INFORM ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE
Minority Religions: Contemplating the Past and Anticipating the Future

Friday 31 January - Sunday 2 February 2014

New Academic Building, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK
Inform was founded in 1988 by Professor Eileen Barker and is now celebrating over a quarter of a century of providing information about minority religions that is as reliable and up-to-date as possible. The conference includes talks by experts on minority religions from around the world, from former and current members of religious groups and from representatives of professional bodies that have benefitted from their association with Inform over the years. Presentations cover a wide range of topics, in particular how the study of minority religions has changed since Inform was founded, how it appears now and what the future will bring.

Inform’s Management Committee

Professor Eileen Barker, PhD, OBE, FBA,
Founder of Inform, Chair of Inform’s Board of Governors and an Honorary Research Fellow for Inform

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Chair of Inform’s Management Committee

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Inform’s Treasurer

Inform’s Office Staff

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Research Officer

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Assistant Research Officer

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Administration and Assistant Research Officer

Adviya Khan, MA
Assistant Research Officer

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS
If you have any questions or problems during the day, please find one of Inform’s staff members or volunteers – they are wearing red and yellow badges.

Inform Mobile Number is 075 8173 8131

A member of Inform staff, Silke, will be taking photos throughout the day. Please speak to her if you do not want your photo to be taken.
Local Map including nearby amenities:

- New Academic Building, 54 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2A 3LJ
- Starbucks, 10 Kingsway, WC2B 6LH
- Pret a Manger, 29-33 Kingsway, WC2B 6UJ
- NatWest Bank and ATM, Connaught House, 65 Aldwych, WC2B 4DS
- Shakespeare’s Head Freehouse, 64-68 Kingsway, WC2B 6BG
- Sainsbury’s Supermarket, 129-133 Kingsway, WC2B 6NH
- Fleet River Bakery, 71 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2A 3JF

Inform’s Anniversary Dinner will be held at Dicken’s Inn, St Katharine Dock, London, E1W 1UH. You must have pre-registered and paid to attend this dinner.

Directions: From Temple Tube Station, take the Circle line or the District line Eastbound to Tower Hill station and follow the signs for St Katharine Docks OR Take the number 15 bus (towards Tower Hill or Blackwall) from stop L on the Aldwych and disembark at Tower Hill Station/Tower of London. Follow signs to St Katharine Docks.

OR Walk from the LSE east along Thames River, until Tower Bridge. Follow signs to St Katharine Docks. Approximately a 45 minute walk.
New Academic Building (NAB) floorplan:

A = Sheikh Zayed Theatre (LG.08)
B = Alumni Theatre (LG.09)
C = Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)
D = Thai Theatre (LG.03)
E = 1.04
F = 2.04

FIRE SAFETY
If you suspect fire:-
• Sound the alarm.
• Leave the building quickly and quietly following the Fire Exit signs.
• Do not use the lifts.
• Do not delay to collect personal items.
• Do not re-enter the building to search for anyone or anything.
• Go to the Fire assembly point which is in on Lincoln’s Inn Fields
• Do not re-enter the building until he all clear has been given

PERSONAL PROPERTY
A coat rack is available outside of the lecture theatre doors. However, we cannot guarantee that items will be secure, and anything is left at your own risk. Although in a safe environment, we are in central London and thieves may operate here.
### Friday 31 January 2014

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<tr>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>Registration, New Academic Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>Tour of the LSE Campus, starting from the Lower Ground lobby, New Academic Building</td>
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<td>16.30</td>
<td>Talk about the LSE by Simeon Underwood, Academic Registrar and Director of Academic Services, Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building</td>
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<td>17.30</td>
<td>Welcome and Plenary Panel A: a Word from our “Stakeholders”, Sheikh Zayed Theatre, New Academic Building</td>
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<td>19.30</td>
<td>Launch of the Ashgate-Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements and Reception with refreshments (provided)</td>
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### Saturday 1 February 2014

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<td>9.00</td>
<td>Registration, New Academic Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30 – 11.15</td>
<td>Plenary Panel B: Members or Former Members of New Religious Movements, Sheikh Zayed Theatre, New Academic Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15 – 11.40</td>
<td>tea/coffee</td>
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<td>11.40 – 13.25</td>
<td>Parallel Session 1A, Parallel Session 1B, Parallel Session 1C</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.25 – 14.15</td>
<td>lunch (provided)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.15 – 16.00</td>
<td>Parallel Session 2A, Parallel Session 2B, Parallel Session 2C, Parallel Session 2D, Parallel Session 2E</td>
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<td>16.00 – 16.30</td>
<td>tea/coffee</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.30 – 18.15</td>
<td>Parallel Session 3A, Parallel Session 3B, Parallel Session 3C, Parallel Session 3D</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.15</td>
<td>End of day</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>Inform Anniversary Dinner at Dicken’s Inn, St Katharine Dock. Cost of dinner is not included in the registration fee. Must be pre-booked.</td>
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### Sunday 2 February 2014

