

ISORECEA

International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association



Faculty
of Arts

14th ISORECEA conference



**ISORECEA conference:
Religion on the
Periphery**

Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic, 15 – 17 April 2021

PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA)

in cooperation with

Czech Association for the Study of Religions (CASR)

Department of Sociology, Andragogy and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts,
Palacký University Olomouc

Department for the Study of Religions, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno

Contents

On the conference	3
General information	4
Keynote speakers	5
Program	8-12
Abstracts	13-45
List of Participants	46-47

On the conference

14th ISORECEA conference: Religion on the Periphery
Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic, 23 – 25 April 2020

On behalf of the International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association, we would like to welcome you to Palacký University Olomouc for the ISORECEA Conference.

Individuals or groups on the periphery have always been part of various societies, not only today but also in the past, in ancient times. Modern Europe, including Central and Eastern Europe, pays more and more attention to and exhibits increasing sensitivity about minorities, to people on the periphery, to those who are marginalized because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, political beliefs, religion or lack of religion. Attitudes of society and individuals to such persons or groups can be seen as an indication of the state of their culture and civilization, as an indication of the prevailing values, as a touchstone, which can not only unite but also divide the society. Numerous religious traditions throughout history demonstrate, however, that peripheral areas of social life, as well as peripheral areas of faith, are phenomena that involve special treatment and special attention by religious authorities as well as by ordinary believers. Science and the humanities are also aware of peripheries and have peripheral areas, certain methods or theories can play a crucial role, some marginal. It is the same within the academic study of religions. Traditionally, the historical approach and the study of the history of religion have played a significant role. Many other approaches have emerged, however, since the nineteenth century. Some of these, such as the study of the origin and development of religions, have lost their popularity and then regained it later. Some approaches have been marginalized, others favored. In other words, science, including the study of religions, also creates different stratifications, exclusions, and the ostracism of individuals and groups of scholars.

The aim of this conference is to encourage scholars from Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Western scholarship, to reflect on the variety of such peripheries – in particular, peripheries in/of religions as well as in the study of religion; for instance, various forms of heresy, apostasy and blasphemy, ways and forms of religious and social exclusion, and types of power and powerlessness within religious traditions. At the same time, it is considered important to draw attention to the peripheral areas of religious studies, the reasons for the marginalization of certain scholars, and the exclusion of some approaches, methods and concepts. If religious studies is to be a discipline creating its own peripheries, it is undoubtedly important to take them into account.

We want to address these issues in the forthcoming international conference and encourage scholars from various parts of Europe and elsewhere to share their theoretical and empirical insights about religious diversification and varieties of approaches to it.

Tomáš Bubík, Silvie Kotherová and David Václavík
On behalf of the Organizing and Advisory Committee

Organizing and Advisory Committee:

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Silvie Kotherová (Palacký University Olomouc)
Dorota Hall (Polish Academy of Sciences)
David Václavík (Masaryk University, Brno)
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Aleš Črnič (Slovenia)

Keynote speaker

Milda ALISAUSKIENE (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania)



Milda Ališauskienė is professor at the Department of Political Science at Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania. Her research interests include religion and politics in the post-socialist society, religious diversity, religious fundamentalism and new religions. She has published more than 20 scientific articles on religion in contemporary Lithuania and the Baltic States and contributed to collective monographs and studies on social exclusion of minority religions and on the process of secularization in Lithuania. In 2011 she co-edited a volume “Religious Diversity in Post-Soviet Society” (Ashgate). In 2016 she was a visiting Fulbright scholar at the University of California in Santa Barbara Department of Religious Studies. In 2017 she was a guest editor of the special issue of the journal *Nova Religio: Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* about new religions in Eastern Europe. In 2015-2017 M. Ališauskienė served as a president for International Society for the Study of New Religions (ISSNR). In 2014-2018 she served as general secretary for International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA). Since 2015 she is a member of the executive board of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR). Since 2018 she is a member of the board of International Sociological Association Research Committee of Sociology of Religion (RC22).

Keynote Address Title: Religion on the Periphery in Central and Eastern Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall: Diversity, Pluralism and Everyday Life

Abstract: Decades of being vanished from public life and thirty years after the fall of Berlin wall religion in Central and Eastern Europe has gone through transitions that influenced its development, relations with society, place and role in the society. Religion in contemporary societies of Central and Eastern Europe manifests in a wide range of forms. What distinguishes the region is the centrality of Christianity and the role of Christian churches – Roman Catholic or Orthodox – in the nation building processes and contemporary religion-state relations. The centrality of Christianity in CEE leaves other religious traditions of the periphery of public life. The research into religious discrimination in the region shows that Christian minority religions are discriminated most (Fox 2016). The idea of religious pluralism in the region seems to be a challenge for society, states and religions. What development has been in the region with regard of centrality of „national churches“ (Barker 1997) and their relations with other religious traditions and worldviews? In the first part of the lecture I will discuss the concept of periphery and its application for religion in CEE. This discussion will be followed by the discussion of developments in the religious diversity, religious pluralism and everyday practices since the fall of the Berlin Wall. As empirical background for the lecture will serve my research into religious discrimination among minority religions, religious LGBT and non-religious individuals.

Keynote speaker

Jonathan LANMAN (Queen's University Belfast, UK)



Jonathan Lanman's research addresses two main areas in the scientific study of religion. Across both areas, he aims to integrate theories and methodologies from the social, cognitive, and evolutionary sciences with ethnographic and historical research. While his geographic area of interest is international, his work has focused on the North Atlantic world and, more recently, Japan.

His work on atheism and secularization aims to provide an account of why some individuals become theists and others become non-theists, why some nations have much higher proportions of non-theists than others, and why some non-theists engage in anti-religious social action. This research engages literature on cognitive biases, existential security, hypocrisy, threat detection, coalitionary psychology, and moral psychology and focuses on the United States, United Kingdom, and Scandinavia.

In collaboration with Lois Lee (UCL), Stephen Bullivant (St. Mary's), and Miguel Farias (Coventry), he is continuing this research as a PI on a John Templeton Funded grant entitled "Understanding Unbelief" (£2.3m, 2017-2020), an international, and interdisciplinary programme of research on 'unbelief' around the world.

Dr. Lanman's collaborative work on religious identity, ritual, and self-sacrifice aims to provide an account of the nature and catalysts of religious cohesion and the relative contributions of belief, ritual, values, and identity in explaining individual willingness to die for a religious group. This research engages literature on belief, ritual, memory, identity fusion, psychological kinship, sacred values, and martyrdom and is international with a focus on the United States and Europe.

In collaboration with Harvey Whitehouse (Oxford), William Swann (Texas), Michael Buhrmester (Oxford/Texas), and others, he has contributed to this research as part of a £3.2m project funded by the ESRC entitled Ritual, Community, and Conflict (2011-2017).

Dr. Lanman is Senior Lecturer in Anthropology and Assistant Director of the Institute of Cognition & Culture at Queen's University Belfast.

Keynote Address Title: Who wants to be the centre of attention? From 'centres and peripheries' to interdisciplinary collaboration in the study of religion and its others

Abstract: To discuss centres and peripheries in religion and its study is to employ a powerful conceptual metaphor, and the meanings we glean from the use of this metaphor rely heavily on our evolved cognitive architecture. Yet, one will observe that the cognitive study of religion lies more on the metaphorical periphery of the academy than at its centre. Some will argue that this is very much where it belongs. Other, more enthusiastic scholars may claim that cognition

(broadly defined) should be placed at the very heart of the study of all things human, including religion.

My argument will be that the language of centres and peripheries, while useful in describing inequalities, discrimination, and coalitionary dynamics, is less useful as a vision for how we might best work together to improve our understanding of religion, nonreligion, and human life. Based on my collaborative research in the cognitive science of religion and atheism, I will discuss two meta-theoretical strategies of science-humanities collaboration that aim to provide benefit for all involved parties. The first is Lawson & McCauley's Interactionism model of interpretation and explanation. The second is Harvey Whitehouse and I's use of Tinbergen's 4 Questions in establishing a multi-disciplinary, holistic explanatory framework for human thought and action. I will then move from meta-theory to practice and methodology, describing how a team of sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and scholars of religion have worked together on the Understanding Unbelief programme (2017-2020) to try to avoid establishing a 'centre-periphery' relationship among our representative disciplines, methods, and questions and how this has benefited our research.

Program

Thursday 15

14.20 – 14.30	<i>Opening: Dorota Hall, President of ISORECEA and Tomáš Bubík, President of CASR</i>			
14.30 – 15.45	Plenary session I: Keynote lecture chaired by David Václavík Jonathan Lanman: Who wants to be the centre of attention? From ‘centres and peripheries’ to interdisciplinary collaboration in the study of religion and its others			
15.45 – 16.15	<i>break</i>			
16.15 – 18.00	Parallel session 1A – Room A Religious people as a minority I Dorota Hall, chair Maija Grizane: Religious Practices under the Soviet Regime: the case of the Old Believers in Latvia Fadime Yilmaz: From periphery to the center: The change in the status of Imam Hatip Schools in Turkey Olaf Müller: Religious fundamentalism among Muslims of Turkish origin in Germany: response to failed integration or cultural legacy?	Parallel session 1B – Room B Dominant and peripheral discourses on religion I Katarzyna Zielinska, chair Eileen Barker: Fight, flight or freeze? Reactions to the law by minority religions James T. Richardson: Theoretical Understandings of How and Why Minority Religions Sometimes Succeed in the Legal Arena Barbara Theriault (with Konrad Pedziwiatr): The YouTube-Monk. A study in the life conducts of the young Polish middle class András Máté-Tóth: The third wave of freedom	Parallel session 1C – Room C Non-believers and atheists in religious societies I Tomáš Bubík, chair David Václavík: Crumbling Communities - the Disappearing Religion: Demographic Changes and Changes in the Socialization Model and their Influence on the "Atheization" of the Czech Borderland Agata Rejowska: Humanist Weddings in Poland: The Various Motivations of Couples Atko Rimmel: (Non)religion and national narratives in a museum space Dinka Marinović Jerolimov; Nikolina Hazdovac Bajic; Filip Fila: Comparative study of nonreligiosity: Croatia, Slovenia, and Czech Republic	Parallel session 1D – Room D Theories and methods at the periphery: Evolutionary theorizing, experiments, and modelling Aleš Chalupa, chair Jan Krátký: Experiments in local context: Hindu puja alleviates anxiety Radim Chvaja: Rituals as basic social acts: Testing the relationship between collective rituals and norm objectivity Kateřina Koppová: Operationalization of group boundaries in research of religious prosociality Jakub Cigán: Patterns of schism: Phylogenetic modelling of religions
18:15 – 19:15	<i>ISORECEA General Assembly</i>			

