpret them. Secondly, the article examines the historical and social context of shamanism in Estonia and the role it has played in the development of a more contemporary practice. The actual practice of shamanism in Estonia can be traced throughout its history, under the commonly referred to term of *nõid*, who was a person that basically performed similar tasks to shamans in rural communities. It was only during the Soviet period (1940-1991) that the word *shaman* came into the Estonian vocabulary, along with the compulsory learning of the Russian language, and the corpus of literature that came along with it. However, at that time, it was never used to describe local practitioners, but rather those of cultures outside of the country in general, and Siberian shamanism in particular. Currently, the term *shaman* has become interchangeable with the word *nõid* in Estonia.

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## **Spiritual-based healing – a gateway to de-institutionalization in Finland**

The religious landscape in Finland is still quite hegemonic as over 70 % of Finnish people belong in Lutheran church. Also, trust in health-services governed by official medicine based on evidence-based research has been strong in Finland. However, there are certain features that predict changes in status quo. One of these is spiritual-based healing practices.

Both charismatic healing and alternative healing practices are positioned against official mainstream religiosity and health-services. Independent neo-charismatics practice healing according their interpretations of Bible and the gifts of Holy Ghost. The broad field of alternative medicine turn to universal healing power, which is channeled by devotees via certain rituals. Both of these practices represent non-institutional religiosity and spirituality.

I claim that these spiritual-based healing practices offer more holistic experience to people suffering dis-ease as intuitive thinking is integral part of processing knowledge in humans. Knowledge is here understood as both sensations felt in body as well as meaning-making process.

It seems that many secularly orientated conventional church member step into the world of holistic experience through these healing rituals. Could this, also, be a signal against obedience to institutionalized values and of distrust in authoritative institutes?

In my presentation I will study features of intuitive presumptions beyond healing in neo-charismatic and reiki-healing practices. This research highlight the need of unifying mind and body, spirit and nature as it comes to well-being but also to the control over health and sickness.

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## **Philosophy on relations between religion and spirituality**

With the rise of the New Age Movement in the culture of Europe in the 1970's the process that may be summarised as a movement "from religion to spirituality" began. It was possible because New Age Movement accepted a wide concept of spirituality as a capacity to ask questions about where he comes from, what he is, and where he goes. There appeared also a postulate to replace traditional religion by new spirituality, because "spirituality can exist without a religion but a true religion cannot exist without spirituality" (Fritjof Capra, *Belonging to the Universe. Explorations on the Frontiers of Science and Spirituality*, San Francisco 1991).

This contemporary thesis about primacy of spirituality over religion is contrary to the dominant in the thought of the West view according to which religion (especially Christianity) is the ending stage of human spiritual quest.

In the text I define (on the ground of realistic philosophy of being cultivated in the Lublin Philosophical School) more precisely what spirituality and religiosity are. The distinction “religiosity – spirituality” is a basis of my considerations. Religiosity is a complex of internal and external actions by which a man worships God whereas contemporarily proposed spirituality does not refer to any transcendent reality, and is not a way of expressing a man’s faith, but only provide experiences brightening up the human life.

This is the reason why no form of spirituality can replace the Christian religion. This is also a main argument for the thesis that movement from religiosity to spirituality turns out be not a progress but a regress.

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## **Doing away with theoretical abstractions: A discursive analysis of the definition of Atheism and critical analysis of the positive vs. negative paradigm**

In recent years the study of Atheism has grown in popularity, leading to both positive and negative results. On one end, this has engendered a polyvocal and polyfocal discourse, garnering perspectives from a number of different methodological and theoretical approaches so as to develop a truly inter- and multi-disciplinary understanding about how Atheism is defined and how Atheists define themselves. On the other, this myriad of voices has led to an ever-broadening discordancy, an equivocal discourse that makes it all the more difficult to state with any sort of certainty what Atheism is or how Atheists define themselves. The latter issue is, as this paper will argue, the result of a theoretical abstraction, a scholar-based attempt at theorizing a universal interpretation about Atheism that might pragmatically generalize the concept. This is evinced by a number of novel approaches, such as the creation and use of umbrella terms such as ‘non-religion’ (Lee 2011), or the precarious notion of a division between ‘positive’ and/or ‘negative’ Atheism. This paper will attempt to assuage this issue by offering a discursive analysis, borrowing from individuals such as von Stuckrad (2003, 2013) and Taira (2012) who use the same sort of methodology in order to address the discontinuity in defining and

studying 'religion.' In this way, this paper intends to endorse a move away from the use of the 'positive vs. negative' paradigm (e.g., Bullivant and Ruse 2013) in order to promote a more pragmatic and less hazardous approach.