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<tr>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>Registration, New Academic Building</td>
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<td>9.30 – 11.15</td>
<td>Parallel Session 4A, Parallel Session 4B, Parallel Session 4C, Parallel Session 4D, Parallel Session 4E</td>
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<td>11.15 – 11.40</td>
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<td>11.40 – 13.25</td>
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<td>13.25 – 14.15</td>
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<td>16.15</td>
<td>Conference ends</td>
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<td>Plenary Panel Session</td>
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<td><strong>Plenary Panel A: a Word from our “Stakeholders”</strong>&lt;br&gt;Friday 31 January&lt;br&gt;17.30 – 19.30&lt;br&gt;<em>Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)</em></td>
<td>The Right Reverend Graham James, Lord Bishop of Norwich&lt;br&gt;Dr Damian Thompson, Editor of Telegraph Blogs and a Director of the Catholic Herald&lt;br&gt;Warwick Hawkins, Head of Faith Communities Engagement, Integration Division, Department for Communities and Local Government&lt;br&gt;Nick Parke, former police officer&lt;br&gt;Philip Katz QC, Barrister&lt;br&gt;Professor Conor Gearty, Professor of Human Rights Law, LSE&lt;br&gt;Leethen Bartholomew, Community Partnership Adviser, City &amp; Hackney Safeguarding Children Board</td>
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<td><strong>Plenary Panel B: Members or Former Members of New Religious Movements</strong>&lt;br&gt;Saturday 1 February&lt;br&gt;9.30 – 11.15&lt;br&gt;<em>Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)</em></td>
<td>Richard Barlow, former member of the Unification Church&lt;br&gt;Abi Freeman, formerly a spokesperson and member of The Family International (TFI)&lt;br&gt;Gauri das, executive secretary of ISKCON&lt;br&gt;Terrill Park, Scientology Freezone</td>
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<td><strong>Plenary Panel C: a Word from the “Cultwatchers”</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sunday 2 February&lt;br&gt;14.15 – 16.15&lt;br&gt;<em>Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)</em></td>
<td>Dr Michael Langone of the International Cultic Studies Association&lt;br&gt;Professor Gordon Melton of the Institute for the Study of American Religion&lt;br&gt;Professor Eileen Barker of Inform&lt;br&gt;Mike Kropveld of Info-Secte&lt;br&gt;Professor James T. Richardson of University of Nevada, Reno&lt;br&gt;Dr Massimo Introvigne of CESNUR</td>
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Chair: Professor Eileen Barker<br>Chair: Professor James Beckford<br>Chair: Nick Parke
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<td>1A Mapping Minorities</td>
<td>Milda Ališauskienė</td>
<td>Religious minorities in Lithuania: contemplating the present</td>
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<td>Saturday 1 February 11.40 – 13.25 Alumni Theatre (LG.09)</td>
<td>Brigitte Knobel and Camille Gonzales</td>
<td>Mapping of religious minorities in Geneva</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ringo Ringvee</td>
<td>What do the censuses tell about minority religions? Some reflections</td>
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<td>Christiane Königsted</td>
<td>Changes in the field of new religions in the mirror of secular law - the example of the French legal practices</td>
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<td>1B The Academic Study of NRMs Over Time</td>
<td>George D. Chryssides and Stephen E. Gregg</td>
<td>‘The Silent Majority’? beyond insider / outsider categories and understanding ‘apostate testimony’ in the future study of new religions</td>
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<td>Timothy Miller</td>
<td>Are the cult wars over, and if so, who won?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Afe Adogame</td>
<td>What are new religious movements good for? African Christianities and the building of social and religious capital in Europe</td>
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<td>1C Cult Reputations</td>
<td>Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist</td>
<td>In good faith?</td>
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<td>Saturday 1 February 11.40 – 13.25 Thai Theatre (LG.03)</td>
<td>Sarah Harvey</td>
<td>Ayahuasca in limbo, the UK situation</td>
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<td>Megan Goodwin</td>
<td>'The Wall Between Us’: American Sexual Exceptionalism and Minority Religions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Christian Greer</td>
<td>Beneath the Underground: The Dissemination of The Church of The SubGenius Through the Marginal Press</td>
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<td><strong>2A The Next Generation</strong></td>
<td>Thai Theatre (LG.03)</td>
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<td><strong>2B Insider Perspectives I</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2C Therapeutic Considerations</strong></td>
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<td>2D Spiritual Spaces</td>
<td>Wendy Dossett</td>
<td>Secularisation and the past, present and future of Alcoholics Anonymous</td>
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<td>Erin Johnston</td>
<td>Anticipating the future: the growth of practice-oriented spiritualities</td>
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<td>Suzanne Newcombe</td>
<td>The democratization of yoga in Britain</td>
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<td>Emily Falconer</td>
<td>Queer religious youth: informal spaces of spirituality</td>
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<td>David V. Barrett</td>
<td>Coping strategies for failed prophecies</td>
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<td>Eugene V. Gallagher</td>
<td>A guaranteed future for new religions</td>
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<td>Roland Littlewood</td>
<td>The end of a religion</td>
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<td>Piera Talin</td>
<td>Building New Age sustainability in Santo Daime Ecovillage</td>
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<td>3A Legal Considerations</td>
<td>Stephanie Berry</td>
<td>Freedom of religion and the protection of religious minorities: has the European Court of Human Rights lost its way?</td>
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<td>Sadia Mir</td>
<td>Protecting Human and Minority rights in the era of global governance – examining the methods and acknowledging the challenges, for a way forward</td>
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<td>H. David Baer</td>
<td>Hungary’s new system of church recognition: rule of law or rule by decree?</td>
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<td>Anthony T. Fiscella</td>
<td>Communication breakdown: MOVE, the U.S. Court System, and critical religion theory</td>
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<td>3B Minority Religions and New Media</td>
<td>François-Xavier Bauduin</td>
<td>Reengineering the basis of the community in a new religious movement: how the internet and the concept of network has given to the Raelian movement a new breath</td>
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<td>James D. Holt</td>
<td>Mormons and the media. A historical analysis of a media history and the contextual framework for “I’m a Mormon”</td>
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<td>Erica Baffelli</td>
<td>Japanese ‘new religions’ and the media: dynamic and changes since the 1980s</td>
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<td>Beth Singler</td>
<td>No leader, no followers: the internet and the end of charisma?</td>
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<th>3C Minority Religions and Conflict in the UK</th>
<th>Matthew Francis</th>
<th>Non-negotiable beliefs: making a useful distinction between the ‘sacred’ and ‘religion’</th>
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<td>Jeff Gary</td>
<td>In sharp relief: the study of new religious movements and radicalization in the UK</td>
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<td>Hardeep Singh</td>
<td>Mistaken identity: facing the negative rebound of Islamism in a post 9/11 age</td>
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<td>Douglas J. Davies</td>
<td>Mormonism in Britain - testimony and doubt</td>
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<th>3D Minority Religions and the State I</th>
<th>Norman Bonney</th>
<th>The attitude of the UK state towards minority religions</th>
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<td>J. Eugene Clay</td>
<td>Religious liberty in Russia after 1997</td>
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<td>Stephen Suleyman Schwartz</td>
<td>The Bektashi-Alevi Continuum from the Balkans to Iran: Sufi Minorities and Politics</td>
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<td>Titus Hjelm</td>
<td>Paradoxes of religious legitimacy and authenticity in an age of expediency</td>
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<td><strong>4A Inform: Anticipating the Future</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sunday 2 February&lt;br&gt;9.30 – 11.15&lt;br&gt;<em>Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)</em></td>
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<td>Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist, Sarah Harvey and Suzanne Newcombe</td>
<td>New cults, changing contexts – how we make sense of it all</td>
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<td>Eileen Barker</td>
<td>The changing scene: What might happen and what might be less likely to happen?</td>
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<td>Nick Parke</td>
<td>Inform: Anticipating the future – the Director’s cut</td>
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<td><strong>4B New Religious Movements and their Public Image</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sunday 2 February&lt;br&gt;9.30 – 11.15&lt;br&gt;<em>NAB 1.04</em></td>
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<td>Chair: Dr Steven Sutcliffe</td>
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<td>András Máté-Tóth and Gábor Dániel Nagy</td>
<td>Empirical research among the membership of Scientology in Germany, Hungary and Switzerland</td>
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<td>Ruth Bradby</td>
<td>Worldwide but barely a minority: A Course in Miracles</td>
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<td>Eugenia Roussou</td>
<td>Spiritual movements in times of crisis: an anthropological account of esotericism in Portugal and Greece.</td>
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<td>B Scherer</td>
<td>A Neo-orthodox Buddhist Movement in Transition: the late-charismatic status quo and the post-charismatic perspectives of the Diamond Way</td>
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<td>Chair: Hardeep Singh</td>
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<td>Eric Roux</td>
<td>Scientology: from controversy to global expansion and recognition</td>
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<td>Han Gang-Hyen and Kim Young Suk</td>
<td>The Role and Future of a Korean new religious movement: The Victory Altar and the development of neo-humans</td>
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<td>Shruti Kulkarni</td>
<td>Religion and social justice: learning from the past, looking to the future. A Vedic perspective</td>
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<td>Moojan Momen</td>
<td>Change and development in the Baha’i Faith</td>
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<td><strong>4D Minority Religions and the State II</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sunday 2 February&lt;br&gt;9.30 – 11.15&lt;br&gt;<em>NAB 2.04</em>&lt;br&gt;Chair: Ringo Ringvee</td>
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<td>Sylvie Toscer-Angot</td>
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<td>Religious minorities in democratic Spain: rekindle with the past and part of the future</td>
<td>Claude Proeschel</td>
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<td>New religious responses to police raids and state “persecution”: collective memories, theological innovation and social reorganization</td>
<td>Susan J. Palmer</td>
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<td>Four generations of scholars researching <em>les dites</em> &quot;sects&quot; in France</td>
<td>Guillaume Roucoux</td>
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<td>From Japanese Buddhist sect to global citizenship: Soka Gakkai past and future</td>
<td>Anne Mette Fisker-Nielson</td>
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<td>Coming In From The Cold: the use of faith-based social care and action as a means of building social, symbolic capital and community integration for a once marginalised Christian NRM.</td>
<td>John-Paul King</td>
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<td>Pop culture-based religions: Can it actually work?</td>
<td>Pavol Kosnáč</td>
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<td>Invitation to future research on the Church of Scientology</td>
<td>Donald Westbrook</td>
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<td>From deviance to devotion: the evolution of NRM studies</td>
<td>George D. Chryssides</td>
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<td>Writing and researching on new religious movements: A view from the American Academy</td>
<td>Benjamin E. Zeller</td>
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<td>Classical comments: treacherous new rites: writing on NRMS in the ancient world</td>
<td>Margaret Z. Wilkins</td>
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<td>Scholarship on seekership: explaining traffic in and out of (new) religions</td>
<td>Steven J. Sutcliffe</td>
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<td><strong>5B Paganism: Past and Future</strong></td>
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<td>Vivianne Crowley</td>
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<td><strong>5C Negotiating Religious Identity</strong></td>
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<td>Alessandro Amicarelli</td>
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<td>Jessica Finnigan</td>
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<td>Dinka Marinović Jerolimov, Ankica Marinović and Branko Ančić</td>
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<td>Adam Klin-Oron and Rachel Werczberger</td>
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*Please note that Plenary Panel C: a Word from the “Cultwatchers” will follow the final parallel session. The Conference end time is 16.15*
Plenary Speakers Abstracts and Bios

Professor Eileen Barker, PhD, OBE, FBA is the founder of Inform, Chair of Inform's Board of Governors and an Honorary Research Fellow for Inform; Professor Emeritus at the London School of Economics. Sociologist of Religion, she has been researching minority religions and the responses to which they give rise since the early 1970s. Her study of conversion to the Unification Church for her PhD, led to an interest in a wide variety of movements, and she has personally studied, to greater or lesser degree, over 150 different groups. As the first-generation movements aged, she became interested in the changes, particularly the arrival of second-generation members and those who leave the movements. For the past twelve years, she’s been interested in differences between ‘cult-watching’ groups and the dynamics within and between these groups and the religions. She has over 300 publications, translated into 27 languages. She travels extensively for research purposes, particularly in North America, Europe and Japan, and, since collapse of the Berlin Wall, in Eastern Europe and, more recently, China. She was the first non-American to be elected President of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

From Cult Wars to Constructive Co-operation – Well Sometimes....
Inform was founded largely in response to the so-called ‘cult-wars’ in which indignant scholars of new religious movements and equally indignant anti-cultists were at daggers drawn. Rarely did the two opposing sides speak to each other and sometimes their concern with the ‘other side’ seemed to take priority over their concern about the movements in which they were both interested. This paper will attempt to chart some of the changes that have taken place in both camps and in their relationships with each other over the past decades, drawing on concepts that have more commonly been applied by scholars to the religions we study in our attempts to analyse processes such as ‘deviance amplification’, accommodation, denominationalisation, revisionism and schism.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Leethen Bartholomew is a qualified social worker with a background in probation and child protection. For the past 7 years he has worked as the Community Partnership Adviser (CPA) in Hackney. Within this role he is responsible for safeguarding children within Black and Minority Ethnic communities and places of worship with emphasis on child trafficking, ‘honour’ based violence, Female Genital Mutilation and children abused through faith or belief. He is currently a PhD student at the University of Sussex and his research topic focuses on outcomes for children who reside within the same household of children who have been accused of witchcraft.

The death of Victoria Climbe highlighted the need to better understand the link between faith/belief and child abuse. One response to this was the London Safeguarding Children Board Community Partnership Project. I will outline the development of the community partnership project and the difficulties practitioners encounter when working with families who have abused their children in the name of faith and belief. Using a case study I will outline some of the complexities and challenges practitioners face when working with families.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)
Richard Barlow embarked on a quest while studying at University College, Rhodesia. He joined the Unification Church (UC) in London in the early 1970s. For two years he was a State Director in America before being married by Rev. and Mrs. Moon in 1975. After a further period in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe as a missionary, he gave lectures in the UK on the UC's teaching, the Divine Principle. He and his wife then became missionaries to Trinidad (his wife’s home nation) but in 1990 they returned to the UK to seek treatment for a daughter with leukaemia. Increasingly disillusioned with the UC, Richard read for a degree in the Study of Religions at London University's School of Oriental & African Studies, before ill health forced him to give up in his final year. One of Professor Barker’s original interviewees, during his long association with Inform he has given talks at previous seminars.

The Unification Movement - Past and Future
From its humble and somewhat obscure origins in post-World War 2 Korea, the new religious movement founded by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon had established a worldwide presence by the end of the 20th century. With the founder’s recent passing, the Unification Movement now faces the challenge of creating a renewed direction and purpose. This presentation will provide a brief overview of the various stages of the movement’s development, including key factors in the success or failure of a number of major projects, and an examination of the limits of its adaptability to other cultures, which were largely contingent on the style, structure and strategies of the Korean (and to some extent the Japanese) leadership cadre. The presenter will continue with a personal reflection on his experiences during 20 years of participation in front line activities on four continents from the 1970s to the 1990s. He will include his reasons for leaving the movement, his subsequent reinterpretation of his experiences, and his observations on more recent changes, which he has continued to monitor through personal contact and via the internet. In conclusion, current trends will be projected into several possible futures.