Friday 16

09.00 – 10.15	Plenary session II: Book presentation (roundtable discussion) chaired by Tomáš Bubík, Atko Rimmel and David Václavík Tomáš Bubík, Atko Rimmel, David Václavík (eds.), <i>Freethought and Atheism in Central and Eastern Europe: The Development of Secularity and Non-Religion</i>, Routledge 2020. Co-authors: Nikolina Hazdovac Bajic, Anita Stašulane, Milda Alisauskiene, Miroslav Tížik, Anna Mariya Basauri Ziuzina, Oleg Kyselov.			
10.15 – 10.45	<i>break</i>			
10.45 – 12.30	<p>Parallel session 2A – Room A Religious people as a minority II Tomáš Bubík, chair</p> <p>Zuzana Bártová: Between marginalisation and alternative lifestyle: a case study of Buddhist practitioners in the Czech Republic and France</p> <p>Nicholas Lackenby: For many are called, and few are chosen: the marginality of Orthodox liturgical life in central Serbia</p> <p>Cintia Csók: The Changing Role of School Pastors in the 21st Century</p>	<p>Parallel session 2B – Room B Dominant and peripheral discourses on religion II Jakub Havlíček, chair</p> <p>Matouš Vencálek: Beyond Peripheries: The Methodologies, Implications and Limitations of Studying Extraterrestrial Religions</p> <p>Anita Stasulane: The Religious and the Secular: Examining Religion in Relation to History at the exhibition Latvia's Century</p> <p>Merili Metsvahi: Werewolf belief among the Estonian peasants in the 16th and 17th century</p>	<p>Parallel session 2C – Room C Non-believers and atheists in religious societies II David Václavík, chair</p> <p>Ondrej Štefaňák: The phenomenon of believing without belonging among Slovak youth (What does a youth who does not identify with any religion believe in?)</p> <p>Krunoslav Nikodem: “It finally happened”: Secularization in European Catholic Countries</p> <p>Nikolina Hazdovac Bajić: Non-religiosity in Croatia – Non-religiosity on the (semi-)periphery?</p>	<p>Parallel session 2D – Room D Network Analysis, Computational Modelling and Simulation in the Study of Religions I Jakub Cigán, chair</p> <p>Dalibor Papoušek (with Adam Mertel and Zdeněk Pospíšil): Archaeological Proxies in the Modelling of the Spread of Early Christianity in Its Formative Phases</p> <p>Anestis Karasaridis: The Dynamics of the Growth of Christianity in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries CE: Designing a System Dynamics Model of the Influence of Pandemics on Early Christian Population</p> <p>Aleš Chalupa (with Eva Výtvarová; Adam Mertel; Jan Fousek; Tomáš Hampejs): Did the Roman Army help Mithraism to Spread? Mithraism and Roman Military Infrastructure</p>
12.30 – 14.00	<i>Lunch break</i>			
14.00 – 15.45	<p>Parallel session 3A – Room A Transformations of the New Religious Movements: from the periphery to the mainstream or disappearance I Gergely Rosta, chair</p> <p>Dorota Hall: Christian minorities' perspectives on history and intricacies related to making their message public</p>	<p>Parallel session 3B – Room B Dominant and peripheral discourses on religion III Katarzyna Zielińska, chair</p> <p>Vladimír Bahna: From peripheral and controversial religious practice into a highlight of regional religious life: The Marian pilgrimage site in Turzovka</p>	<p>Parallel session 3C – Room C Scientific Atheism: Soviet Scholarship Mainstream or Its Periphery? Atko Rimmel, chair</p> <p>Stefan Ragaz: Provincializing scientific atheism</p> <p>Oleg Kyselov: Sociology as a servant of atheism: sociology of religion in Soviet Ukraine</p>	<p>Parallel session 3D – Room D Network Analysis, Computational Modelling and Simulation in the Study of Religions II Dalibor Papoušek, chair</p> <p>Tomáš Glomb; Vojtěch Kaše: The Cultural Evolution of Moralizing Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean Project (CEMRAM): A Distant Reading Approach</p>

	<p>Réka Szilárdi; Sára Heidl: Festival religion</p> <p>Jakub Havlíček: Indigenous People of the Pacific Northwest Coast, Spirituality and Identity: Museums in Washington State</p>	<p>Maja Kaninska: Religious discourse - legitimacy in the socio-political system of a devaluing state</p> <p>Olga, Breskaya: Role of Religion and Perceptions of Religious Freedom</p>	<p>Tatiana Folieva: From «Moscow Radio University» to «Central Open Anti-Religious Institute»: system of atheistic education in the 1930's.</p> <p>Anna Mariya Basauri Ziuzina: “We quitted religion...”: Female Voices in Soviet Deconversion Narratives</p>	<p>David Zbiral: Dissident Networks Project (DISSINET): Bridging Between Medieval History and Innovative Research Methods</p> <p>Jana Valtrová: Exploring Misunderstandings within Interreligious Communication: Christian Material Culture and the Medieval Mongols</p>
15.45 – 16.15	<i>Break</i>			
16.15 – 18.00	<p>Parallel session 4A – Room A</p> <p>Transformations of the New Religious Movements: from the periphery to the mainstream or disappearance II</p> <p>Dinka Marinović Jerolimov, chair</p> <p>Michal Puchovský: (In)visible religion in music: Pagan motives in music of Moravian Pagan musician Tomáš Kočko</p> <p>Andrzej Kasperek; Karolina Maria Hess: On the periphery of religion: the case of Kazimierz Stabrowski and the Warsaw esoteric milieu</p> <p>Irena Saleniece: Religious life under Communist totalitarianism: the case of Latvia (1940s-1980s)</p>	<p>Parallel session 4B – Room B</p> <p>Dominant and peripheral discourses on religion IV</p> <p>Olaf Müller, chair</p> <p>Katarzyna Zielińska: Doing Gender in the Polish Catholic Missions in Sweden</p> <p>Silvie Kotherová: The controversy of knowledge-making about Buddhism</p> <p>Kinga Povedák: 'Rocking the church' – The sound of religion from the periphery</p>	<p>Parallel session 4C – Room C</p> <p>Exposing the explicit and implicit in religions I</p> <p>Oleg Kyselov, chair</p> <p>Edit Márta Révay: Edging from a privileged position</p> <p>Victoria Vitanova-Kerber: Religious policy on the edge of the Soviet Union: Esotericism in 1970s Bulgaria</p> <p>Gergely Rosta: Religious Change in Hungary and its Mechanisms</p> <p>Wojciech Sadlon: Paradoxical Tensions in Religious Identity: Living out Sexuality in Consecrated Life in Poland</p>	<p>Parallel session 4D – Room D</p> <p>Everyday life on the periphery of religious studies</p> <p>Nikolina Hazdovac Bajić, chair</p> <p>Michaela Žáková: “Cricket is a religion, and I am an extremist!”: meanings of the sport for the minorities in the Czech Republic</p> <p>Milan Fujda (with Michaela Ondrašínová; Miroslav Vrzal): Making new home: Friendship and the community of faith among expats in Brno</p> <p>Matej Paulík: Alternative spiritualities as cultural resources for reframing unusual experience</p> <p>Remigiusz Szauer: Between the need for sensations and attachment to tradition. The specificity of religious experience among the youth of Central Pomerania in Poland in the face of the phenomenon of peripheralisation of religion</p>

Saturday 17

09.00 – 10.15	Plenary session III: Keynote lecture chaired by Atko Rimmel Milda Alisauskiene: Religion on the Periphery in Central and Eastern Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall: Diversity, Pluralism and Everyday Life			
10.15 – 10.45	<i>break</i>			
10.45 – 12.30	<p>Parallel session 5A – Room A Religious diversification and social exclusion Jana Valtrová, chair</p> <p>Adam Gajdoš: Church life/live in pandemic times: traditional and emergent boundaries of membership in Czech Christian communities</p> <p>Pavol Minarik: Bringing rational choice to the study of religion in communist and post-communist settings</p> <p>Anna Szwed: “If you don’t change anything, nothing will change”. Agency among religious women in a Roman Catholic women’s community in Poland</p>	<p>Parallel session 5B – Room B Dominant and peripheral discourses on religion V Tomáš Bubík, chair</p> <p>Robert T. Ptaszek: The Marginalized Queen. A few remarks about the need and opportunities for philosophical studies on spirituality, religions and religious movements</p> <p>Rita Hegedűs: Believers on the periphery: Christians in Hungary who do not support the right-wing government</p> <p>Maria Sroczyńska: Polish Youth in Search for the Sacred – Two Minorities: Deep Believers and Non-believers</p>	<p>Parallel session 5C – Room C Exposing the explicit and implicit in religions II Jakub Havlíček, chair</p> <p>Sławomir Mandes: The gender gap in religiosity in East and Central European countries</p> <p>Gabriella Pusztai: Religious socialization of students in qualitative and quantitative approach</p> <p>Zsuzsanna Demeter-Karászi: A cross-sector comparison of student’s religiosity</p> <p>Anett Hrabéczy: Religious Affiliation and Persistence among University Students with Disabilities</p>	<p>Parallel session 5D – Room D Everyday life on the religious periphery Silvie Kotherová, Chair</p> <p>Zsófia Kocsis: Term-time work and religiosity among higher education students</p> <p>Maria Rogińska: On the periphery of the universe. Cosmic (ir)religious imaginary of the post-Soviet natural scientists</p> <p>Giuseppe Maiello: On Being a Trans man in the Czech Pagan Community</p>
12.30 – 14.00	<i>Lunch break</i>			
14.00 – 14.15	<i>Closing: Dorota Hall and Tomáš Bubík</i>			
14.15 →	<i>Informal meeting</i>			

Abstracts

Vladimír BAHNA

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From peripheral and controversial religious practice into a highlight of regional religious life: The Marian pilgrimage site in Turzovka

This paper covers the development of a Marian pilgrimage site called mount Živčák, located near town Turzovka in north-west Slovakia. Since its inception (an alleged apparition of the Virgin Mary in 1958), till today this place of religious devotion witnessed several changes of its official status, social function, forms of ritual practice, and the actual appearance of the place. A transition of the church attitude from an official and long-lasting ban, through ignorance, to active support and full-time management, was followed by changes in the forms of religiosity related to this site. The initial spontaneous forms of folk Christianity were expelled from the main ritual practice and replaced by the official catholic liturgy. The shift between these divergent ritual forms is interpreted in the context of two competing cognitive theories of ritual. Namely, the Ritual competence theory developed by Thomas Lawson and Bob McCauley (2002) and the Modes of religiosity theory proposed by Harvey Whitehouse (2001, 2004).

Eileen BARKER

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Fight, flight or freeze? Reactions to the law by minority religions

This talk considers a variety of ways in which minority religions may react to the law of the society in which they find themselves. A few, very few, resort to violence; passive resistance, going underground or fleeing from the law are more common responses. In some cases, minority religions will challenge the law and, in not a few instances, they have succeeded in changing it and/or its interpretation. Others may adapt to the law, taking on board more or less fundamental changes to their beliefs or practices, or re-presenting themselves in ways that are more in accordance with the law. And, not infrequently, minority religions with relatively little status, will forge some kind of alliance with those in positions of greater power or authority, be it by lobbying politicians, turning to the media or wooing scholars to give evidence on their behalf.