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## **History of Yoga in Finland**

The practice of postural yoga has become a popular activity in Finland during the past 15 years. The roots of Finnish yoga practice, however, predate this recent "yoga boom" by roughly a century. This paper deals with an ongoing doctoral research on the history of yoga in Finland, which is the first systematic effort to map out, how yoga was introduced, popularized and developed in Finland from the late 1800's to the early 2000's.

To illustrate the development of yoga in Finland, four trends can be identified. They are 1) theosophy, 2) holistic health, 3) new religious movements, and 4) consumer culture. These rough and overlapping thematic tools help to make sense of the chronological development of yoga, as well as the different ideological currents that have contributed to its various interpretations.

Two phases of rapid popularization stand out in the development of yoga in Finland. These took place in the late 1960's and the early 2000's. The societal, cultural and religious landscape of Finland has gone through many profound changes during the timeframe under focus. I argue, that these changes have enabled yoga to move from the esoteric margins to the cultural mainstream.

The aim of my research is to show, how the various interpretations of yoga interact with and reflect the changes in the Finnish society, culture and religiosity. In this paper, I will give an overview of the history of yoga in Finland, highlighting the four general trends, the most important historical turning points, as well as introducing some key figures in the Finnish yoga history.

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## **The impact of forced secularization on nonreligious sphere in Estonia**

Estonia is known for its high level of secularization, yet this phenomenon is studied mostly in terms of declining church attendance, the changing nature of religiosity and the impact of New Spirituality. Current paper explores Estonian religious landscape and secularization from the opposite side: nonreligious sphere. An overview of the history of nonreligious traditions in Estonia and their specific features is given, focusing especially on the impact of forced secularization of the Soviet Era on contemporary nonreligiosity.

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## **Secular State, religious society. The perception of secularisation and the discussions about the social position of the Lutheran Church in Estonia from the early 20th century to 1940**

The first decades of the 20th century were characterised by significant changes of the Baltic provinces' political and social order. In 1918 an independent and democratic Republic of Estonia was established. The Lutheran church too went through a period of change. In 1917 it was established as a peoples' church, separated from the state in the newly established Republic of Estonia.

Based on public debates and discussions in the church, I aim to analyse how did the shift from one social order to another change the perception of secularization in the church and how did the understanding correspond to social developments of the time.

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## **Volk, Reich, Führer, God – Religion and racist nationalism of German Christians**

Beginning in 1933, the church movement of the German Christians (Deutsche Christen) took over control in a couple of Protestant regional churches in Germany. This inner-church movement considered Adolf Hitler as the legate of God to save the German »Volk«. The German Christians were the most radical fraction within German Protestantism that combined religion and racist nationalism.

For German Christians the creation of a »völkisch« faith on the basis of Christianity, De-Judaisation (of Christianity) as well as the fight against secularization and individualization was a main motive of their agitation. They interpreted secularization, internationalization, capitalism and communism as a punishment by God for the apostasy of Germans from true Christian faith. As the German Christians believed, in the darkest hour God send Adolf Hitler to the German people as the Savior. Under his rule not only the »Volk« should be returned to God, but also all Aryan Germans would be confessional comprised in one national church.

My presentation will discuss this religious model of one of the most influential church movement in the Third Reich. In my discussion I will mainly refer to the relation of religion, nationalism and race in the common belief of this movement. By adopting National Socialism to Christian propagation, the religious focus went over the world to come to the mortal world. Additionally, »Non-Aryan« people were excluded from the church, even though they were Christians, since Christianity was considered a faith only for racial Aryans. Despite this extreme nationalization of religion, the German Christians remained part of the Protestant Church until the end of the Third Reich. Their success in a couple of regional churches clarifies the acceptance of such a common belief in parts of Protestant population during the 1920s and 1940s.

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## **Religious studies during the Soviet cultural revolution: Myth and reality**

There are almost no works in modern historiography dedicated to a social history of religious studies in Russia. The perception even persists that for almost seventy years of the twentieth century there was no study of religion in Soviet country, and that from 1917 onwards everything connected to religious studies was related entirely to antireligious propaganda and developments in the political situation. In recent decades the tragedies concerning ‘repressed ethnography’, ‘repressed linguistics’ and ‘the twilight of linguistics’ in Russia have come out into the open, whilst the no less dramatic history of the development of religious studies in the middle of the last century, still remains hidden. This is in spite of the fact that a great deal of interesting materials that bear witness to the existence and development of religious studies under the dominance of Soviet ideology can be found in the archives. The presentation will be dedicated to just one aspect of the history of the religious studies during the Soviet cultural revolution of the 1930s — the creation and development, for a short period of time, the holistic program of studying the religious practices in the USSR. It will demonstrate the existence of two groups in Soviet academia in religious studies of the time: the “new scholars” and “new ideologists”.