Plenary Panel B: Members or Former Members of New Religious Movements. Saturday 1 February, 9.30 – 11.15
Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Abi Freeman was formerly a member and spokesperson of The Family International (TFI), previously known as the Children of God. She joined the movement in her teenage years, subsequently living in TFI communities in England, Iran, Turkey, the Indian Subcontinent and various parts of Europe including Eastern Europe, until 2007. Her involvement with TFI now is limited to writing some articles for their evangelical magazine. Trained and qualified as a teacher/lecturer, she writes and edits faith-based books, and volunteers with various health-related charities.

From the Radical to the Routine: The History and Future of the Family International (Children of God)
Throughout most of its 45-year history, the Family International (TFI) has been a world-rejecting movement; members were expected to be separate from society at large in practical, spiritual and social terms, such as by living communally, avoiding taking outside employment, home-schooling their children, limiting outside friendships, and so on. These core membership requirements were given theological underpinning, such as the statement by Jesus that “whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple,”(Luke 14:33) and maintained by a complex system of internal regulations. All of this changed in 2010, when TFI’s leaders Peter (Steve Kelly) and Maria (Karen Zerby) announced the “reboot” programme in which the organisation’s membership requirements and classifications were virtually abolished, along with most of its hierarchy.
For the first time in its history, TFI membership is no longer predicated on “dropping out” of society, separated socially and practically from the mainstream. Even theologically, TFI has moved closer to traditional Christianity, with earlier writings withdrawn for revision. As a result, TFI today is essentially an online faith community, with websites providing religious reading material, news and a point of contact. Although there are some missionary projects run
on the initiative of individual members, and a network of friendship continues, it seems unlikely that TFI will return to its earlier radical roots, even if renewed attempts are made to restructure.

Plenary Panel B: Members or Former Members of New Religious Movements. Saturday 1 February, 9.30 – 11.15
Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Gauri das, joined ISKCON in 1983. Born a Glasgow Catholic at twenty he left home in search of truth. He lived as a monastic for 15 years, ten of which were spent in India. Today he is head of Development at Bhaktivedanta Manor and executive secretary of ISKCON. He serves as the spiritual commissioner of the Hindu Forum or Britain and is known for his selfless commitment to the broader Hindu community and philanthropic work. Over the last decade he has led campaigns for the religious recognition of Hindus in Russia, Kazakhstan and Hungary. In 2008 he campaigned against the RSPCA’s killing of a temple cow that resulted in a public apology and new DEFRA protocol specific to Hindu farms. In contrast to his early years of monasticism he now lives with his wife (a practicing lawyer) and 15-year-old daughter. He is a proponent of the importance of family life even for the most spiritually inclined.

From Commune to Integrated Community
In 1966 Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada registered the International society for Krishna consciousness in America. Inspired by the instructions his revered master Bhaktissedanta Saraswati Thakur he had transplanted a medieval Hindu tradition begun by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. For the disaffected youth of the sixties, Prabhupada offered an alternative: happiness by mantra meditation, devotion to Krishna and the relinquishment of all material attachments. It was exotic, philosophical, a substantial alternative—you just had to move in. The movement spread internationally at an incredible pace, over one hundred temples were established. With the passing of Swami Prabhupada in 1977 and the failures of his immediate successors, the communal life of exclusive devotion to guru and Lord Krishna, things began to implode. Members had grown in experience and struggled with the ideals both individual and social. The movement took a new form, not by plan but organically and driven by necessity: few monastics and an expanding diverse community largely made up of the Hindu diaspora. Today in contrast to the usual stereotyping of saffron street chanters, the majority has never been dislodged from public life. In contrast to renunciation, education, profession and family life are promoted and communes replaced by communities.

Plenary Panel B: Members or Former Members of New Religious Movements. Saturday 1 February, 9.30 – 11.15
Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Conor Gearty is professor of human rights law and director of the Institute of Public Affairs at LSE. He is a Trustee of The Tablet and has written on religious issues, mainly from his perspective as a scholar working in the field of human rights. His most recent book is Liberty and Security (Polity Press 2013). His co-edited (with Costas Douzinas) The Meanings of Human Rights will be published by Cambridge University Press in 2014.

Gearty will consider the work of Inform viewed from an academic perspective, how its authoritative information base has assisted in effective social sciences research, which in turn has fed into policy-formation and law-making while also informing the media’s treatment of religious movements. The universities are now working very hard (under a degree of pressure from government) to develop just the kind of ‘impact tools’ that Inform has been perfecting over the years. Gearty’s talk will locate the work of Inform in these new scholarly environment and consider what the future holds for work of this kind, firmly located as it is within a university environment.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)
Warwick Hawkins MBE has worked on engagement between faith groups and Government for 17 years and presently heads the Faith Communities Engagement team in the Integration and Faiths Division of the Department for Communities and Local Government. The team facilitates contact between faith communities and different parts of Whitehall, advises politicians on matters relating to religion, and sponsors various programmes designed to support inter-faith dialogue and faith based social action. DCLG has a direct funding relationship with Inform. Warwick is a Fellow of the Faith and Civil Society Unit at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and a practising Anglican.

A number of Government Departments and agencies are required from time to time to find out information about cults and new religious movements. Examples would include prison officers seeking to understand the religious needs of a group of prisoners; the Department for Education wanting to give guidance to a school whose pupils are coming into contact with a particular cult/NRM; or a Minister wanting to respond to the concerns of a constituent about cultic activity in the local area. Particular developments or incidents relating to cults/NRMs often receive significant media attention which can lead to Parliamentary or correspondence casework, and Ministerial interest, to which civil servants are required to respond quickly. It is essential that impartial and current information is available in such circumstances and INFORM has long been seen across Whitehall as a reliable provider of such information. In the context of a complex and fragmenting religious landscape its role can only continue to be highly relevant.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Massimo Introvigne teaches Sociology of religious movements at the Pontifical Salesian University in Torino, Italy, and is managing director of CESNUR, the Center for Studies on New Religions. In 2011, he served as Representative of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) for combating racism, xenophobia, and religious intolerance and discrimination. From 2012, he is chairperson of the Observatory of Religious Liberty established by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Dr Introvigne is the author of some 60 books and more than 100 articles and chapters in the field of NRMs, contemporary religious pluralism, and modern Western esotericism.

INFORM, ISAR and CESNUR were established at about the same time, in what seems almost a different geologic period. Dialogue between those engaged in the scholarly study of NRMs and anti-cultists was extremely difficult. The academic study of new religious movements was often regarded as not entirely respectable, and we spent a significant amount of time and resources simply trying to persuade colleagues and the public opinion that ours was a legitimate field of research. Today, we notice very significant changes. There is an ongoing dialogue between different cult-watching organizations, although some anti-cultists still refuse to participate. The academy has largely been persuaded that studying NRMs is not a weird waste of time. Certain developments took us by surprise. For instance, recently art historians – a powerful and well-financed sector of the academia – took an active interest in certain NRMs and esoteric groups, realizing how influential they have been on modern art. We should avoid the Japanese holdout syndrome, stop fighting wars that ended years ago, and now that our studies are at last «respectable» look at what is new in the 2010s: new NRMs, new phenomena, new angles of study, new academic players such as art historians entering the field.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)
The Rt Revd Graham James has been Bishop of Norwich since 1999. Educated at the University of Lancaster and following his theological training at Oxford, Graham was ordained in 1975, initially serving on council estate parishes in Peterborough and Welwyn Garden City. He was in charge of the Church of England’s selection procedures for ordination candidates in the mid-1980s prior to being appointed as Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury (then Robert Runcie) in 1987. In that capacity he advised the Archbishop on a wide range of matters, including the establishment of Inform. He was consecrated as a bishop in 1993, serving as a suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Truro in his home county of Cornwall. He has been glad to be a patron of Inform for the past decade. He has sat in the House of Lords since 2004 and is currently a member of the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications.

Behind the scenes at Lambeth Palace in 1988 and getting the Archbishop of Canterbury’s support for Inform. Criticism, misunderstanding and appreciation: the fear of “cults” in a secular age. Recovering sufficient religious literacy in the public square to speak intelligently about minority religions. Should we any longer distinguish between “main stream” religion and “minority” religions? Do we face more challenges in an age where passionate commitments are looked upon with suspicion? The need for Inform is greater than ever in an age of new missionary endeavour.


Philip Katz obtained his MA in Jurisprudence from University College, Oxford (1971-4). He was called to the Bar in 1976 and has since practiced in criminal law from Chambers known as 9-12 Bell Yard. He appears for the Prosecution or the Defence in high profile and serious criminal trials. In 2000 he was appointed Queen’s Counsel and also a Recorder of the Crown Court. He is a Bencher of Middle Temple where he trains advocacy and ethics. He appears occasionally on the radio and television when he attempts to speak coherently on legal issues.

Trial by jury is described as adversarial. Prosecution and Defence each try to persuade the jury of the merits of their respective case. Courtroom arguments are often not exactly subtle. Counsel trade in words like "cult" and "brainwashed" without the same scrupulousness as INFORM. Now that the whole criminal justice system is being re-focussed on "victims" are we still being simplistic? Is there a role for INFORM to inform the lawyers?


Mike Kropveld is Founder and Executive Director of Info-Cult / Info-Secte, based in Canada. He also sits on the board of the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA). Mike has assisted former members and members of "cults," "new religious movements," and other groups, and their families. He has served as an expert witness on cult-related criminal and civil cases, and is consulted regularly by mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies. Since the mid 1990s he has collaborated on the organizing of the ICSA annual international conferences on cultic phenomena. He has been an invited speaker, and has appeared on radio and television programs locally, nationally and internationally. Among other publications he co-authored the book, The Cult Phenomenon: How Groups Function.