Zuzana BÁRTOVÁ

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Between marginalisation and alternative lifestyle: a case study of Buddhist practitioners in the Czech Republic and France

Previous research in minority religions mainly discussed religious marginalization through the concept of sect (Abgrall, 1996; Barker, 1995; Beckford, 1985; Luca, 1998). Some minority religious groups were thus considered controversial. Defying secularization, sects were also dismissed as threatening (Woodhead, 2011). As it is observed by Hjelm (2006, 2011) classical

critiques of sects extend progressively to religions as such. Based on an ethnographic study of Buddhist practitioners of “convert” Buddhism during 2010 to 2013 in the Czech Republic and France, this paper suggests that despite media and popular culture appropriation of Buddhist symbols and practices (Borup, 2016; Iwamura, 2011; Mitchell, 2014), its practitioners can be marginalized in their everyday lives. Their Buddhist engagement becomes a social problem. However, practitioners themselves propose a positive view of their practices, world-views and values and embrace an alternative conception of what can be called a Buddhist lifestyle. It is argued that practitioners can efficiently adopt this position due to their social status of mainly middle-class origin. To fully assess this alternative character, the emic posture has to be contextualized with regard to contemporary culture and its values (e.g., consumerism).

Anna Mariya BASAURI ZIUZINA

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“We quitted religion...”: Female Voices in Soviet Deconversion Narratives

Scientific atheists used various sources for their academic and propaganda work. One of such sources were real life stories, told by former believers of various religious denominations, particularly the so-called sectarians, which included Baptists, Pentecostals, Adventists and Jehovah Witnesses. These stories were published in newspapers, leaflets and given as examples at popular lectures for Soviet workers. With time these stories were collected in special books, which will be analyzed in this paper. A special attention will be given to women stories, their peculiarities and general pattern of narration. The hypothesis is that the main scope of collecting and citing these stories was to form a new Homo Sovieticus, convinced that a new Soviet lifestyle is not compatible with the existence of religious beliefs.

Olga BRESKAYA

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Role of Religion and Perceptions of Religious Freedom

Processes of modernization of society and simultaneous religious revitalization became an empirical argument of the sociology of religion for reconsidering the traditional roles played by religions. Seen as a source of solidarity and identity and system of individual and collective meanings, religions have considerably expanded their functions in modern societies performing new functions in the processes of sustainable development, protection of human rights, interreligious dialogue, or peacebuilding. This paper aims to present and discuss the New Indices of the Functions of Religion (NIFoR) and explore their relevance for explaining individual differences in perceptions of religious freedom. The theory being tested is that openness to the principles of religious freedom is related to perceptions of the functions of religion in society. A review of extant literature on the functions of religion identified eleven conceptually distinct functions. In the presented research, these functions were operationalized by thirty items. Drawing on data provided by 1035 students in Northern Italy, factor analysis reduced these thirty items to seven latent functions of religion. Regression analyses conducted separately for participants with various identities – belonging to the majority and minority religions and non-affiliated youth – employing these seven latent functions demonstrated that

for all groups of participants a more positive attitude toward religious freedom was associated with conceptualizing religion as primarily concerned with offering meaning and moral guidance.

Tomáš BUBÍK; Atko REMMEL; David VÁCLAVÍK (with Nikolina Hazdovac BAJIC, Anita STASULANE, Milda ALISAUSKIENE; Anna Mariya Basauri ZIUZINA; Oleg KYSELOV)

Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic

Book presentation (roundtable discussion)

The roundtable presents the book *Freethought and Atheism in Central and Eastern Europe: The Development of Secularity and Non-Religion* (2020). In contrast to scholarship that has focused on the ‘decline of religion’ and secularization theory, the book builds upon recent trends to focus on the ‘rise of non-religion’ itself. While the label of ‘post-communism’ might suggest a generalized perception of the region, this survey reveals that the precise developments in each country before, after and even during the communist era are surprisingly diverse. A multinational team of contributors provide interdisciplinary case studies covering Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria. This approach utilizes perspectives from social and intellectual history in combination with sociology of religion in order to cover the historical development of secularity and secular thought. After the book presentation roundtable discussion will follow.

Aleš CHALUPA (with Eva VÝTVAROVÁ, Adam MERTEL, Jan FOUSEK, Tomáš HAMPEJS)

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Did the Roman Army help Mithraism to Spread? Mithraism and Roman Military Infrastructure

The cause of the rapid and geographically impressive spread of Mithraism in the Roman empire is still only partially explained. Scholars had speculated about the influence of the Roman army and the popularity of Mithraism among Roman soldiers; however, a meticulously conducted demographical study based on Roman epigraphical data problematized this view. To demonstrate the possible impacts of the Roman military infrastructure on the spread of Mithraism in the Roman empire, we coded all sites of documented Mithraic presence and locations of the major Roman legionary fortresses, positioned them on the transportation network and used statistical analysis to detect possible relationship between these datasets, both at the level of the whole Roman empire and regionally. Although we were not able to find, at the level of the Roman empire, a statistically significant overlap between the locations of the Roman legionary fortresses and Mithraic sites, we discovered the statistically significant presence of Mithraic evidence in nodes important on thresholded military subnetworks connecting the Roman legionary fortresses. These results support the view that the Roman military infrastructure contributed to the spread of Mithraism and can partially explain the geographical distribution of archaeologically attested Mithraic evidence in the Roman empire.

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Rituals as basic social acts: Testing the relationship between collective rituals and norm objectivity

The perception of moral norms as objectively existing is a widespread feature of human cognition. Although various aspects of religious systems were suggested to enhance the objectivity of moral norms (e.g., belief in moralizing gods), the crucial role of ritual in the process has been neglected. Following Rappaport, we identify three characteristic features of ritual form - materialization, invariance, and digitalization, and investigate their role in promoting norm objectivity. In this talk, I will present results of 4 correlational (N = 977 in total) and one experimental study (in process) conducted on 3 populations which were designed to test the basic prediction of our theory that the frequency of collective religious rituals should be associated with perceived norm objectivity. Across these studies, we found that the more people attend collective rituals, the more they believed that moral norms are existing independently of space, time and humans. In the experiment, participants will write about their rituals in the experimental condition and about their ordinary day in work in control condition. Based on the theory and correlational results, we predict that writing about ritual will lead to more objective perceptions of moral norms.

Jakub CIGÁN

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Patterns of schism: Phylogenetic modeling of religions

The topic of schisms and sects is a traditional area of interest and systematic theorizing of sociologists of religion, at least since Weber and Troeltsch. Traditionally, sociology of religion concerns the relationships and connections between social and historical conditions that shift societies from local integrated communities into modern large-scale industrial bureaucratic structures and changes social forms of religious groups. However, there are no large datasets and appropriate models in the sociology of religion, allowing the scholars to access similarities and diversities of religious fragmentation across different religious traditions and under divergent social and historical conditions. The presented project aims on analyzing patterns of schism of five global religions (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism) based on computational methods developed in biology and resulted in phylogenetic models to assess similarities and differences in fragmentations and unifications under different social and historical conditions connected to state ideology, ethics, or economic system. The main goal of the talk is to evaluate and discuss the contribution and new insights into the systematic approaches from natural sciences for the study of religious schisms.

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The Changing Role of School Pastors in the 21st Century

While traditionally the role of pastors in schools is related to promoting the moral and religious development of students, the current interpretation increasingly identifies school pastors as members of a team of schools' helping professionals. In several countries, an extensive network of educational and social professionals operate to support the work of teachers. In recent years, the benefits of the integration of school helping professionals into the educational system have moved to the forefront of international research. In the literature, school pastors are sometimes also placed in this category. In several countries, school pastors are also in public institutions, using the specific and unspecific methods of pastoral care. In our qualitative research, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 school pastors. Interviewees were selected using a non-probabilistic sampling procedure, including the snowball method. Our research question was whether they identify themselves as pedagogical support staff in their school work. We also asked them the following questions: was there a difference in their role interpretation between the sectors of the school system (denominational and public et ct.). In which sectors do they consider their contribution to the effectiveness of educational processes to be significant? How do they relate to teachers and other support professionals (school social workers, child and youth workers, school-psychologists, teaching assistants, developmental pedagogues, traveling special needs teachers, health professionals, and school police)? The research results pointed to the significant transformation process of the school pastors' profession, in Hungary. Supported by the ÚNKP-20-3 New National Excellence Program of the Ministry for Innovation and Technology from the source of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund.

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A cross-sector comparison of students' religiosity

The church-related higher education institutions mostly attracted the researchers' attention after the millennium, because these institutions opened their gates in Central and Eastern Europe following the political changes. Pervious regional research on the private sector of higher education institutions has shown that the new type of these institutions have started to operate in peripheral, marginalized regions (Pusztai, Farkas 2016). As for students of higher education institutions were less and less able to describe their religiosity in black and white (Tomka 1990), because nowadays religiosity is becoming more and more complex.

In the following study we are looking for the answer to the questions whether the religious composition of church-related and state universities differs in the cross-border areas. Our analyses are based on database from the PERSIST 2019 survey, conducted among students of higher education (N = 2310) in five countries of Central and Eastern Europe. To answer our research questions, we performed multidimensional analysis of students' religiosity. Our results show that the two sectors have different composition. Project no. 123847 has been implemented with the support provided from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary, financed under the K_17 funding scheme.

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From "Moscow Radio University" to "Central Open Anti-Religious Institute": system of atheistic education in the 1930's

The League of the Militant Godless (LMG) had been systematically building a system of anti-religious education for 7 years. That is why the LMG established the following system: anti-religious interest groups for grassroots activists, anti-religious workers and peasant universities for the district activists. By the early 30s, this system was supplemented by Sunday universities, the anti-religious faculty at the Moscow University on the radio (in 1931 there is an all-Russian anti-religious University on the radio), and in 1933 the Central open anti-religious Institute was established and operated for several years. Hence, a very clear system of education was built, and, according to my preliminary calculations, from 600 thousand to 1.5 million people passed through it. LMG administrators not only build the education system, they are trying to "academize" this system, through cooperation with Communist academy, attracting top scientists, organizing academic and research plans. These plans are surprisingly similar to the curricula of the first departments of scientific atheism, which allows us to consider the system of anti-religious education of the UMA as the forerunner of modern domestic religious studies education, at least, it is a new topic in the discussion about the role of scientists in state and religious policy in the Soviet period.

Milan FUJDA (with Michaela ONDRAŠINOVÁ, Miroslav VRZAL)

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Making new home: Friendship and the community of faith among expats in Brno

We analyze the role of intimate social ties and community in the process of home-making among the highly skilled migrants in Brno. We focus on the local international Catholic community. It supports migrants' home-making by fostering friendships, strong engagement and bypassing the language barrier. Belonging, then, is dependent on internationality and sharing of migratory experience and of faith. The settling migrants, however, relax their ties to the community because they need to establish local attachment through local ties of various types including those dependent on overcoming the language barrier. Their ties and identities are more diversified and stable.

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Church life/live in pandemic times: traditional and emergent boundaries of membership in Czech Christian communities

In 2013, the Czech Republic adopted a "Restitution bill" which initiated a gradual termination of state funding of Christian churches. As a result, churches have had to adapt their economic

plans to become independent, optimize their organizational structures while also reposition themselves as actors in a secular society. These processes put to question existing symbolic boundaries around membership. Who will assume responsibility for financial health, decision-making and church community life in the new economic situation? Who is a potential client of church “services”? What sort of relationship should Churches maintain with “outsiders”? What are the criteria to draw these boundaries?