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## **Atheistic spirituality**

Atheism and spirituality are often seen as opposites. However, the history of non-theistic spirituality dates back to at least when Jainism and Buddhism – which rejected the idea of a creator god – were founded in India 2500 years ago. In the 21st century the visibility of atheism has increased in the Western countries partially because of the religion-critic phenomenon called new atheism. At the same time movements and guide books of atheistic spirituality have come to the market. For example originally a British movement The Sunday Assembly, “the church of atheism”, has now congregations in over 30 cities around the Western world. Also books like *Religion for Atheists* (2012) by Swiss-British philosopher Alain de Botton as well as *Waking up: A Guide to Spirituality Without Gods* (2014) by American new

atheist Sam Harris have become best-sellers. The key message of these movements and books is that one does not need to have faith in God or anything supernatural in order to live a moral and spiritually delightful life. Atheistic spirituality is mostly based on naturalistic and scientific worldview, concentrating on the present moment in this world and how to make life more meaningful. It is often influenced for instance by Buddhism, Pantheism, or mystical experiences. Movements and books of atheistic spirituality can be classified in different categories, distinguished for example by a) attitude towards monotheistic religions, which can be critical or favorable, b) orientation: theoretical or practical, or c) focus on either individual spiritual practice (meditation, yoga etc.) or communal spiritual practice (rituals, gatherings etc.). In general, atheistic spirituality may serve as a pacifying force in the uptight discussion between atheists and religious people, because it seems to take a stance somewhere in between these two sides.

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## **The unorthodox sacred in Portuguese urban spaces**

Drawing on interviews carried out in 2010, this paper focuses on a local devotional movement in Portugal surrounding one person (a medical doctor famous for helping the poor, Dr. Sousa Martins) that has grown into a large and still growing cult with devotees of all ages. Because of contested rumors of Sousa Martins' having been a Freemason and having committed suicide over a century ago, his cult of devotion was never absorbed into the Church, and probably never will be. This paper asks: *what are the reasons behind the survival of this devotional cult outside the Church and how did this different course of development affect the forms taken by devotion in this case?* Despite the fact that the Church does not promote or condone it, Sousa Martins' cult is enabled – and its ritual activities organized – by three public spaces within and near Lisbon (his statue, his tomb, and his home-turned-museum) in which devotees can openly 'communicate' with Sousa Martins to ask for his help (especially medical cures), bring him offerings, and leave gifts of thanks for miracles performed. The fact that this devotion has no organizing institution means that active individuals have been able to guide it in particular directions. Such individuals include a charismatic female medium, a seer-turned-writer who has written numerous popular books on Dr. Sousa Martins, and the owner of a kiosk selling cult objects, who has invented rituals for communicating with the doctor which she instructs to her customers. I briefly contrast the devotion surrounding Dr. Sousa Martins to that directed toward another male sacred figure in Portugal,

Santo Cristo in the Azorean city of Ponta Delgada. Unlike in the case of material representations of Sousa Martins, the public is rarely given direct access to the highly revered Santo Cristo statue. This may explain why very few persons feel the need to communicate with Sousa Martins via his Facebook page, whereas hundreds of persons actively communicate with the Santo Cristo through his internet and Facebook pages.

#### **Titans, Normunds**

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### **The new spirituality vs the old religion in contemporary Latvia: Decline in the traditional God-beliefs in face of a universal spirituality (legacies of the Enlightenment deism, 'New Age' eclecticism, etc.)**

The aim of this study is to find out how the traditional dogmatic God-beliefs in Latvia fare in face of the increasingly widespread spiritual views with roots in the Enlightenment deism and developments in the 'New Age' movement varieties. For this purpose, a questionnaire representing the traditional and alternative beliefs is distributed. The provisional results confirm the hypothetical assumption that the alternative spiritual beliefs dominate over the traditional ones – even among churchgoers. This situation calls for transformations in churches, adapting themselves not only to the secularization outside but also to these alternative views within.