Info-Cult is an organization that has been operating out of Montreal, Canada since 1980. As with many of the groups it has been observing and researching, Info-Cult has also evolved over the years.
An overview of the history and evolution of Info-Cult will highlight some of the changes that have occurred in this field, including the positions of those perceived as being part of the pro- or anti-cult camps. For many years I have had the opportunity of being able to move among, and get to know the various individuals, academics, groups and organizations that deal with this issue. My years of experiences as Executive Director of Info-Cult will form the basis for my reflections on possible future directions in the field of “cults”/ “new religious movements”.

Sheik Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Michael D. Langone, PhD, a counseling psychologist, received a doctorate in Counseling Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1979. Since 1981 he has been Executive Director of International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA), a tax-exempt research and educational organization concerned about psychological manipulation and cultic groups. He is ICSA Today’s Editor-in-Chief. In 1995, he was the Albert V. Danielsen visiting Scholar at Boston University. He has authored numerous articles in professional journals and books, including Recovery from Cults: Help for Victims of Psychological and Spiritual Abuse, and has spoken widely to dozens of lay and professional groups.

I approach the subject of this conference from the perspective of a cult watcher with more of a practical than an academic interest in the subject. The work that my colleagues and I engage in today rests on the proposition that some groups harm some people sometimes. Our focus is on helping those who have been harmed and forewarning those who might someday be harmed. During my 30+ years in this field, I have seen an evolution of views toward the nuanced proposition cited above. In the early days of this field, groups were typically described almost as monoliths, with the Moonie Booneville experience often serving as a false and misleading template for all “cult” conversions. The deprogramming experiences of the 1970s, nearly half of which involved Moonies, fueled the overgeneralizations of this narrative and contributed to the “pro-cult-anti-cult” divide that separated many academics and activists during the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, a large number of voluntary defectors entered our network. Professionals came to realize more acutely that cultic groups were much more varied than at first believed and that individuals reacted differently to the same group environment. During the same period, lawsuits by and against cultic groups also diminished. As a result of these changes, as well as the courage of certain individuals who tried to breach the divide, dialogue between academicians and activists increased and polarization diminished. The challenge of the future is to help more people realize that some groups do indeed harm some people sometimes, that groups and conversion experiences of individuals are complex, and that each case must be assessed individually.

Sheik Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

A Half-Century of Observing New Religions in the West

A new growth phase to what we term New Religions became noticeable in the late 1960s initially in Japan and in North America and Europe. As the number of New Religions multiplied, their proliferation not only challenged perspectives on secularization approaches to religion in general but called for an explanation of their seeming popularity especially among young adults. Over the decades a variety of ideas came and went, most notably that nrms represented a new wave of religious consciousness destined to replace a declining Christianity, that nrms were an ephemeral phenomenon off the baby boom generation, that nrms were a particularly dangerous set of foreign religions that would isolate members from their own culture, and that nrm leaders had discovered and now employed a sinister psychological technique that destroyed the free will of participants. As each of these ideas were tested and discarded, a more nuanced and at the same time mundane view of the place of nrms in the emerging religiously pluralistic, globalized, and urbanized world has emerged.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

James T. Richardson, J.D., Ph.D., is Professor of Sociology and Judicial Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno, where he directs the Grant Sawyer center for Justice Studies, as well as the Judicial Studies graduate degree program for trial judges. He has done research for decades on various aspects of New Religious Movements, and has focused in recent years of social control of minority religions, including NRMS, using legal and judicial systems. His most recent books include Regulating Religion: Case Studies from around the Globe (Kluwer, 2004) and Saints under Siege: The Texas State Raid on the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints (New York U. Press, 2011, with Stuart Wright).

The Law, the Courts, Religious Freedom, and the Evolving Pattern of Jurisprudence in Western Societies

All religions have to operate within the confines of whatever legal system exists in their society, and the justice system – law enforcement and the judiciary - of that society is supposed to enforce constitutional provisions and laws, including the many that protect religious freedom. There has been considerable change in how western societies have interpreted legal provisions concerning newer religious movements (NRMs) over the past several decades, but there also has been considerable variation among western societies in how new and other minority religions have been treated. In some societies the justice system has been used more as a method of exerting social control over smaller and unpopular religions, whereas in others the justice system has functioned to guarantee more religious freedom for those who participate in minority faiths. This variation has been subject to review through various courts, including supreme courts and constitutional courts in individual countries, particularly former Soviet nations, and through the operation of regional courts such as the very important European Court of Human Rights. The developing jurisprudential pattern concerning minority religions and individual participants will be examined, and some prognosis offered about the future of religious freedom for such groups. The role of organizations such as INFORM in this changing pattern of jurisprudence will also be briefly discussed.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Terrill Park first got into Scientology in around 1965. Terril became a NED [New Era Dianetics] auditor and interned as such which is his highest level of technical training in around 1979. He joined the staff of the London organization toward the end of this training and was staff there for 3 years. In that time he went to Flag to do the OEC [org executive course] and FEBC [Flag executive briefing course] which are the highest administration training courses that Scientology has. In around 1991 Terril left the COS never to return after some screwy auditing. He remained a scientologist. Some 7 or 8 years later he bought a computer and one day searched “Scientology”. He was shocked at some of the terrible stories he read. Also pleased that one could do Scn outside of
the COS, and did upper OT levels 1-3 in the Freezone/Independent area. He has probably been the most active promoter of the FZ Independent area for many years and formed 2 Yahoo forums, one of which is the largest Yahoo FZ forum still. For many years Terril was getting between 20-30 new members joining FZ forums. Now there are maybe 10 new Freezone Facebook forums, some even larger than his own. Since coming to the net he has also been a member of most forums critical of Scn and have read nearly all critical-info.

Most have heard of Scientology but it’s much less well known that one can do and receive Scientology auditing at all levels in what is called the "Freezone" or "Independent" arena. In a sense the seeds of the FZ were sown in the early franchises, later named missions, who were fairly independent of the Church of Scientology. They merely had to send 10% of income to the Church and they didn’t have any of the various networks which largely controlled the Church organizations, and even the Sea Org had to get permission to enter their premises. There have always been a few people leaving the Church of Scientology, but this became something of a mass exodus after the Mission Holders Conference in 1982. There were 3 main paths of disaffection. Many of the Missions just moved away from the COS and became independent. David Mayo former top scientology technical expert, and L Ron Hubbard's former counsellor set up independently and around 50 affiliated organizations around the world joined with him. Captain Bill Robertson, no 3 in the sea org, found he could not get in touch with Hubbard and per Hubbard's apparent orders set up independent Scientology networks in Europe called "Rons Orgs". These later expanded enormously into Russia which now has around 40 groups. The COS looks to be in its death throes. Many of its former execs are now outspoken in their criticism of the organisation including those who still consider themselves scientologists, in particular the former no 2 Marty Rathbun, and former International spokesperson Mike Rinder. COS are currently involved in several serious law suits, including Insurance Fraud by Narconon.

**Plenary Panel B: Members or Former Members of New Religious Movements.** Saturday 1 February, 9.30 – 11.15
Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)

Nick Parke is the Director of Inform, appointed in August 2013. He was formerly a police officer employed in the gathering, analysis and dissemination of intelligence around major public order and security events in London and the rest of the UK, and responsible for the overall assessment of the threat to the event. He was a point of contact for Inform in the police service over a number of years.

I joined the Metropolitan Police in 1982 and in 2002 transferred to the section of Special Branch dealing with political extremism and public order. By a process of good fortune I became responsible for liaison with Inform on behalf of the police service nationally. In this role I would contact Inform with enquiries about new religious movements and would be contacted in turn by Inform when matters came to light that might require some form of police response. The key element of our relationship was one of trust, in that we both understood the quality of response that was necessary and were also comfortable dealing with issues of confidentiality. The information that Inform provided was going to be important in influencing operational decisions and needed to be timely, reliable, current and objective.

The presentation will use a number of examples of actual incidents where the liaison between the police and Inform, and the service provided by Inform, was critical in forming decisions and operational responses to situations that were unfolding. I will also discuss the implications of there not being an organisation like Inform when the police have to address similar circumstances.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)
Damian Thompson wrote his PhD thesis, on the apocalyptic beliefs of Pentecostal Christians, under the supervision of Professor Eileen Barker at LSE. He has been a journalist for 30 years. He is currently a columnist for The Daily Telegraph and Editor of Telegraph Blogs.

What do journalists mean by 'cults'? The persistence of a stereotype

The tendency to brand new and minority religions with the word "cult" has persisted in the English-speaking media since the 1970s – hardly surprisingly, since journalists helped frame the concept. The word itself is dangerously useful for reporters and commentators – useful, because it conveys so much; dangerous because it encourages writer and reader to make lazy assumptions. Admittedly, the heyday of the stereotypical 1970s and 80s "cult" is over; but the Western religious landscape is changing faster than ever, thanks to immigration and the growing prominence of minority religious groups in public life. Islam and Islamism present a particular challenge in this respect. The need to introduce the media to the common-sense methodology that once undermined the simplistic notions of "cults" is therefore greater than ever.

Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)
Parallel Speakers Abstract and Bios


The growing pace of international migration and technological revolution in media and travel has generated circumstances and new opportunities for the mobility of African new religious movements (ANRMs) within Africa and beyond. The public image of ANRMs in the past and in contemporary era is controversial and suspect. Generally, public understanding of ANRMs is grossly inadequate and speculative. Popular media portrayal anchors the movements’ activities, especially in the face of internal conflicts, fraud, scandals, child witchcraft accusations or matters the public consider problematic or contravening human –child and women rights. Even where such public and media accounts attempt to be balanced, exotic and conflictual aspects often predominate. The paper explores the civic role and social relevance of ANRMs in Europe; and demonstrates how and to what extent ANRMs, as strategic actors and benefactors, in diaspora are involved in processes of social, religious and cultural capital engineering. The knowledge gained by an understanding of ANRMs’ worldviews, experiences and ritual emphasis in Europe can assist in reorienting certain public apprehensions.