Restrictions of social contact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic made the work around these boundaries even more visible. The necessity to improvise church life/live between the on-line and off-line set existing assumptions regarding access and responsibility under pressure - in some cases, boundaries became less permeable, in other cases they dissolved completely. We take the “pandemic lens” as an opportunity to better understand the current dynamics of boundary work in three Czech churches of different theological ecclesiological traditions (Roman Catholic, Mainline Protestant and Baptist) where we have been conducting anthropological research since 2019.

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The Cultural Evolution of Moralizing Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean Project (CEMRAM): A Distant Reading Approach

The paper presents an interdisciplinary research project which aims to contribute to an ongoing debate in the cognitive science of religion and cultural evolution on factors responsible for the emergence of moralizing religions. Scholars propose either social complexity or economic prosperity as the key forces in these cultural processes and often refer to the religious history of the ancient Mediterranean in their arguments. In this regard, the project aims to explore the so called Affluence Hypothesis. This hypothesis suggests that the emergence of moralizing religions was caused by shifts in life-history strategies in response to the increase in economic prosperity. The project aims to evaluate this hypothesis by analyzing economic, demographic and religious dynamics of the ancient Mediterranean. To achieve this goal, the project will apply the methods of distant reading to explore the spatial and temporal relationships between occurrences of moralizing religions motifs in digitized corpora of ancient texts and inscriptions in Greek and Latin on the one hand and the level of affluence based on socio-economic proxy data on the other. The paper will discuss key methodological approaches of the project and their potential in selected case studies.

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Religious Practices under the Soviet Regime: the case of the Old Believers in Latvia

After the Second World War, democratic system of the Republic of Latvia was changed into the soviet order. Communist regime was openly anti-religious and threatened believers with

punishment and social isolation. In Latvia, atheistic propaganda influenced representatives of all confessions, but not all of them suffered badly. By the time, Old Believers were already experienced in surviving under adverse conditions, and the new political ideology became the challenge, but not the verdict. Old Believers' parishes continued their daily activities and sometimes even managed to get support from the local authorities. However, the community itself stratified into two major groups – practicing believers and non-believers. For their part, practicing believers divided in open and hidden fellows. The main reason for abandoning religion was public career and/or necessity of caring the family. Nonetheless, there were also those, who stayed religious and gained social success and recognition. The believers became a minority, who had to keep religious traditions and to transfer the religious experience to secular brothers in faith in 1980s after religiosity was allowed. The presentation is based on life stories of Old Believers, who narrated about their experience under the soviet power.

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Christian minorities' perspectives on history and intricacies related to making their message public

The paper draws on sociological research on constructing and negotiating minority Christian identities in the context of mediatization, and more specifically, on the discourse analysis of media narratives produced by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and Orthodox Churches in two countries: Poland and the UK.

When referring to history, both churches, on the one hand, rely on dominant discourses, in particular by presenting their beliefs and heritage as enrooted in the local past and/or corresponding to historically shaped values cultivated in a given country. On the other hand, they display an alternative vision of past developments. Having other perception of history than the majority does, they make a lot of effort to educate both their co-religionists and a wider audience on the 'right' perception of history in the opposition to the official 'wrong' one. When pursuing this differentiation strategy, each church in each country highlights different points of contention and with different zeal, according to whom they recognize as the main producer of the 'wrong' version of history and what exact 'wrongness' they find particularly painful, unjust and diminishing the importance of their organization. The paper expands on the Polish part of the research and Christian minorities' engagement with the public media.

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Indigenous People of the Pacific Northwest Coast, Spirituality and Identity: Museums in Washington State

The presentation focuses on indigenous peoples' spirituality as it is presented in the exhibitions of museums of Seattle area, Washington. It stresses the emic viewpoint provided in the exhibitions of Tulalip Hibulb Cultural Center, Suquamish Museum, Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Centre, and Carnegie Museum (Lower Elwha Klallam). The presentation provides the

analysis of the role and place of religion, as it is portrayed in the museums, in the identity formation of indigenous people.

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Non-religiosity in Croatia – Non-religiosity on the (semi-)periphery?

Secularistic tendencies in Croatia in the past 150 years can be analytically regarded through the concept of (semi-)periphery. Namely, since the 19th century, when anti-clerical ideas appeared in political and literary (modernistic) circles they expressed reflection of a much broader process that sought to reject hegemonic systems in Europe. During the other half of the 20th century, systematically imposed secularization and atheisation of Croatian society was part of established communist ideology in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. After the collapse of communism, although Croatia experienced resurgence of religion, certain activism of organized non-religious and atheistic groups can be observed in public. This paper seeks to analyze in which part is this activism a reflection of cultural imperialism of Western countries and spreading of the patterns established by the movement of New Atheism and in which part is it original. The analysis is based on close observation of non-religious and atheistic organizations in Croatia during the period from 2016 to 2019, and it will include the analysis of their web pages, materials they disseminate, their public activities (protests, gatherings) and group communication (in groups on social media).

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Believers on the periphery: Christians in Hungary who do not support the right-wing government

Hungary can be said to be a Christian country with a right-wing government that identifies itself as Christian democratic. No doubt, many religious people favour this kind of politics and vote for the ruling party 'Fidesz'. Also, most Christian church leaders support this regime. However, not all Christian people identify themselves as right-wing citizens and many of them do not support the ruling party. In my analysis I focus on this group, which can feel being on the periphery in the church nowadays in Hungary. Who are they, what is their social status, does their religiosity differ from that of their for-government companions? I use survey data from the European Values Study, 2018 wave, to answer these questions.

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Festival religion

Festival religion implies an alternative religious phenomenon, which is a specific approach to religious lifestyle and transcendental belief. Nowadays increasing number of people search for modern spirituality, independently from institutional religiosity and conventional religious practices. Our research is based on the inquiry of the Department for Study of Religions in the University of Szeged. We examine an esoteric event every year since 2016, the Festival Everness. The topics of the event are conscious lifestyle, physical and mental health, environmental protection, esoteric practices. The programs are related to dance, massage, meditation, yoga, and healing. Participants can listen to lectures on religion, esotericism, sexuality and healthy lifestyle. People here are attempting to find a way to experience or discover their own faith, spiritual balance or simply themselves. In every research, we have sought to include queries based on modern theories in the field Study of Religion, in addition to traditional religious questions, in order to find the best approach for the community. In the first year, we examined the "civil religious dimensions", in 2017, we asked about occult-esoteric religious practices. In 2018 and 2019, we examined three dimensions of esoteric, healing and self-development activities. These approaches produced results that can show the dominant ideological view at the event. We collected all the theories and data to show the presence of an alternative religious dimension, which we try to map and interpret to get closer to the phenomenon of Festival Religion.

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On the periphery of religion: the case of Kazimierz Stabrowski and the Warsaw esoteric milieu

The aim of the paper is a sociological analysis of the esoteric environment existing at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in Warsaw, operating around the Director of the Warsaw School of Fine Arts, Kazimierz Stabrowski (1869–1929), which is treated as an example of a cultic milieu. The authors focus on the analysis of the Warsaw cultic milieu in terms of visibility and recognition. Referring to the category of rejected knowledge (anomalies or cultural rubbish bin), they show, using the example of Stabrowski and other group members, their efforts in the struggle for recognition of their ideas in various environments, and trace the process of their exclusion by various post-enlightenment institutions. Analysis of this phenomenon in a sociological perspective also allows to present theoretical problems regarding the relationship of sociology and the dominant approaches in the study of Western Esotericism and to propose a possible theoretical framework for research in the field of sociology of esotericism.

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Religious Affiliation and Persistence among University Students with Disabilities

Besides the family, other inter- and intragenerational relationships of individuals have an outstanding influence on academic progress and embedding, as confirmed by a number of researches, and these factors are also crucial for students with disabilities. However, since most research considers students with disabilities as a homogeneous group, our research aims to examine the heterogeneity of this group and to examine how the embedding of students with disabilities and learning difficulties differs in relation to each other, focusing on embedding in religious communities. The main hypothesis of our research is that students with learning disabilities will be more embedded in different student or youth organizations, while students with disabilities will be more embedded in religious communities. In order to investigate this, our quantitative research examined data from 315 university students with disabilities. Questionnaire research with such a large number of items is unique among research that examining students with disabilities. In our research we compared the intergenerational and intragenerational relationships of students with disabilities and learning difficulties and how embedding in religious communities affects the persistence and academic performance of the students studied. Based on our results, a clear difference can be observed between the religious embedding of the two groups investigated. Supported by the ÚNKP-20-3 New National Excellence Program of the Ministry for Innovation and Technology from the source of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund.

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Comparative study of nonreligiosity: Croatia, Slovenia, and Czech Republic

Although nonreligiosity and atheism are becoming increasingly interesting topics within the sociology of religion, with a separate field of research that is slowly being created over the past twenty years, most studies are focused on Western European and American societies. In post-Communist societies, research is focused on religion and on attempts to explain religiosity and the public role of religion, while nonreligiosity and atheism are often left in the blind spot. This paper will try to start filling the gap since there are no comparative studies of nonreligiosity in this part of the world. Using the data obtained by ISSP, the paper presents a comparative analysis of three post-Communist societies with significant differences in the general level of non-religiosity: Croatia, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic. The paper will present a more in-depth analysis for three chosen countries, present the basic socio-demographic and other characteristics of the nonreligious people, and try to answer whether social expectations about the public role of religion differ among chosen countries depending on a general level of religiosity in a specific society.

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Religious discourse - legitimacy in the socio-political system of a devaluing state

The beginning of the 21st century confronted us with the question of whether we as a human species have progressed spiritually and intellectually and whether our spirituality nonetheless feels external influences. In the context of influence, this paper will address the dominant and peripheral discourses that are active in the Serbian Orthodox Church. There will be also parts about why their importance should be monitored and analyzed. In other words, why their causes were inevitable and did the political establishment know what the consequences might be after all events. It will follow the flow of religious discourse in the mass media that manifested itself in the 1980s in Yugoslavia, and then more intensely in the 1990s and the conflict period. Given that religious discourse is a way of thinking, speaking, symbolic expression that is recognizable and close to the religious community, dominant discourse with almost dominant utility in socio-political turmoil during the 1980s will prove to be the most important. I will also explain the importance of peripheral discourse that quickly and easily manifested as a consequence in culture and in the intensive formation of the foundations of national identity.

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The Dynamics of the Growth of Christianity in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries CE: Designing a System Dynamics Model of the Influence of Pandemics on Early Christian Population

It has been argued that the Antonine Plague and the Plague of Cyprian had a significant impact on the composition of the population of the Roman Empire during the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. The impact of those pandemics is deemed so significant that it might have led to the ideal conditions under which Christianity became the dominant religion in the whole Mediterranean. Recent adoption of the methods of mathematical and computational modelling by the humanities allowed to precisely demonstrate some phenomena related to the Antonine Plague and the Plague of Cyprian. However, the potential significance of pandemics in the growth of the early Christian population was not yet tested through such methods. The aim of this paper is to present a project that would systematically evaluate the extent to which those notions are realistic. To achieve this, a set of epidemiological system dynamics models of varying complexity is proposed and discussed, which could utilise the current advances in epidemiology and the demographics of the Roman Empire to present selected scenarios of the pandemics of the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE and their influence on the growth of Christian population.