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### **The fluid forms of contemporary religiosity. The modes of participation in Estonian spiritual milieu**

Several scholars of contemporary religion have pointed out the “fuzzy” and elusive nature of contemporary religious phenomena. Due to historical-cultural reasons, the forms of religiosity are especially fluid and commonly also concealed in Estonia. The low level of belief in God and the minor role of institutional religion do not implicate the lack supernatural or transcendent dimension in people's life-

worlds. Religiosity has just become more disguised, appearing rather in different forms of contemporary spirituality. Several signs indicate the popularity of spirituality in Estonia: e.g., rich variety of best-selling spiritual-alternative self-help books, busy schedule of spiritual events taking place all over the country. However, the number of permanent active practitioners is still small. There remains a discrepancy between high level of (mostly latent) beliefs and actual practices as people do not often implement the spiritual-supernatural resources they believe that could actually give good results.

In the modes of participation the transition from the traditional religious commitment-obligation model towards the “demand-based” or “situational” model is visible. People tend to turn to spiritual-esoteric teachings with a specific need and in certain moments: for example, if they feel “off the track” in their lives or cannot handle crises using only non-religious/materialistic frames. Therefore, religious situation in Estonia brings out the need to talk about inclinations rather than supposedly constant believing or belonging. Based on qualitative studies in the Estonian spiritual milieu, the paper draws the models of participation by identifying the main characteristics of the involvement as well as the prerequisites for the functioning of the spiritual milieu as such.

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## **Is politics religious or religion political? The appearance of Christianity in the contemporary Hungarian political sphere**

The concept of secularism and the process of secularization are challenging issues in western societies but also part of an ongoing research area in post-soviet countries about the way it has happened in these special social, historical and political contexts.

In my presentation I would like to shortly introduce how secularization happened in Hungary – what kind of attributes can be defined that can fit into the theory of secularization. Then focusing on a today’s issue in my country, namely the appearance of religion – mainly Christianity – in the public sphere using the latest redefinition of secularism by Charles Taylor, looking at the question about the role of religion in the public sphere and whether it is needed to be moved out from

there. Through the idea of Taylor I intend to look deeply at the theory of Jose Casanova about the de-privatization of religion as the way that 'certain cultural traditions or historical circumstances induce other religions to enter the public sphere' (Casanova, 1994) I assume that the strengthening appearance of Christianity in the Hungarian public sphere is not only a religious, but rather an issue of cultural politics against the 'de-traditionalization' of its own world. As Paul Heelas stated „Organized culture with its sustained voices of moral authority seems to differentiate values...to facilitate coherent, purposeful identities life-plans or habits of the heart.” (Heelas, 1998:64).

Looking at the recent Hungarian situation I also think that the idea of civil religion by Robert Bellah is worth to be taken into account with special focus on the difference between nationalism and patriotism. However my presentation is based on a rather theoretical approach, I also will try to describe the actual public sphere and through the analysis of recent legal documents, regulations and political speeches - methodologically with the mixture of text and discourse analysis – showing the relation between the state and different religious traditions as well as the inter-relatedness of Christianity and the Hungarian history, memory and culture in the public sphere.

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## **Contesting national history: Alternative rhetoric of the Estonian maasulised movement in media representations**

An analysis of media texts about the adherents of the Estonian native faith (maasulised) in the Estonian press over the last two decades indicates that a functioning alternative religious movement has developed. In this talk some ideological statements of maasulised, contesting mainstream views on Estonian history and folklore, will be addressed.

The wider ideological framework of the maasulised movement was formulated during the Soviet occupation, in the 1960s and 1970s, when essays criticizing the mainstream western orientation of Estonian national culture were disseminated among students and the literati. Since its institutionalization two decades ago,

members of the movement have been active in public discussions on such issues as religious freedom and religious education, safeguarding historical sacred sites, and evaluating Estonia's national and cultural heritage using opportunities offered by the Internet and mass media. Despite the fact that the movement represents a quite specific nationalist discourse in public statements, it has generally received positive media coverage and the ideas of the maasulised have enjoyed unprecedented popularity in recent national surveys.

In public statements maasulised spokespersons constantly highlight the continuity and local specificity of this religion, its essential relationship with vernacular languages, and its roots in indigenous ethnic traditions and customs. Invoking linguistic affinity and common origin, maasulised relate their religious principles to the analogous traditions of kindred peoples – ethnic groups whose languages belong to the Finno-Ugric and Uralic language families – and have not sought connections with similar Baltic, Slavic and Germanic modern Pagan movements in neighbouring countries.

In more detail media representations of the adherents of the Estonian native faith in main Estonian daily and weekly newspapers between 2010 and 2014 will be analysed.