1B The Academic Study of NRMs Over Time. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Milda Ališauskienė holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania. Since 2011 she works as an associate professor of Department of Sociology at Vytautas Magnus University where she teaches courses on Sociology of Religion, Religion and Politics and New Religious Movements. Her field of research is religion in contemporary post-communist society, religious diversity and religious fundamentalism, new religions and New Age. She published a number of scientific publications about contemporary religious phenomena in Lithuania. She is a cofounder of New Religions Research and Information Centre.

Religious Minorities in Lithuania: Contemplating the Present

This paper discusses the situation of religious minorities in contemporary Lithuania. Focusing on the so-called non-traditional religious minorities the author analyzes the changes in the religious field of Lithuania since nineties. Paper is based on the analysis of the data from the national censuses in 2001 and 2011 and of the survey of members of religious minorities that was conducted in 2012 (N=370). What are the changes within statistical data about religious minorities? Which of them were successful and who failed? Which phenomena of alternative religions are not visible from statistical data and why? What are the relations of religious minorities with Lithuanian society? The results of the survey show that members of religious minorities experience religious discrimination. The analysis of the situation of religious minorities in Lithuania leads author to the conclusion that these groups are silenced and not considered to be the participant of equal value in the religious field despite of increasing diversity among them and amazing growth of some of them.

1A Mapping Minorities. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Alumni Theatre (LG.09)
Alessandro Amicarelli PhD is a lawyer in private practice and belongs to the BAR of Italy and to the Law Society of England. He has a PhD in International Order and Human Rights from "Sapienza" University of Rome and between 2005 and 2012 he has lectured in human rights at Urbino University. His main field of interest is that of minorities and religious minorities rights. Alessandro belongs to several professional associations and societies and specialising also in Middle East Studies he follows with particular interest the developments inside the Muslim communities in the East as well as in the West.

Islam in America: The Moorish Science Temple of America
Among the constellation of Muslim groups in the US, this group can be considered original as, along with the Quran typical of Islam, they have their own holy book, Circle7 Koran. The founder Prophet Noble Drew Ali originated the group in 1913 although it became officially known only in 1928.

Basics: this is a black only denomination; they only exist in America; they don’t practise the pilgrimage to Mecca in Arabia but to a place in the US; they wear specific clothes; they pray in a way that differs from Al-Islam; there are some specific symbols and they greet saying “Islam and Greetings”; Prophet Muhammad was prophet of Islam for the Arab region; they respect all the prophets sent by God to earth to announce the good novel; likewise Jesus was a Prophet to announce to good novel for the people of that time, Prophet Drew Ali had the role to announce the good novel of Islam to America. A major split from the main group, led by Shaykh Ra Saadi El, occurred and they had some problems derived from some fake Moorish groups.


Adam Anczyk is a researcher and lecturer in the field of psychology of religion, New Religious Movements (especially Pagan Studies) and dream studies; associated with the Department for the Psychology of Religion, Institute of Religious Studies, Jagiellonian University and research fellow at the Department of Social Factors & Methodology IOMEH. Visiting lecturer at Masaryk University in Brno and Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Budapest. The focus of his current research are many faces of contemporary Druidry in Europe, religious discrimination in Poland and new forms of spirituality. Enjoys Celtic and ethnic music, fantasy and horror fiction and Role Playing Games.

Neopaganism in Poland from the 90ties till Present
The presentation forms an overview of Polish Neopagan groups, their beliefs and forms of their presence in the Polish society from the nineties of the 20th century till present, with a special focus on the changes in the movement that have occurred during these two decades. The distinct feature of Slavic Neopaganism is that the doctrinal critique of the Catholic Church was one of the characteristics of the movement in its beginning, and the political engagement was one of the major points of interest. In the past two decades, a drift towards establishing Neopaganism as an independent religious movement with a focus on ritual and mythology is observed. Alongside, an interest in other Neopagan traditions, like Wicca or Druidry, aroused in the nineties of the 20th century (some researchers point at the translation of the Scott Cunningham’s book into Polish as the beginning of the interest in the Wicca movement in Poland), and the main field of activity of people interested in these kinds of traditions was the Internet. Nowadays, the presence of Neopaganism – a very small religious movement when it comes to the number of its followers – is getting more visible in the public sphere, than it was twenty years ago.


H. David Baer is associate professor of theology and philosophy at Texas Lutheran University, USA. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame (1999), an M.T.S from Candler School of Theology at Emory University (1992), and a B.A. from Oberlin College (1990). He is the recipient of two Fulbright Fellowships to Hungary (1996, 2007) and is author of the book, The Struggle of Hungarian Lutherans under Communism (Texas A&M University Press, 2006). Prof. Baer is a member of the Honorary Board of the Central-European Religious Freedom
Institute. Currently he is conducting research in Hungary supported in part by a fellowship from International Research & Exchanges Board with funds provided by the United States Department of State through the Title VIII Program.

Hungary’s New System of Church Recognition: Rule of Law or Rule by Decree?”

In 2012 Hungary enacted a law concerning the legal status of churches with profound implications for religious freedom. Previously religious communities in Hungary were registered according to a 1990 law which treated all religious groups equally. The 2012 law created a tiered system of legal recognition, distinguishing between “established churches” and “religious organizations.” Many countries in Europe have tiered systems, and a superficial look at Hungary might leave the impression that its religion law resembles that in other European countries. However, Hungary’s tiered system was introduced after the country had a well-established legal regime for treating religious communities equally. Introducing a tiered system in Hungary proved impossible without arbitrarily stripping numerous religious communities of a legal status they already possessed. Furthermore, because the new law is premised on the retroactive withdrawal of rights already secured, the Hungarian government has been unable to preserve the tiered system without creating a registration system that is arbitrary and unaccountable, which fails to comply with OSCE/ODIHR guidelines for legislation pertaining to religion or belief, and which contravenes fundamental legal principles such as equality under the law and the right to due process.

3A Legal Considerations. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Dr. Erica Baffelli is currently a Senior Lecturer in Japanese Studies at the University of Manchester. She is interested in religion in contemporary Japan, with a focus on groups founded from the 1970s onwards. Currently she is examining the interactions between media and “new religions” (shinshūkyō) in 1980s and 1990s and the changes in the use of media by religious institutions after the 1995 Tokyo subway attack. In 2008 she started a new research project on ex-members of Aum Shinrikyō focusing on the ways they are dealing with their past and how they are restructuring the group’s teachings and practices.

Japanese ‘New Religions’ and the media: dynamic and changes since 1980s.

The analysis of the relationship between Japanese New Religions (shinshūkyō) and society in contemporary Japan needs to take into account the role of media in both shaping public discourse about religion and in (re)creating religious groups’ image and identity. Indeed, the advent of the mass media and its technologies has, since the late 19th century, been “a mixed blessing” (Dorman 2005) for new religious movements. The press, and, later, television became important sources of information (and criticism) about new religions. On the other hand, some new religious movements that flourished in the 1980s (Agonshū, Köfuku no Kagaku, Aum Shinrikyō) were well known for their intense use of media narratives in order to proselytize, communicate with members and create the image of a highly modern and up-to-date form of religion appropriate for a modern technological age.

This paper will discuss the dynamics of the relationship between Japanese new religion and media focusing on the issue of legitimization and delegitimization. In particular, it will focus on the period immediately before and after the 1995 sarin gas attack perpetrated by the members of Aum Shinrikyō, investigating how the impact of the Aum affair is still affecting nowadays the relationship between media and religion in Japan.

3B Minority Religions and New Media. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. NAB 1.04

Eileen Barker, PhD, OBE, FBA is the founder of Inform, Chair of Inform’s Board of Governors and an Honorary Research Fellow for Inform; Professor Emeritus at the London School of Economics. Sociologist of Religion, she has been researching minority religions and the responses to which they give rise since the early 1970s. Her study of conversion to the Unification Church for her PhD, led to an interest in a wide variety of movements, and she has personally studied, to greater or lesser degree, over 150 different groups. As the first-generation movements aged,
she became interested in the changes, particularly the arrival of second-generation members and those who leave the movements. For the past twelve years, she’s been interested in differences between ‘cult-watching’ groups and the dynamics within and between these groups and the religions. She has over 300 publications, translated into 27 languages. She travels extensively for research purposes, particularly in North America, Europe and Japan, and, since collapse of the Berlin Wall, in Eastern Europe and, more recently, China. She was the first non-American to be elected President of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

The Changing Scene: What might happen and what might be less likely to happen?
Sociologists of religion are likely to insist that they cannot possibly predict the future – and rightly so. They are also likely to insist that one cannot generalise about ‘cults’, ‘sects’ or ‘new religious movements’ – again, rightly so. They can, however, suggest some of the social characteristics that could need to be taken into account when trying to anticipate what will happen, or not happen, in the realm of minority religious in the near(ish) future. In this paper, I shall discuss potential outcomes that could, at least in part, be dependent on changes in such independent variables as the economy, technical advancements, political, legal and military decisions, education, and the general culture in so far as it embraces such areas as family structures, demographic developments, moral values, and the ever-shifting religious and secular scene.

Dr David V Barrett has been a teacher of Religious Studies and English, an intelligence analyst for the British and American governments and a journalist. He has been a freelance writer since 1991, researching and writing mainly on religious and esoteric subjects. In 2009 he received a PhD in Sociology of Religion from the London School of Economics. His books include The New Believers: A Survey of Sects, Cults and Alternative Religions (Cassell 2001), A Brief History of Secret Societies (Constable & Robinson 2007), A Brief Guide to Secret Religions (Constable & Robinson 2011) and The Fragmentation of a Sect (Oxford University Press 2013), based on his doctoral study of the schisms in the Worldwide Church of God after the death of its founder Herbert W Armstrong.

Coping strategies for failed prophecies
From the earliest centuries CE – arguably from New Testament times – preachers and prophets have been forecasting the imminent return of Christ. Many set dates. All, at least so far, have been proven wrong. There’s a similar compulsion for UFO religions to predict that spaceships will arrive on a certain date to reveal the alien gods or to take away the elect.
It would be sensible for prophets to set the date far enough into the future that they’re not embarrassed when nothing much happens, but few do. How do date-setting prophets save face when the dates come and go, but no one has arrived?
David V Barrett has created a model of six ideal types of explanations for the failure of prophecy, an indispensable guide for future prophets when events (or the lack thereof) prove them wrong.