Vojtěch KAŠE – see Tomáš GLOMB

Andrzej KASPEREK – see Karolina Maria HESS

Zsófia KOCSIS

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Term-time work and religiosity among higher education students

Work and ethics, the relation of religiosity to work are long-researched topics. The work is profession, not just an activity of earning money. Defining work as a profession directs the interpretation of work towards self-actualization, and it can be accompanied by a religious explanation. However, work can be an asset, and it can occur in both forms among college students. Is there a link between student employment and religiosity? We used the PERSIST 2019, this is a large sample database (N = 2310), it was made in higher education institutions in the five eastern region of Europe. Based on previous research, people who belong to a religious community are more altruistic in work, while the perfectionist factor is typical for the non-religious students. We assumed that the motives of employment were closely related to the religious typology, but not to the quantitative indicators of employment. During the analysis, the types of religiosity were compared with the characteristics of employment. The results showed that the relationship between religiosity and work showed a differentiated picture. Project no. 123847 has been implemented with the support provided from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary, financed under the K_17 funding scheme.

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Operacionalization of group boundaries in research of religious prosociality

Into some social bonds, we are already born (kin), while into others, we decide for ourselves whether and to what extent we want to be part of them (kith). Similarly, an affiliation to some religious group can be obtained through early socialization by these primary bonds or later in life more based on oneself decision. Groups that we consider as "our own" are usually preferred over other groups. More prosocial acts, such as investing more resources (e. g., energy, time, money), emerge towards members of the same group. In current evolutionary grounded research on religious prosociality, the terms ingroup and outgroup are used to distinguish groups to which an individual belongs or does not. Belonging to different groups contributes to the formation of an individual's varied identity. Social groups can be seen as dynamic organisms that are continually changing - arise, regroup, and disappear. The question, however, is how it is possible to operationalize the group's belonging and where to lead the dividing line of group boundaries. In this paper, the focus will be not only on the theoretical context of these questions but also on concrete ways in which current research copes with the complexity of these phenomena.

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The controversy of knowledge-making about Buddhism

Controversy studies have been an essential part of the sociology of science since the late 1970s. Inspired by Kuhn (1970), the new sociologists of science were determined to show empirically what Kuhn had suggested conceptually: that knowledge-making was a social process (Mukerji 2007). From that time social scientists and historians from sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK) have studied conflicts in and around science for insights into the science-policy process; in order to learn more about the various roles of scientists and non-scientists in policymaking (Martin and Richards 1995) and to a deeper understanding how is scientific knowledge created. Like any scientific study, the study of religion is also subject to social and political processes. Unfortunately, the study of controversies in the study of religion has so far been a very marginal matter. For this reason, this conference paper would like to show the importance of this approach on the example of the controversial study of Buddhism.

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Experiments in local context: Hindu puja alleviates anxiety

Localized manifestations of religious behavior, be they on central or peripheral areas, are of the primary importance for social study of religion. The aims of such an endeavor may be either to describe the patterns of behavior in its full richness or contribute to understanding of distant phenomena based on generalized patterns. Informed by the experimental research of anxiety and ritual behavior in the local Hindu culture of Mauritius, I will argue that sociologists seeking to uncover such a comparative patterns can indeed be empowered by hypotheses driven experimental setup of research. Experimenting in local places necessarily demands prior observations and contacts established at the site not dissimilar to those mastered by sensitive qualitative researcher. In fact, experimental research, if conducted with methodological rigor and with all ethical consideration in mind, demands steps that are well known to all qualitative-oriented social researchers, but on the top of that also the expertise of experimentalist. So why bother with extra work? The presentation argues that merits of such work can be grasped under the purview of sociological method. It is the possibility of postulation of middle-ranged theory on societal-, ecological-, group- or physiological level with a predictive power that adds on the top of the knowledge obtained by a qualitative work. And that is far too promising to be ignored.

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Sociology as a servant of atheism: sociology of religion in Soviet Ukraine

In this paper, I am going to present my study of the Ukrainian sociology of religion based on published works, archive materials and interviews with former scientific atheists. Scientific

atheism was a part of Marxist social theory, that gives me ground to proclaim that its core was rather sociological than historical, psychological or even philosophical, despite the fact that scientific atheism was reckoned as a part of philosophical disciplines. At the same time, the theoretical problems of the sociology of religion were not highly developed, with the exception of secularization theory and the concept of religiosity. In addition to this, the sociological surveys were conducted with ideological purposes – to define the population's level of religiosity and atheization and to give practical advice on atheistic upbringing for the Communist party organizations. I have found that sociologists were skeptical toward sociological surveys conducted by scientific atheists: they asked their colleagues not to even call them sociological surveys, but just questioning. My interviews with the former scientific atheists show that now they try to present these surveys not as a part of state atheistic policy, but as the experience of communication with believers.

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For many are called, and few are chosen: the marginality of Orthodox liturgical life in central Serbia

This paper considers how – in a context where there is an overarching, historically-rooted faith tradition – particular ways of practising that same tradition can come to be perceived and experienced as peripheral. Ethnographically speaking, it draws on long-term fieldwork with observant Orthodox Christians (vernici, lit. ‘believers’) in the central Serbian town of Kraljevo. Whilst in postsocialist Serbia ethnic and confessional identities are deeply intertwined, only a relative minority strive to lead a ‘liturgical life’. That is, beyond claiming a ‘traditional’ Orthodox identity through ethnic affiliation, these Christians seek to lead lives centred on the Divine Liturgy, structured around fasting and regular Divine Communion. For many (more secular) Serbians, however, this appears to be a strange, even disingenuous, fanaticism. Thus, despite being integrated members of society, structurally speaking vernici inhabit a peculiar position: marginalized (sometimes stigmatized) for their religious practice and yet marshalling ideas about a collective identity and way of life which they claim to be essential for all Serbs. However, the paper's central argument is that the vernici's persistent (negatively-inflected) critical push against what they see as an indifferent, non-practising society is generative for liturgical life, allowing for the emergence of powerful discourses about ‘sincere’ Christians forever being a minority.

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On Being a Trans man in the Czech Pagan Community

The paper presents a specific situation concerning the Czech Pagan community, mainly through the narrative of the actors. Using the emic approach, the aim of the paper is to show an insider's perspective of the ways in which Czech Pagans relate to the problematics of transgender and its connection with the vaguely understood concept of shamanism. We will study the case of

one visible transgender Pagan man who is perceived as a mystical figure by some but is unacknowledged by most people, as being someone special or attracting more attention than anybody else in the community. The goal of the paper is to capture the points of interconnection between his transgender identity and his religious practice. The perspectives of other members of the Pagan community will be taken into account.

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The gender gap in religiosity in East and Central European countries

The aim of the presentation is to answer the question about the scale and the sources of the gender gap in religiosity in East and Central European countries (ECC). Research shows that women are generally more religious than men. Many explanations for this phenomenon have been proposed (Voas, McAndrew, Storm 2013). However, most of the research is focused on Western European countries, and little is known about the sources of the gender gap in ECC countries and how it has changed over the past 30 years. The analysis will be based on the four waves of the European Values Study for ECC belonging to the European Union. At the beginning of my presentation, I show how the church and subjective religiosity have changed since 1989. Next, I analyze the influence of demographic, structural (socioeconomic status) and ideological (political attitude) factors on the gap in both types of religiosity. Finally, I verify the hypothesis according to which modernization and Europeanization lead ECC to the weakening of the pressure of traditional values on women, and in consequence to the decrease of the gender gap in religiosity.

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The third wave of freedom

In some former studies, I argued for a distinction between the first and the second period (wave) after the regime change in CEE. I have observed the societal and religious transformation on three different levels: state and churches/politics and churches / civil society and churches used the tripartite logic of José Casanova's public religion. Some recent developments in the region and especially in Hungary suggest talking about the third wave of freedom. On the state/church level churches take over several tasks from the state in social care and education. On the politics/church level, there is a growing tension in the taken-for-grantedness of the support of right-wing parties. And on the civil society/church level we can observe a boom of church-related and faith-based activities. And one last general observation is that the link to the communist past lost his interpretative power. In my paper, I will try to argue with different types of recent data for the idea of the third wave of freedom.

Adam MERTEL – see Dalibor PAPOUŠEK

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Werewolf belief among the Estonian peasants in the 16th and 17th century

During the witch trials of the 16th and 17th century about 30 people were accused of doing harm as werewolves in Estonia and Livonia. Taking account the fact that not so many trial records have been preserved in this region one can conclude that werewolf belief was quite widespread at that time.

In my presentation I will give a short overview of trial records in which somebody was accused of changing herself or himself into a wolf. I will also discuss the questions why and when the belief in werewolves started to be popular among Estonian peasants.

The concept of werewolf was imported from abroad, but found a very fertile ground for spread and growth in Estonia and Livonia. Foreign travellers who regarded Livonia as an El Dorado of werewolves in early modernity had widely differing ideas of werewolf than the native local inhabitants had. While this motif was used as sociopolitical means that helped to fashion the image of the inhabitants of the periphery of Europe for the Germans and other foreigners, it meant something much more positive for local peasants.

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Bringing rational choice to the study of religion in communist and post-communist settings

The rational choice theory (RCT) and the religious economies approach have earned significant attention in the social scientific study of religion, being both praised and criticized. Those theories enjoy much less prominence in Europe than in the United States, and they are rather peripheral in the Central and Eastern European study of religion. This paper reviews some of the recent applications of the RCT to show that the theory might have been unfairly marginalized and that it can provide interesting insights even in studying communist and post-communist societies. Particular attention is given to the theoretical and empirical works dealing with China as well as the existing studies applying the RCT and the religious economies approach to the Central and Eastern European countries. The goal is to stimulate a discussion about possible further applications as well as the limits of the RCT in the communist and post-communist context.

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Religious fundamentalism among Muslims of Turkish origin in Germany: response to failed integration or cultural legacy?

In order to investigate the determinants of fundamentalism among Muslim migrants and their descendants, there are various approaches that can be taken to: based on the claim that fundamentalism is a response to increasing secularization and modernization, various studies have demonstrated that it is especially the “losers of modernization” that tend towards fundamentalist attitudes (Coreno 2002). According to the thesis of “reactive religiosity” (Fleischmann/Phalet 2012), immigrants’ experience of social exclusion and discrimination strengthens their identification with their own religiosity, which in turn could favour fundamentalist attitudes. Culturalistically arguing approaches that assume that mentalities, attitudes and behaviours change only slowly and are maintained over a longer period of time even in the event of serious changes in contextual conditions (Jacob/Kalter 2013), would suggest that fundamentalism is first and foremost a legacy of the Muslim culture of origin. Using survey data collected in 2015/16, the paper presents a concept developed to measure Muslim fundamentalism, describes its distribution among the population of Turkish background in Germany and examines influencing factors.

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“It finally happened?” Secularization in European Catholic Countries

The paper is based on empirical analysis of religiosity in six European Catholic countries (Austria, Croatia, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Spain). Theoretical frame of this analysis are different theories of secularization. The analysis is based on EVS data sets (1999/2008/2018). Religiosity is constructed from following items: religious self-identification, importance of God and religion in life, beliefs in God, life after death, heaven and hell, and prayer. Results of comparative analysis on the basic level are showing decreasing of religiosity in almost every item and in all examined countries. In the next step religiosity index is constructed from mentioned items and analyzed with six predictors (political orientations, basic socio-demographic characteristics, authoritarianism, moral, national identity and individualism). Results from further analysis are showing strengthening correlations of religiosity and “right” political orientation in Croatia, Poland and Spain. Also, there are increasing connections between religiosity and authoritarianism, and religiosity and national identity in Croatia and Poland. On the general level results indicate that secularization in those Catholic countries is evident. But the question of secularization’s causes remains open.

Dalibor PAPOUŠEK (with Adam MERTEL and Zdeněk POSPÍŠIL)

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Archaeological Proxies in the Modeling of the Spread of Early Christianity in Its Formative Phases

The lack of direct archaeological evidence strictly limits the study of early Christian spreading in its formative phases (30–150 CE). Until now, the research has focused on detailed analyses of rare written sources or on general deductive reconstructions. The proposed project tries to overbridge this gap with a formalized quantitative approach using methods of geospatial

modeling and network analysis. It conceptualizes the spread of early Christianity as a transmission happening on a network in which people carry religious ideas, practices, and artifacts and transmit them successfully to a new spatial-population milieu. On this base, the provided model presupposes a global network of Mediterranean cities, which was commonly shared by ancient populations. In particular, the project will use the transportation network of the Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World (ORBIS) adapted for a more detailed analysis. Early Christianity has already been discussed in some historiographical studies using formalized methods. However, these studies focused mainly on the spreading process from Jerusalem as a unique center. Therefore, the paper reconsiders not only the role of Jerusalem but also that of other big Mediterranean cities as potential primary or secondary centers of the Christian dissemination.

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Alternative spiritualities as cultural resources for reframing unusual experience

I will focus on a deeper understanding of alternative spirituality practices and their practical use in specific life crisis. I would like to show, that these practices can play an important role in coping with different complex difficult life situations. More specifically, I will analyze the coping strategies of my interviewees suffering from unusual mental and physical symptoms. By these symptoms, I mean phenomena like hearing voices, communication with non-human beings, strange feelings in the body, uncontrollable body movement or changes in sensory perception. These symptoms resulted in a variety of personal and professional problems such as losing their job or becoming socially isolated. However, new perspective on life have also been brought through these symptoms. The majority of my interviewees re-evaluated their position in the world, relationships, various everyday practices, and habits. My interviewees try to cope with these symptoms by mobilizing various resources, from classical biomedical psychiatry to different kinds of psychology, psychotherapy, alternative medicine, or alternative spirituality. I will demonstrate with empirical data from my dissertation research how my interviewees use different practices and concepts of alternative spirituality to cope with their unusual symptoms and how they can benefit from a complex interplay between different kinds of therapy. To do so, I have used methodological and theoretical approaches from various scientific fields, such as the anthropology of health and illness, transcultural psychiatry, and science and technology studies.

In my contribution, I will focus on deeper understanding of practices, which we used to conceived as spirituality and their practical using in specific life situations. I will try to show, that what we named as spirituality do not have to be just leisure-time activity or abstract symbolic system. I would like to demonstrate, that these practices can play an important role for coping with different complex difficult life situations. More specifically, I will analyze the coping strategies of my informants suffering from unusual mental and physical symptoms. By these symptoms I mean for example hearing of voices, feelings of communication with transcendental beings, uncontrollable body movements, changes in sensory perception or alteration of perception of body boundaries. Emerging of these symptoms usually means suffering and different life crisis for my informants. They try to cope with these symptoms by mobilizing various resourcies, from classical biomedical psychiatry to different kinds of alternative medicine or psychotherapy. In my contribution I will use empirical data from my dissertation research. I will try to show on few empirical examples of how my informants use

different practises and concepts which we named as spirituality in their coping with their unusual symptoms and how they can benefit from complex interplay between different types of therapies and resources.

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The YouTube-Monk. A study in the life conducts of the young Polish middle class

This paper investigates the life conduct of a new Polish middle class. Drawing on Weber's insight on the importance of "practical theology," sources that matter to people in shaping their daily practices and views, our starting point is the medial presence of Adam Szustak, a 41-year-old Dominican monk. Szustak is known for his guiding videos (on relations, marriage, parenting) and sermons on YouTube, but also his spiritual retreats ("rekolekcje") in parishes, churches and his worships ("wielbienia") in concert halls as well as large-scale crowd-founding schemes. Through new channels of communication his followers accompany him through his daily life. He is active – he doesn't seem to sleep much – and travels around the world, but is not a completely ascetic figure: one also sees him craving for coffee and his phone, eating junk food, driving cars and flying a lot. Analyzing a sample of Szustak's videos and comments as well as interviews with some of his followers, we argue that he embodies and speaks to a new generation's self-confidence, and a certitude explicitly grounded in religious sources. His popularity, or charisma, which relies on novel methods of preaching, seems to be anchored both in his reflection and the shaping of a new, young, Catholic Polish middle class.

Zdeněk POSPÍŠIL – see Dalibor PAPOUŠEK

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'Rocking the church' – The sound of religion from the periphery

With the blurring boundaries between the sacred and the profane, popular religious art immensely changed and created new aesthetic forms in congregational music as well. In my paper, I focus on the unique dimensions of lived Catholicism through the analysis of contemporary congregational music in Hungary. The hot-debated Christian popular music appeared in Christian congregations in the late 1960s and is still popular. I attempt to analyze this novel form of congregational musicking from an anthropological perspective. I argue that this musical phenomenon in the periphery of mainline/traditional churches might be a performative way of knowledge production within religious communities. I intend to demonstrate how religious music and more particularly Christian popular music is not only music but also a transcendental communication which engenders and performs vernacular theologies but can also become a point of connection enabling individuals to locate themselves in the social and cultural space. In this paper will look at the ways in which this modern congregational musicking translates to transitions in individual and official religious practices

and I try to analyze this unique musical grassroots movement as a sensitive indicator of social and historical processes.

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The Marginalized Queen. A few remarks about the need and opportunities for philosophical studies on spirituality, religions and religious movements

Today, the academic studies on religions are dominated by sociology, science of religion, and history of religion. Not many researchers are philosophers. One can therefore say that philosophy (called the “queen of sciences” for a reason) is on the periphery of those studies. However, to understand religions, even the most precise descriptions of particular communities, their functioning, and their impact on individuals and society, are not enough. In order to learn why people join them, it is also necessary to examine their doctrines. Although they have long been studied by theologians, their research has met with serious accusations: theology was deemed unscientific, and the theologians – not impartial. Philosopher, on the other hand, can study religious doctrines without fear of such charges, as philosophy limits itself to rational considerations, does not refer to revealed truths, and does not proclaim any concept of salvation. In my speech, I will show what results the philosophical research of religious doctrines lead to, taking as an example new spirituality and doctrines, which – in the opinion of their creators – constitute an alternative to Christianity.

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(In)visible religion in music: Pagan motives in music of Moravian Pagan musician Tomáš Kočko

The conference paper will present an analysis of Pagan motives in music of Moravian folk/folklore musician Tomáš Kočko. His music is heavily inspired by Moravian traditional music (particularly of the etnoregion Lašsko, near Slovakian and Polish borders), but he also draws inspiration from Slavic Modern Paganism. Kočko declares himself as modern Pagan and he is also very proud of his regional (Moravian) identity. Pagan motives in Kočko’s music will be explained with help of Christopher Partridge’s theory about contemporary cultural milieu called “occulture” which can be described as broad reservoir of alternative spiritual concepts, used by artist as resource of inspiration. The paper will therefore discuss a) the question of usefulness of the concept in case of Tomáš Kočko’s music and b) where are the borders between national/local and Pagan motives in Kočko’s music. It should be noted that the paper is early version of one chapter of author’s dissertation thesis.

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Religious socialization of students in qualitative and quantitative approach

The term religious socialization has become a pressing issue in the context of religious diversity. Due to the difficulty of interpreting the data of large-scale religious sociological studies, it has become urgent to investigate the concept of religious socialization more thoroughly. Based on an earlier study seven types of religiosity of young adults were established (Pusztai, Demeter-Karászi 2019).

In the following study our aim was to examine, also from a quantitative approach, the relevance of the types created during the qualitative research. In order to get a more comprehensive picture we used the PERSIST 2019 database, to form religious typology by analyzing the variables on intergenerational religious mobility. The PERSIST 2019 survey, conducted among students of higher education (N = 2310) in countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia and Serbia), coordinated by CHERD (Center for Higher Education Research and Development). Comparing the qualitative and quantitative typologies, our results show that well identifiable types have emerged and these confirms the fact that religious socialization can be built on the constructivist approach. Project no. 119679 and 123847 have been implemented with the support provided from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary, financed under the K_17 funding scheme.

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Provincializing scientific atheism

There is no doubt that Soviet so-called scientific atheism was a highly ideologized field of scholarship. A possible post-communist answer to this discipline's self-proclaimed hegemony may consist of a *damnatio memoriae*, an exclusion from the history of the study of religion. Another option, however, is to decentralize and to 'provincialize' (Dipesh Chakrabarty) it by questioning its historical uniqueness and conceptual specificity. Four points can serve to illustrate this. A) Scientific atheism can be understood as a specific form of conservative modernity, trapped in concepts of the 19th century. B) It shows parallels with Western phenomenology of religion of the 20th century by taking part in an essentializing discourse on religion. C) The 21st century trend of the cognitive science of religion reiterates some claims of scientific atheism. D) Scientific atheism should be discussed not only with respect to the history of the study of religion, but also as being entrenched in modern religious history.

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Humanist Weddings in Poland: The Various Motivations of Couples

In Poland, we observe an increase in the popularity of humanist (strongly individualized and mostly secular) marriage ceremonies. Their presence in the Polish context is particularly significant, taking into account the fact that religious practices are for Poles an important element of identification (Borowik 2001), and Catholicism acts here as a cultural religion (Demerath 2000). According to the propagators of humanist rites of passage, these ceremonies are an alternative for religious marriages in Poland. However, research that I have conducted reveals ambiguous motivations of people who decide on a humanist marriage. ‘Non-religious’ or ‘anti-religious’ motivation is just one of the possibilities. One of the aims of the presented paper is to describe and analyze these various motivations. The paper is based on the empirical material gathered in the years 2016-2019 during the fieldwork on humanist marriages in Poland. I conducted semi-structured interviews with humanist celebrants, a qualitative content analysis of scripts from humanist ceremonies, observations of humanist weddings, and narrative interviews with main actors of marriage ceremonies (the young couples).

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(Non)religion and national narratives in museum space

National narratives are concurrently a process and an outcome – despite claiming to represent national features that reach back to the ancient times, they reflect the values of the contemporary society. Therefore, the analysis of national narratives shows the development of values in society and their change over time. Estonian national narrative is classified as the “golden age”-type. What makes it interesting is that the golden age is set into the pre-Christian times and Christianity is blamed for its demise as a henchman of foreign powers that ruled over Estonia after the violent Christianization. The backbone of the narrative is Estonians fight for their freedom and endurance of their culture, with different sub-motifs – for instance, Estonians as religiously lukewarm nation – relying on that backbone and concurrently supporting it. This paper analyses the treatment of (non)religion in two permanent exhibitions at the Estonian National Museum, perhaps the most important memory institution in Estonia; also studying the influences of national narrative and the representation of religion in the backdrop of Estonian “culture”.