François-Xavier Bauduin is a History teacher, teaches Sociology, General Culture and Political Sciences at the University of Versailles Saint Quentin. Member of CEIFR (Centre des Etudes Interdisciplinaires des faits religieux), EHESS, Paris. PhD “Believing through networking: the example of the Raelian Movement” (PhD director: Nathalie Luca, EHESS, CNRS).

Reengineering the basis of the community in a New Religious Movement: How the Internet and the concept of network has given to the Raelian Movement a new breath
During the last 40 years, the Raelian Movement organization has grown bigger and stronger, which allowed Rael and his followers to join the ranks of the world’s first flying saucer movement, present on five continents. The ability of
the community to constantly attract new followers is due to the ingenuity and the constant renewal of the message. In the case of the Raelian movement, the themes are of New Age inspiration and collect elements belonging to the scientific field, the defence of sexual minorities, health, personal development, Buddhism etc. However, the real turning point in the life of the organization comes in the early 2000s, with the development of the Internet and the case of a supposedly cloned baby. The audience of this highly meditated event exceeds the limits of the scientific community. Currently looking for recognition at an international level, the Raelian Movement has been modernized and the internal organization is directed largely through a communication network present on the Internet. Thus, the notion of network acquires a new specific dimension which gives a new legitimacy to the Raelian leaders and reinforces the follower’s beliefs. To what extent does the notion of network allows the Raelian Movement to overcome the constraints of routinization in terms of belief, proselytism and community organization? After showing why the notion of network provides a new meaning to the sense of community (I), the contributions of the network in terms of organization will be analyzed (II). Finally, we should reflect on the development of the community life on the Internet and on the online cultural practices.

3B Minority Religions and New Media. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15, NAB 1.04

Dr Stephanie Berry is a Lecturer in Public Law at the University of Sussex. Previously, she worked as an Associate Tutor at the University of East Anglia and Research Assistant at Brunel University. Her PhD, completed at Brunel University, considered ‘The Added-Value of Minority Rights Protection for Muslims in Western Europe: Multiculturalist Approaches and International Law’. Recently, Stephanie worked as a legal advisor on the case of SAS v France in the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, challenging the compatibility of the burqa ban with article 9 ECHR.

Freedom of Religion and the Protection of Religious Minorities: Has the European Court of Human Rights Lost Its Way?
Freedom of religion has been recognised by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) as ‘one of the foundations of a “democratic society”’. However, in its recent jurisprudence, the ECtHR has afforded States a wide margin of appreciation to restrict this right in order to protect the majority from the perceived threat posed by religious minorities. In contrast, as the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) does not recognise that States have a margin of appreciation, it has not accepted the legitimacy of restrictions placed on the rights of religious minorities to the same extent as the ECtHR.

By comparing the ECtHR and HRC’s decisions in analogous cases concerning the right of Sikhs to manifest religion by wearing both the turban and keski, this paper submits that by deferring to the State’s margin of appreciation, the ECtHR has lost sight of the purpose of the freedom of religion. In order to ensure that the freedom of religion of religious minorities is protected, the ECtHR should fully consider the legitimacy of restrictions placed upon this right and not defer so readily to the ‘worries or fears’ of the majority.

3 Şahin v Turkey ECHR 2005-XI, Judge Tulkens dissenting opinion.

3A Legal Considerations. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Norman Bonney is emeritus professor at Edinburgh Napier University. He is the author of Monarchy, religion and the state; civil religion in UK, Canada, Australia and the Commonwealth. Manchester University Press, 2013, and numerous journal articles including ‘Towards a free market in religion’ Political Quarterly 84, 2, July 2013, 256-264. A full listing of publications can be found at www.normanbonneypublications.blogspot.com

The attitude of the UK state towards minority religions
This paper explores the official policies of the UK state towards a range of minority religions. The Church of England, the official church of the UK state, has only 20 per cent of the population now identifying with it, and can be
regarded as a minority religious denomination although it exercises a monopoly of state religious ceremonial. The Roman Catholic Church with about 10 per cent support is still explicitly, by law, disavowed by the UK monarch. Recent years have seen the UK state grant official subaltern representation in state ceremonial to six ‘world religions’ – Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism in addition to the comparable status previously afforded to some Christian denominations and federations. Spiritualists, Mormons and Humanists are explicitly excluded by Church of England dogma from state ceremonies. The Scottish Parliament’s Time for Reflection has attempted to give recognition to the full diversity of faith and belief in Scotland but even then it has failed to be fully representative. It will be concluded that the only defensible policy for the UK state is to be neutral in its attitudes to all religious denominations.

3D Minority Religions and the State I. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Claire Borowik is a communication consultant and grantwriter for non-profits. She is the co-director of the non-profit web-based Worldwide Religious News Service, providing religious news to the academic and legal community, and has participated in numerous initiatives promoting religious diversity. She is currently a public relations consultant for the movement. Claire served as the director of international public affairs for The Family International from 2006–2010, and previously managed legal and media affairs for the organization in South America for 4 years, and in North America for 10 years. She has lived for 20 years in several countries of Central and South America directing mission centers, non-profits, and schools.

From Radical Communalism to Virtual Community: The Family International
The Family International (TFI) emerged as a radical, world-rejecting movement in the 1960s, at the height of the counterculture era. Characterized by its radical Christian discipleship and non-traditional beliefs, the movement was structured around its vision of first century Christian communalism. While TFI’s history has been punctuated by recurrent trends of innovation and adaptation, reorganizations have typically harmonized with its foundational doctrines and practices. The launch in 2010 of “the Reboot” was a notable departure from this norm, resulting in the dismantling of the organizational structure and a virtual reinvention of the movement. Revisionism in foundational interpretations of Christian discipleship and the abandonment of its communal model have produced unprecedented cultural upheaval, resulting in a process of cultural identity transformation for many of its members as they reintegrated into conventional society. Three years after the introduction of the Reboot, the movement remains largely unstructured. The current-day rebooted TFI community, connected primarily through its online presence, faces new challenges in member retention and developing a new sense of community. The Reboot has transformed TFI culturally from radical communalism to a virtual community that emphasizes personal autonomy.

2B Insider Perspectives I. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. NAB 1.04

Dr Ruth Bradby is a Visiting Research Associate in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Chester. Her PhD (Liverpool) thesis focused on the influence of 1960s channelled texts on the New Age network of spiritualities of the following decades. She has contributed to the Brill Handbook of Religion and the Authority of Science (2011) and to Ireland’s New Religious Movements (2011). Her research into new spiritualities continues with a focus on their impact on Christian spirituality and on popular culture.

Worldwide but Barely a Minority: A Course in Miracles
Devotees of the New Age channelled text, A Course in Miracles reject the ‘New Age’ label and resist defining their thought system as a religion. However, scholars recognise this channelled text from the 1960s as a prominent source of ideas for the New Age network of the 1980s and 1990s. A comparison of self-definitions by 1980s New Age thinkers with core beliefs of A Course in Miracles reveals a close correspondence. Scholars Wouter Hanegraaff and Olav Hammer refer to the Course as a form of scripture for the network of new spiritualities. Is Course spirituality a new religion? It is useful to go back to Weber’s research on how traditional religions established authority for their
followers. Since *A Course in Miracles* was published in 1976, groups following the *Course* have used Weberian strategies such as tradition construction, appeals to rationalism and charismatic routinisation to legitimate *Course* spirituality for devotees. Finally, is *Course* spirituality a minority religion? It has evolved into a universal spirituality practised largely amongst the middle classes in countries on all continents of the world. The text has been translated into over 30 languages. Yet it is a minority religion as it remains largely unknown in the cultures where it is practised. Its influence, however, is pervasive in the popular cultures of these countries through *Course* inspired spiritual self-help books, therapies and social media used by people of faith and those of none.

**4B New Religious Movements and their Public Image.** Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15, NAB 1.04

George D. Chryssides is Honorary Research Fellow in Contemporary Religion at the University of Birmingham (UK). He was Head of Religious Studies at the University of Wolverhampton until 2008, and has authored numerous books and articles on new religious movements, including the *Historical Dictionary of Jehovah’s Witnesses* (2008) and *Historical Dictionary of New Religious Movements* (2 ed, 2012) (Scarecrow Press). He is currently working on *Jehovah’s Witnesses: Continuity and Change*, to be published by Ashgate.

*From Deviance to Devotion: The Evolution of NRM Studies*

The presentation aims to show how publications on NRMs have developed in the course of the last 125 years or so. Some 50 years ago, scant attention was given to NRMs. C. Morris Davies’ *Unorthodox* London (1874) describes empathetically several religious minorities which the author visited. In the early 20th century, a few publications emerged on “modern heresies”. Objective writing was rare: Charles S. Braden’s *These Also Believe* (1949) stands virtually alone as an example. Festinger’s *When Prophecy Fails* (1956) was a landmark, being a study in the sociology of deviance, heralding similar approaches by Lofland and subsequently Balch and Taylor.

Meanwhile, Christian counterculture literature proliferated, initially targeting the “old new religions”: examples are Hoekema, Martin and Horton Davies. The rise of newer NRMs in the 1960s and 1970s, prompted a new wave of literature from the emerging anticult movement, and subsequently from sociologists such as Barker and Beckford, treating themes such as “brainwashing” and media representation. More recently, NRM Studies found a foothold within Religious Studies, enabling discussion of origins, beliefs and practices. Some academic authors are themselves exponents of NRMs, giving insider as well as outsider perspectives.


Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

George D. Chryssides

Stephen E. Gregg is Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Study of Religions at Liverpool Hope University. He was previously a lecturer at the University of Wales for six years, and has recently edited a special issue of the *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* and has contributed to the forthcoming *Bloomsbury Companion to New Religions* (Chryssides & Zeller). He is currently writing on sexualised protest in the Raëlian Movement, and on purposefully offensive protests/performances against religion in UK comedy.