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Edging from a privileged position

Marginalization of religious orders and their members occurs on institutional and individual levels as well. Members of the religious orders, like the priesthood, were in many ways privileged in earlier centuries. During the communist era, they were marginalized in society and could not play their former role in the Church, except three male and one female order, but their role also was limited. After the change of political regime, the status of religious orders

within the church and society settled, but their role was no longer as important as it was in the pre-communist era. The main reasons for this are their demographic characteristics, difficulty in starting again, and secularization. The data from previous researches show that the perception of their role has become more realistic over the decades among the members of religious orders. There is another type of marginalization occurs at the individual level namely, marginalization of those whom leaving the order and the priesthood. I distinguish three subtypes of their marginalization: a) formally breaking with the church / religion b) staying, but drifting within the church c) seeking new commitment within the church. All three types are marginalized. At the beginning of the research of marginalization on individual-level, only the main issues of the research can be presented beside the specific difficulties and small results of this subtopic.

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Theoretical Understandings of How and Why Minority Religions Sometimes Succeed in the Legal Arena

Minority religions often find themselves involved in legal actions, either to defend themselves from civil claims and criminal charges, or as plaintiffs in legal actions taken to defend their beliefs and practices. Minority religions usually are severely disadvantaged when involved in legal systems, but sometimes they are able to prevail. This presentation, using theories from the sociology of religion and the sociology of law, will focus on reasons that minority faiths are sometimes successful in defending themselves when sued or charged, or when proactive and attempting to use legal systems for their own purposes. Included will be discussions of the way that courts may make use of cases involving minority religions to accomplish their own purposes, the impact of historical, cultural, and structural factors in such successes, and the role of "cause lawyers", NGOs, and others (including some scholars) as "third party partisans" in legal actions involving minority religions.

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On the periphery of the universe. Cosmic (ir)religious imaginary of the post-Soviet natural scientists

The starting point of the talk is the pre-Copernican image of the universe portraying the earth placed in its centre and surrounded by the concentric spheres. Bertrand Russell compares this image to a tidy toy house, built by its owner for the dolls. The modern universe, says Russell, is no longer either cosy or small, being rather an infinite empty space without any divine meaning. Humankind inhabits its outskirts; our world is a truly peripheral one. This tragic acceptance is not however the only way to deal with the secularized cosmos. I refer to the Soviet atheistic literature to show how the Soviet propagandists manage to construct a much more optimistic and in fact quasi-religious narrative about that. I then discuss the assumption that the lack of the existential anxiety in this Soviet ontology may have participated in the formation of the ideologies of people socialized in the Soviet Union. My argument is based on the

comparative data from my own sociological study on the religiosity of post-Soviet (Ukrainian) and Polish natural scientists born in 1930-60. While the former do not problematize the peripheral position of the earth, the latter emphasize it as an existential drama of humankind.

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Religious Change in Hungary and its Mechanisms

Religious change in Hungary has been a complex process with not only different trends regarding to different dimensions of religiosity, but also with different mechanisms behind them. According to previous research, the differences between the religiosity of consecutive generations play the major role in the changes of church-related religiosity, whereas the changes taking place during the lives of the individuals seem to be the major force of change when religious faith is concerned. (Rosta 2007) In the current paper, I am going to study these mechanisms using the latest empirical data from the European Study and the “Religious Change in Hungary” Study, a research project supported by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office NRD Fund (registration number K 119679). A special attention shall be given to the issue of religious socialization. Until now, there has been little comprehensive empirical data about the role and the impact played by the different agents of primary and secondary socialisation in passing on religiosity between generations.

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Paradoxical Tensions in Religious Identity: Living out Sexuality in Consecrated Life in Poland

Religious ‘conceptual framework’ (Taylor, 2001) transcends the logic of rational choice (Stark and Glock, 1970) through the logic of paradox (Weber, 1948; 1978). Religious logic of paradoxes is evident in Catholic understanding of the vocation, holiness and consecration (Pope Francis, 2018) and encompasses the tension between the natural, social, practical and transcendental order (Archer, 2006). The crucial for Christianity is the ‘paradox of cross’ which transcends the distinction between well-being and self-sacrificing love (Urs von Balthasar, 1972). This logic of paradox included in the religious tradition shapes the individual and social identity by reflexive elaborating the relationship to the transcendence (Archer, 2004).

I will present the process of shaping individual and social identity of consecrated persons in Poland as a dynamism of transcending embodied well-being in religious vocation. I demonstrate how living out sexuality encompasses paradoxical tension between human embodiment and transcendental experience of love (vocation). Consecrated persons live the opposite concerns related to their natural well-being and transcendence.

My study delivers results of a project ‘The Communication on the Intimacy, Gender and Sexuality within religious communities in Poland’ (Jewdokimow, Sadlon, 2018-2020). I will present both results of quantitative (Word-Cafe) and qualitative (representative survey n=1543) research.

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Religious life under Communist totalitarianism: the case of Latvia (1940s-1980s)

The period of Communist totalitarianism in Latvian history is characterized by atheistic governmental repressions on religious expression of believers of all faiths. The Soviet society based on the communist ideology, which rejects God and any religious manifestations, recognized as a norm atheistic world outlook. The Soviet Union had an ideological objective of elimination of religion and its replacement with atheism. From the first years of the Soviet occupation of Latvia, the local population was forced to constantly hide their religious life. As a result, many believers have completely severed ties with the Church, and for a large number of faithful, religious practice has largely gone underground. Only a few openly attended Church – mostly those who, for various reasons, did not count on career growth. The aim of the study is to reveal the peculiarities of the existence of believers as an oppressed minority in the Soviet atheistic society on the example of the Latvian SSR. Source materials for research are composed of archival documents and contemporaries' memories represented in the collection of the Oral History Centre of the Daugavpils University.

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Polish Youth in Search for the Sacred – Two Minorities: Deep Believers and Non-believers

The issue of how the category of the sacred is present in the life of Polish youth has been relatively rarely addressed in sociological discourse. The paper refers to certain theses formulated by the researchers, such as: M. Eliade, Th. Luckmann, M. Scheler, J. Mariański and J. Baniak, which are significant for both sociology and related sciences. Attempts are being made to operationalize these concepts in the context of empirical research, both quantitative and qualitative. The focus on the relationship between young people's search for the sacred (basic, religious, individualized) and the types of identity (foreclosed, moratorium, diffused and achievement) is present in Author's research conducted over the last decade. The author is particularly interested in two small-sized categories representing contrary worldviews – deep believers and non-believers. The basic source material is provided by biographical matter (41 statements) obtained as part of the contest "My life – the sacred of mine". The applied dimension of the discussed subject matter is connected with the interest in the condition of modern youth, the world of their hopes and "sacredness". The question of how the certainty or the lack of it in relation to Transcendence shapes the way of seeking the sacred seems to be relevant for every generation. This applies especially to young people who take the trouble to come into being in the world of relativized values, fragile social bonds and a deficit of trust.

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The Religious and the Secular: Examining Religion in Relation to History at the exhibition Latvia's Century

Compared to the previous period of activity (1945-1990) when the museum was an institution of Soviet ideology, today the National History Museum of Latvia has developed a new paradigm for the evaluation and interpretation of religion and religious objects. Alongside to ethnicity, politics and language, the curators have identified religion as the most important element in Latvia's formation process. Religion is interpreted as one of Latvia's constitutive elements in the exhibition, emphasizing that it was society's major cohesive force in the past, influencing the development of national identity and defining the territorial borders of the Republic of Latvia. The paper focuses on the interaction between the secular and the religious in an exhibition Latvia's Century, dedicated to the centenary of the Republic of Latvia, with its narrative being developed by the National History Museum of Latvia. In analysing the qualitative data obtained, through collecting visual information, and undertaking face-to-face in-depth expert interviews and observations, the author will explain how the curators have positioned religious objects chronologically in a specific social and political context by using storytelling as the exhibition's primary interpretative strategy.

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The phenomenon of believing without belonging among Slovak youth (What does a youth who does not identify with any religion believe in?)

In various societies, a certain percentage of people do not identify with any church or religious group. In Slovakia, according to the last census, it is about 15.0%. P. M. Zulehner argues that attempts are being made to portray this type of people as "unbelievers", but a few sociologists could possibly say what that "unbelief" actually means, as it is defined only in the categories of rejection of the official religious organizations. The type of "unbelievers" refers to people who do not accept the official models of religiosity and they create a new one – their own interpretations of life and the world. In the outlined context, the presented sociological study seeks to approach the phenomenon of believing without belonging (concept of G. Davie) among Slovak youth. The author asks and tries to answer the question: What does a youth who does not identify with any religion believe in? The conclusions rely mainly on researches of the religiosity of youth in the regions of Spiš, Liptov and Orava, in which around 10.0% of young people do not identify with any church or religious group. The study focuses mainly on less official resp. formal religious dimensions – e.g. religious experience, acceptance of religious doctrine, acceptance of religious morality, etc.

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Between the need for sensations and attachment to tradition. The specificity of religious experience among the youth of Central Pomerania in Poland in the face of the phenomenon of peripheralisation of religion.

The proposed study is the result of research in Central Pomerania, in the part of the church administration which is the Koszalin-Kołobrzeg diocese. This area can be defined as the periphery in two aspects: 1. Territorial periphery - it is a province, which is located away from larger academic and investment centers, with a low level of specialist employment. The largest cities have been degraded from voivodships cities to powiat cities on the outskirts of new voivodships. This area is dominated by small towns and villages, which were once State Agricultural Farms. 2. Peripheries of religiosity - this is the area of the lowest religious practice indicators in Poland. In sociological reports, this is justified by the lack of formed religious and cultural traditions. It was associated with the settlement of immigrants who arrived after 1945 from "across the Bug River" after changing the borders of Poland. It should be emphasized that the current and numerically dominant inhabitants of these areas are native inhabitants. The group I investigated was high school students and university students. The proposed approach to my speech is an analysis of the religiosity of young inhabitants of the Pomeranian region, which is suspended between the need for sensations and attachment to tradition.

Réka SZILÁRDI – see Sára HEIDL**Anna SZWED**

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“If you don’t change anything, nothing will change”. Agency among religious women in a Roman Catholic women’s community in Poland

The concept of agency is widely discussed in the field of gender and religion studies, yet the term itself remains vague. Scholars disagree as to whether, and to what extent, agency should be related to subjectivity, free will, intentionality, reflexivity, etc. The works of Mahmood, Avishai and others have also challenged the perception of agency in terms of resistance, showing that agency can likewise apply to practices of subordination. In my presentation I would like to discuss the multimodality of women’s agency within a Roman Catholic women’s community in Poland – [Kaptywianki]. The community forgoes the traditional model of women’s religiosity in Poland, based predominantly on common prayer or charity. [Kaptywianki] is a kind of online community, focused around a Facebook page and supported by local offline groups of women. Based on the results of 12 months of research conducted to date (encompassing digital ethnography, offline participant observation, individual in-depth interviews, etc.), I aim to discuss how women’s agency towards gender and religious rules intervene: how women use religious inspirations to challenge religious and secular gender roles; how they interpret, negotiate and transform Catholic femininity using secular and religious resources. I will problematize the role of the community in building women’s individual agency as well as the transformative potential of collective actions within the community.

Barbara THERIAULT – see Konrad PEDZIWIATR

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Crumbling Communities – the Disappearing Religion: Demographic Changes and Changes in the Socialization Model and their Influence on the "Atheization" of the Czech Borderland

According to all available sociological research, the Czech border region (former Sudetenland) is the most “atheized” area of today's Czech Republic and probably one of the most secularized regions in the world. It is also an area that has undergone dramatic demographic, social, cultural, and political changes over the past 70 years. The paper will aim to analyze these changes mainly in connection with the destruction of local communities and to show how the interruption of tradition and the related socialization of an individual into a particular community is linked to a shallow level of identification with religion. At the same time, the effects of other factors such as social and cultural stability and existential security, will be monitored.

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Exploring Misunderstandings within Interreligious Communication: Christian Material Culture and the Medieval Mongols

The paper discusses historical misunderstandings within interreligious communication as important sources for scholarly research. The paper suggests re-examining textual sources of past interreligious contacts with a special focus on failures and misunderstandings because they might reveal crucial discrepancies between the different religious and cultural concepts, values and practices.

In particular, the paper discusses miscommunications over Christian material objects taken by a Franciscan friar William of Rubruck to the Mongols during his journey in 1253-1255. Considering the amount, nature and value of these objects, such as liturgical books, vestments and vessels, sheds new light on the original purpose of the friar's journey. Understanding the social and religious role of these objects for the friar and the Mongols respectively reveals surprising explanations for the final failure of this mission, and also suggests much broader implications for the medieval Franciscan mission in Asia in general.

In this paper, misunderstandings in (historical) interreligious contact are moved from the margins of historians' interest into the very centre of scholarly attention.

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Beyond Peripheries: The Methodologies, Implications and Limitations of Studying Extraterrestrial Religions

Ten years ago, Stephen Hawking said: "To my mathematical brain, the numbers alone make thinking about aliens perfectly rational. The real challenge is to work out what aliens might actually be like." He was referring to the fact that scientists estimate there might be a hundred billion galaxies in the universe, and for example our galaxy itself, the Milky Way, contains at least a hundred billion stars – each of them being orbited by, on average, at least one planet. The possibility of extraterrestrial life logically raises questions about the nature of aliens and about the possible scenarios of contact and its impact. In the past decades, those questions have led to the creation of various protocols on both national and supranational level, as well as to the formation of new (sub-)disciplines of various fields of both life and social sciences. This paper, however provocative it may sound, aims to open the discussion about what implications and challenges would extraterrestrial contact pose to the scientific study of religions – by the means of methodology, ethics and limitations.

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Religious policy on the edge of the Soviet Union: Esotericism in 1970s Bulgaria

Socialism aimed for a utopian atheist society, where religion was supposed to become unneeded and therefore to disappear. Despite the strong anti-religious campaign in the 1970s and -80s socialist Bulgaria, religion remained in the periphery of the public and private life. That applies not only for the traditional orthodox Christendom but even more for different esoteric and theosophical ideas like e. g. Nicolas and Helena Roerich's Teaching Agni Yoga or Peter Dunov's Movement White Brotherhood. The cultural minister of the 1970s and Politburo member Lyudmila Zhivkova (1942-1981), who was personally involved with these beliefs, propagated esotericism in atheist Bulgaria and transformed it from a peripheral to a central element of public life. She implemented theosophical ideas in her large-scale state-funded projects and reforms in the field of education, arts and architecture. Furthermore, she was working on an alternative concept of "the new man" in Bulgaria, which was esoteric rather than socialist. How was that possible in the strongly anti-religious context of a socialist country? Reflecting on the various peripheries on many levels in this case delivers new insights into the mechanisms of social inclusion of so far marginalized religious phenomena like esotericism and the structures of power behind them.

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From periphery to the center: The change in the status of Imam Hatip Schools in Turkey

The movement of religious people of Turkey from periphery to the center can be symbolized in the change of the social status of the religious schools (Imam Hatip Lisesi-IHL). The graduates of IHL were marginalized and the policy makers tried their best to hold them in their “right place” by putting many restrictions to stop their appearance in the public sphere. They were considered as a symbol of backwardness. However, with the victory of AKP in 2002, a political party with Islamic background, the meaning embodied in these symbols has drastically changed and nothing but politics has carried them into the center. This study aims to understand how this political change affected the marginalized status of religious educational institutions and made them one of the main symbols of the vertical social mobilization of religious people. To achieve this goal, this study will review the data collected from official and non-official websites in the light of Bourdieu’s (1986, 1994, 1996) concept of symbolic capital and Black’s (1976, 1993) definition of social status.

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Dissident Networks Project (DISSINET): Bridging Between Medieval History and Innovative Research Methods

The Dissident Networks Project (DISSINET, <https://dissinet.cz/>), hosted at Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Centre for the Digital Research of Religion, is a research project exploring dissident religious cultures in premodern Europe from the perspective of social network analysis and geographic information science. It uses computational methods to shed new light on the social microstructure and spatiality of premodern dissident Christianities, on inquisitorial trials and records and, by extension, on premodern social networks, the functioning of covert networks, and the emergence of religion from local interactions. This paper will discuss the project’s foundations and aims as well as the intricacies of the collection of data on complex social interactions in past societies.

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Doing Gender in the Polish Catholic Missions in Sweden

Polish Catholic Mission organizations (PCMs) function in numerous European countries. They aim to support Polish migrants, enhance the integration of migrant communities and strengthen the bond with the Roman Catholic Church in Poland and with Polish culture and society. At the same time, PCMs function in the contexts of countries which are often much more secularized and multicultural than Poland. This position of PCMs in complex and often contradictory transnational contexts and at the same time their embeddedness in the Polish setting offers an interesting case to study the (re)constructions of gender within these religious organizations. On the one hand, the Polish Catholic context imposes a definition of gender roles shaped predominantly in terms of caring and domestic duties under the influence of traditional and religious social values. On the other hand, PCMs function in the egalitarian setting of the receiving societies, also in terms of gender. The framework in which these organizations operate may therefore contradict traditional constructions of gender, inspired by Catholicism

and the Polish conservative context. The presentation aims to present how gender is (re)constructed in the Polish Catholic Missions in the multicultural and egalitarian context of Sweden. The research is inspired by neo-intuitionism, and understands gender as an institution (Connell's theory). It is based on fieldwork carried out in Sweden in 2016-2017.

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“Cricket is a religion, and I am an extremist!”: meanings of the sport for the minorities in the Czech Republic

On the meadow far from the center of the town is the cricket playground situated. People from different countries, various races, habits, and religions play or visit cricket events every weekend there. From Saturday to Sunday, from April to the end of August. Some of them have been living in the Czech Republic for over twenty years, some just a few months. They create a community around one cricket club. Based on the observations of cricket events, formal and informal interviews with the club members and their relatives, the conference contribution portrays the meanings of cricket and cricket events for the minorities. Within the analysis of the emic conceptualizations of informants, the conference contribution, for example, clarifies what a statement ‘cricket is a religion’ means and what circumstances and practices the mutual closeness in such a multicultural community form.

List of Participants – Index

	Name	Session(s)	Page(s)	Country
1.	Alisauskiene Milda	Keynote		Lithuania
2.	Bahna Vladimír			Slovakia
3.	Barker Eileen			United Kingdom
4.	Bártová Zuzana			France
5.	Basauri Ziuzina Anna Mariya			Ukraine
6.	Breskaya Olga			Italy
7.	Bubík Tomáš			Czech Rep.
8.	Chalupa Aleš			Czech Rep.
9.	Výtvarová Eva			Czech Rep.
10.	Fousek Jan			Czech Rep.
11.	Hampejs Tomáš			Czech Rep.
12.	Chvaja Radim			Czech Rep.
13.	Cigán Jakub			Czech Rep.
14.	Csók Cintia			Hungary
15.	Hrabéczy Anett			Hungary
16.	Demeter-Karászi Zsuzsanna			Hungary
17.	Fila Filip			Croatia
18.	Folieva Tatiana			Russia
19.	Fujda Milan			Czech Rep.
20.	Ondrašínová Michaela			Czech Rep.
21.	Miroslav Vrzal			Czech Rep.
22.	Gajdoš Adam			Czech Rep.
23.	Glomb Tomáš			Czech Rep.
24.	Grizāne Maija			Latvia
25.	Hall Dorota			Poland
26.	Havlicek Jakub			Czech Rep.
27.	Hazdovac Bajić Nikolina			Croatia
28.	Hegedűs Rita			Hungary
29.	Heidl Sára			Hungary
30.	Hess Karolina Maria			Poland
31.	Kaninska Maja			Slovenia
32.	Karasaridis Anestis			Czech Rep.
33.	Kaše Vojtěch			Denmark, Czech Rep.
34.	Kasperek Andrzej			Poland
35.	Kocsis Zsófia			Hungary
36.	Koppová Kateřina			Czech Rep.
37.	Kotherová Silvie			Czech Rep.
38.	Krátký Jan			Czech Rep.
39.	Kyselov Oleg			Ukraine
40.	Lackenby Nicholas			United Kingdom
41.	Lanman Jonathan	Keynote		United Kingdom
42.	Maiello Giuseppe			Czech Rep.
43.	Mandes Slawomir			Poland
44.	Marinović Jerolimov Dinka			Croatia
45.	Máté-Tóth András			Hungary

46.	Mertel Adam			Czech Rep.
47.	Metsvahi Merili			Estonia
48.	Minarik Pavol			Czech Rep.
49.	Müller Olaf			Germany
50.	Nikodem Krunoslav			Croatia
51.	Papoušek Dalibor			Czech Rep.
52.	Paulík Matej			Czech Rep.
53.	Pedziwiatr Konrad			Canada
54.	Pospíšil Zdeněk			Czech Rep.
55.	Povedák Kinga			Hungary
56.	Ptaszek Robert T.			Poland
57.	Puchovský Michal			Czech Rep.
58.	Pusztai Gabriella			Hungary
59.	Ragaz Stefan			Switzerland
60.	Rejowska Agata			Poland
61.	Remmel Atko			Czech Rep.
62.	Révay Edit Márta			Hungary
63.	Richardson James			USA
64.	Rogińska Maria			Poland
65.	Rosta Gergely			Hungary
66.	Sadlon Wojciech			Poland
67.	Saleniece Irena			Latvia
68.	Sroczyńska Maria			Poland
69.	Stasulane Anita			Latvia
70.	Štefaňák Ondrej			Slovakia
71.	Szauer Remigiusz			Poland
72.	Szilárdi Réka			Hungary
73.	Szwed Anna			Poland
74.	Theriahult Barbara			Canada
75.	Václavík David			Czech Rep.
76.	Valtrová Jana			Czech Rep.
77.	Vencálek Matouš			Czech Rep.
78.	Vitanova-Kerber Viktoria			Germany
79.	Yilmaz Fadime			Hungary
80.	Zielińska Katarzyna			Poland
81.	Zbíral David			Czech Rep.
82.	Žáková Michaela			Czech Rep.