*‘The Silent Majority’? Beyond Insider / Outsider Categories and understanding ‘Apostate Testimony’ in the future Study of New Religions*

The distinction between insider and outsider is an over-simplification. There are many different types of insider (waverer, new convert, established member, initiate, birth-member), and there are different types of outsider. Of the latter, the ex-member is of particular interest, although their accounts are inevitably negative. There are different types of ex-members –dissatisfied members, those who move on, lukewarm lapsed members, rebellious second-generation members.
Regard should also be given to cultural aspects of ‘outsideness’ impacting upon such testimonies: age upon leaving, political and geographic location, familial relationships, commercial pressures (for those publishing testimonies) and discordant new worldviews. Little study has been done of these different types of ex-member, and hence popular stereotypes often go unchallenged. The presenters explore how the various types of ex-member might be assessed, and addresses the problems of researching informants who are relatively inaccessible.

1B The Academic Study of NRMs Over Time. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

J. Eugene Clay received his BA, MA, and Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago and is an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Arizona State University, where he teaches and writes about the religions of Russia and Eurasia. His research, which has been supported by the International Research and Exchanges Board, the Social Science Research Council, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, focuses on the Christian dissenters of imperial and contemporary Russia. His publications have appeared in scholarly journals such as Russian History, Slavonica, Cahiers du monde russe, Nova Religio, and Church History.

Religious Liberty in Russia after 1997
In 1990, in an effort to conform to global standards of human rights, both the USSR and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic promulgated new laws on freedom of conscience that provided broad freedom for religious expression and proselytization. But by 1997, alarmed by the rise of new religious movements, the Russian Duma passed a more restrictive version of the law designed to favor the “traditional” religions of Russia, which were enumerated in the law’s preamble as Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. Although critics predicted that the 1997 law would result in a significant diminution of religious freedom, the creativity of some religious organizations (such as the Russian Associated Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith, Pentecostals, led by the politically savvy Sergei Riakhovskii) and several liberal judicial decisions have allowed many religious minorities to establish and maintain a legal presence in the Russian Federation over the last fifteen years. Nevertheless, by placing restrictions on legal registration and on juridical personhood for religious organizations, the law presented particular challenges to new religions. Using a variety of sources, this paper will examine the effects of the law on new religious movements.

3D Minority Religions and the State I. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Vivianne Crowley is in the Faculty of Pastoral Counseling and Chaplaincy, Cherry Hill Seminary. She was formerly Lecturer in Psychology of Religion in the Theology and Religious Studies Department, King’s College London. She received her Ph.D. from University College London. Her current research interests are in Jungian psychology, religious experience and ritual, and contemporary Paganism. She is on the Council of the Pagan Federation where she focuses on interfaith issues.

The changing face of Contemporary Paganism in Britain
Over the past 25 years, Paganism as a religious identification has grown in the UK and Pagan organisations have been attempting to enter the mainstream of public life. In Scotland, Pagan celebrants can now conduct legal marriage services. South of the border, Pagans are represented on the Religious Education Council of England and Wales. Such developments are not without tensions within the Pagan community, as Pagans seek to reconcile the value placed on individualism and the social and spiritual needs of a community growing in both numbers and age span. This paper reports on developments in Paganism over the past quarter century, informed by the views of a survey of 1,700 Pagans in Britain following on from the British censuses of 2011.

Vasudev Das (Bhakti Vasudeva Swami) teaches spiritual leadership and Caitanya Vaisnavism at the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). He is a doctoral researcher and a scholar-practitioner of applied management and decision sciences (AMDS), with a specialization in leadership and organizational change (LOC), and a background in critical and creative thinking (CACT), cum years of experience integrating spiritual technologies with the social sciences. He educates audiences worldwide about self-leadership, self-realization, sonic therapeutic intervention and crime control, youth development and positive change, leading with love, and community development. He has over 35 publications in academic journals and books.

Abstract Sex and Leadership Crisis: Vaisnava Vedantic Approach

As we grow from childhood to puberty, we become physiologically mature, our brain faculties become fully developed like that of a fifty-year-old person, and our latent sex impulses become prominent. Undoubtedly, sex pleasure is a wonderful gift that is concomitant with material bodies. Sex has its economic, social, political, and leadership implications. Organizations and the public have suffered severe setbacks due to leadership crises stemming from leaders’ deregulated and improperly channeled sexual energies. In this study, through semi-structured interviews, observation, and document analysis, I diagnostically explore the role of sonic therapeutic intervention in curbing deregulated sex for sustainable leadership in government and non-government organizations in the United States, using a vaisnava vedantic lens. The results show that deregulated sex has resulted in major leadership crises in a number corporate and non-government organizations. The study proffers sonic therapeutic intervention to regulate and properly channel sexual energy for a sustainable and effective ethical leadership for a positive social change.

2B Insider Perspectives I. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. NAB 1.04.


Mormonism in Britain - Testimony and Doubt

This paper will briefly outline the membership profile of Mormons in Britain from the 1830s to 2013, and will highlight the difference between core and penumbral membership. The paper will then explore the response and adaptation of church leadership to a segment of ‘core’ doubters and to the role of the internet in informing curious members of aspects of church history normally beyond church-legitimate access. The problematic notion of apostate as applicable to these will be considered in its historical and organizational contexts, and in its contemporary UK complexity reflected in a cameo-analysis of two symbolically opposite 2013 phenomena will be made, viz., The Book of Mormon musical, and the Preston Temple based Pageant. These will be framed by a brief note on LDS organized events focused on the very issue of faith and doubt by respected Mormons: all this will highlight the symbolic nature of the embedded Mormon notion of Testimony in relation to the phenomenon of doubt.

3C Minority Religions and Conflict in the UK. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. NAB 2.04.

Dr Wendy Dossett is Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Chester, and Principal Investigator of the Higher Power Project. She is a former Associate Director of the Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre. She has research interests and publications in Japanese Buddhism, religious education, and in spirituality and recovery from addiction. She has worked with addicts in a residential rehab, and undertaken field research amongst

Secularisation and the past, present and future of Alcoholics Anonymous
Alcoholics Anonymous is often characterised as a religious organisation and therefore not suitable for the majority unchurched population. Its origins lay in the Oxford Group, which was later to become Moral Rearmament, and it uses the term ‘God’ in its Twelve Step programme. The association with religion is therefore unsurprising, though AA strongly asserts that it offers a spiritual, not a religious programme, which requires reliance on a personal higher power. The Higher Power Project at the University of Chester is a qualitative study designed to map the diversity of the language of spirituality used in AA and other Twelve Step mutual aid groups. Based on the data gathered from the first fifty participants in the study, this paper will suggest that AA has authoritative texts and strong group norms, but at the same time assigns the individual such interpretative autonomy that theists, agnostics, atheists, Buddhists, and the rejectors of all labels are able to find common ground. The paper will trace the development of the language of spirituality in AA from its inception, through the publication of *Came to Believe* in 1973, to the present day, presenting a picture of secularisation which mirrors that in the wider population. It will also consider the significance of the development of recovery organisations emerging in reaction against the spirituality of AA, such as Rational Recovery, Smart Recovery, and AA Agnostica.

2D Spiritual Spaces. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Alumni Theatre (LG.09).

Dr Linda Dubrow-Marshall is a clinical and counselling psychologist, registered with the Health and Care Professions Council, and a registered counsellor/psychotherapist with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. She is the Programme Leader for the MSc Applied Psychology (Therapies) programme at the University of Salford. In the USA, she is a licensed psychologist in Pennsylvania and is registered with the National Register of Health Service Psychologists. She co-founded RETIRN, the Re-entry Therapy Information and Referral Network in the USA and subsequently in the UK in order to provide specialist mental health services to individuals and families with involvement with NRM’s or other high demand groups.

Professor Rod Dubrow-Marshall PhD is Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) at University of Central Lancashire and was previously founding Dean of Faculty, Humanities and Social Sciences, at the University of Glamorgan. He is a Social Psychologist whose research specialities include the psychology of undue influence and cults or extremist groups (where he has developed the ‘Totalistic Identity Theory’ as an evidence-based theory to combat and reduce ideological extremism and ideologically driven violence), organisational behaviour and healthiness and the social psychology of identity and prejudice. A graduate member of the British Psychological Society, Rod is also Chair of the Research Committee of the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA, formerly American Family Foundation) and is co-Editor of the International Journal of Cultic Studies (www.icsahome.com).

In addition to his association with RETIRN, Steve K. D. Eichel, PhD, ABPP, is the current President of the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA). He is a Past-President of the American Academy of Counselling Psychology and the Greater Philadelphia Society of Clinical Hypnosis. His involvement in cultic studies began with a participant-observation study of Unification Church training in their Eastern seminary (in Barrytown, NY) in the spring of 1975. His doctoral dissertation to date remains the only intensive, quantified observation of a deprogramming. He was honoured with the 1990 John G. Clark Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Cultic Studies for this study. A licensed and Board-certified counselling psychologist, he has co-authored several articles and book reviews on cult-related topics for the Cultic Studies Journal and Cultic Studies Review.

Evolving To Enhance Efficacy: The Retirn Model of Intervening In Cult-Related Cases
An assessment is presented that indicated that one of the primary reasons the “Re-Entry Therapy, Information and Referral Network” (RETIRN)—among the oldest continuous private providers of psychological services in the cult intervention field—has survived and been effective for 30 years is because of a willingness to adapt and evolve to support a growing range of clients with a variety of experiences. In that sense, RETIRN has deliberately worked to reflect both the direction we hope our clients will move toward and the best aspects of the cultic studies field:
In this presentation, we present the major developments in the RETIRN intervention model which is a carefully calibrated consultative approach that incorporates both traditional and modified forms of counselling and mediation for families and current as well as former members. Case studies are presented which demonstrate the efficacy of this evolving approach and shed important light on the experiences of former members and families.

**2C Therapeutic Considerations. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. NAB 2.04**

**Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist**, PhD is the Deputy Director of Inform. Her doctoral research, completed at the LSE in the Department of Sociology, examined the second generation of sectarian movements and the impact their segregated childhoods have had, and is due to be published with Oxford University Press. Further publications include an article entitled ‘Beliefs in Possession’ in the book edited by Inform’s Research fellow Emeritus Professor Jean la Fontaine, entitled *The Devil’s Children. From Spirit Possession to Witchcraft: New Allegations That Affect Children* (2009), and (2010) ‘Children in New Religions: Contested Duties of Care’ *Journal of the International Society for the Study of New Religious Movements* 1(2): 25–48. She is currently working on an edited volume on the topic of fraud in minority religions, in the Ashgate/Inform series on minority religions and spiritual movements.

*In good faith?*

Over the years Inform has encountered many allegations of religious leaders perpetrating fraud on believers, and dealt with enquirers who would ask us questions such as ‘do you think the leader believes this himself’, along with incredulous statements like ‘I cannot believe the followers fell for this’. Invariably, the religious leaders were seen as fraudsters who did not believe themselves the message they were ‘peddling’, and the followers were seen as victims who should have known better. Yet in reality the majority of contemporary cases where fraud and minority religions are thought to interact are not so easily categorised. Issues of right and wrong become muddled when alleged supernatural forces and subjective hopes and expectations enter the equation, along with the novel and unfamiliar religious beliefs, practices, and forms of association one finds in contemporary society.

This presentation will examine this issue by focusing on the concept of fraud in light of minority religions, beliefs and practices. I will discuss some historical cases as well as more contemporary cases in which Inform has been involved in order to present some patterns and outline some areas where spiritual seekers should be wary.

**1C Cult Reputations. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Thai Theatre (LG.03)**

**Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist, PhD**

**Sarah Harvey, MSc** is a Research Officer at Inform where she has worked since 2001. She is also a PhD candidate in the School of European Culture and Languages at the University of Kent where she is exploring the sacred in the natural childbirth movement. She has recently co-edited, with Dr Suzanne Newcombe, *Prophecy in the New Millennium: When Prophecies Persist*, part of the Ashgate Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements. She has also been a guest editor for a special issue of *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 2009, 11(1) Equinox: London, and has written a number of short pieces for journals, magazines and encyclopedias.

**Suzanne Newcombe, PhD** is a Research Officer at Inform where she has been working since 2002. She is also an Associate Lecturer for the Open University in London and has lectured in the field of new and alternative religions at Kingston University. Her PhD research at the University of Cambridge explored the popularization and development of yoga and Ayurvedic medicine in Britain. She continues to be active in research networks in this area. Suzanne has published articles in edited books, the *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, Religion Compass and Asian Medicine.

*New cults, changing contexts – how we make sense of it all*

The founding principles of Inform were to help enquirers by providing them with information about minority and new religions that is fair, balanced and accurate. Whilst these principles remain unchanged, the ‘cult scene’ in the
UK and elsewhere has changed significantly over the last 25 years – a change which is reflected in the types of enquiries to Inform. We will trace the move away from ‘concerned parents’ (and other relatives) enquiries about specific ‘nrms’ to more in-depth and on-going government-body enquiries about minority religious and political groups and their wider social context. We will also outline new concerns that have arisen that are particular to the UK environment, involving issues of public recognition of religious groups, governance, and regulation. We will also reflect on the rise of former-member enquiries about particular religious groups and the methodological challenges this has presented for the work of Inform.

4A Inform: Anticipating the Future. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Emily Falconer is a Senior Research Assistant at the Weeks Centre for Social and Policy Research, London South Bank University. She is currently working on the ESRC funded project ‘Making space for queer identifying religious youth’ (2011-2013) with Professor Yvette Taylor.

Queer Religious Youth: Informal Spaces of Spirituality

‘Making Space for Queer-Identifying Religious Youth’ (2011-2013) is an ESRC funded project that seeks to redress this absence by exploring young (16-30 years old) LGBT Christian’s understanding, uses, and experiences of religion through a mix of qualitative techniques (interviews, maps, and diaries). This paper will question through an intersectional framework (Taylor, 2009) ‘how religious identity interplays with other forms and contexts of identity’, specifically those related to sexual identity (Stein, 2001; Yip, 2005). It will explore young people’s ‘understanding of religion’ and their everyday practices and transitions, investigating the experiences, choices and identities of young queer Christians in the UK. This is situated as a specific case-study exploration of Christianity and sexuality in young people’s lives: how does participation shape identifications, how is marginalisation or discrimination managed and how might religion and sexuality serve as a vehicle for various forms of belonging, identification and political expression? It adopts an intersectional lens, both theoretically and methodologically, uncovering the salience of other social divisions and identities in young people’s lives. Using such a model is relevant and ambitious, where this largely theoretical position has yet to be fully embedded within empirical study. To address the theme of the conference, this paper is specially geared towards exploring how queer religious youth create their own non-conventional religious ‘spaces’, both in material (their bedrooms) and virtual (through social media) space, in order to reconcile often conflicting identities.

2D Spiritual Spaces. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Alumni Theatre (LG.09).

Shai Feraro is a PhD student at Tel Aviv University. Interested in the links between gender, feminism and New Religious Movements, he specializes in the study of Contemporary Paganism and Feminist Spirituality in the US, UK and Israel. Mr. Feraro’s PhD dissertation focuses on Women and Gender in British Magical and Pagan Groups, c.1888 – c.1988. He is also conducting research into the Israeli Pagan community. He sits on the Steering Committee for the founding of the Israeli Center for Information on Contemporary Religions, and serves as Coordinator for the yearly Israeli conference for the Study of Contemporary Religion and Spirituality.


This paper will present the discourse maintained by Israeli Pagans when discussing questions of organization and of religious-political rights. I will argue that although Israeli Pagans may employ a community-building discourse, they constantly fear the perceived negative consequences of public exposure. They see the bond between (Jewish) religion and the state in Israel as a main factor in the intolerance and even persecution that they expect from the government and from religious fundamentalists. The result of this discourse during the first ten years or so of the presence of Modern Paganism in Israel can be seen through the metaphor of a dance, in which participants advance two steps forward, only to retreat one step back.
Ronald Hutton’s recent claims regarding the benefits which the Revisionist Model in Pagan history holds for modern-day Pagans will be set against this background. According to Hutton, this model supplies Modern Pagans with a "greater sense of integration into, and a common inheritance with, the parent society." (Hutton 2011: 231-232). Considering the unique nature of Israeli society and identity politics, can Israeli Pagans expect to reap similar benefits? Canaanite reconstructionism and the recent establishment of an Israeli branch of the Pagan Federation will be discussed.

**5B Paganism: Past and Future. Sunday 2 February, 11.40 – 13.25, NAB 1.04**

Jessica Finnigan is an Advanced Diploma student in the Study of Religion at the University of Cambridge (2013-2104). Her research involves the impact of the internet on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She completed her undergraduate work at Brigham Young University in Provo Utah in 2003. She is the principal investigator of two Mormon internet based surveys conducted in the summer of 2013. The first survey collected data on Mormon feminists with 1862 complete responses. And the second survey attempted to capture a snapshot of Mormon internet usage in the summer of 2013. The survey resulted in 6022 complete responses, measuring internet activity and religiosity. Jessica Finnigan is the co-author on two papers “I am a Mormon Feminist” How Social Media Revitalized and Enlarged a Movement; and “Mormon Feminist Perspective on the Mormon Digital Awakening: A study of Identity and Personal Narratives” (both in review).

*You Can’t Smash the Internet: Historical Analysis of the LDS’s Efforts to Shape Technology, and how the Internet has Changed the Rules of the Game*

The principle of authority lies at the heart of Mormonism. Internal debates continue to rage over the right to receive or interpret revelation. The isolated development of Mormonism in the American West, and their zeal for missionary work created a conundrum after World War II. LDS church leaders attempted to resolve questions of authority and uniformity of message, through the centralization of all departments and auxiliaries, including international curriculum materials.

However, the internet and social media have challenged traditional authority structures in the LDS church. The internet has decentralized historical data that has supported many sacred narratives. The internet has also revolutionized how members voice their opinions. Historically individuals have faced official church discipline for expressing contradictory opinions. They had to navigate the process alone or in small groups, but the internet has provided perceived anonymity and platforms for organized discussion and a place for organized activism. A significant number of Mormons are using the internet and social media outlets from blogs to subreddits. Recent social movements have included, Ordain Women, Mormons Building Bridges, questioning of marriage policies, and a feminist movement. The future of the organization will depend largely on how it adapts to the disruption in authority.


Dr Anne Mette Fisker-Nielsen specialises in Japanese politics and religion. She teaches Anthropology of Japan, Social Theory, and Theory in Anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies. Her recent book *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Japan: Soka Gakkai Youth and Komeito* (2012), published by Routledge presents a study based on long term, first-hand research that examines the alliance between the religious movement Soka Gakkai and the political party they support (the Clean Government Party). Other articles by Fisker-Nielsen can be found on [http://www.soas.ac.uk/staff/staff30945.php](http://www.soas.ac.uk/staff/staff30945.php)

*From Japanese Buddhist sect to Global Citizenship: Soka Gakkai Past and Future*

A universal definition of religion is impossible not only because its constituent elements and relationships are historically specific, but also because that definition itself is the historical product of discursive formation (Asad 1993: 116). The classification ‘religion’ in Japan became a politically charged, boundary-drawing project that shaped
the formation of the nation-state. Considering this history, some of the grassroots movements that had come under the derogatory ‘new’ religion more precisely emerge as forms for religious reformation where individual beliefs and convictions were central. The Nichiren Buddhist organization Soka Gakkai is conspicuous in its epistemological challenge to the core of state power that was rooted in the new conceptual boundaries between the ‘secular’, the ‘religious’ and the ‘superstitious’. This stance made social justice central to its rapid growth in the post-war period where new avenues to social and political engagement emerged. Soka Gakkai’s long years of social and political engagement has developed into a more accepted voice of Buddhist Humanism, playing today a much needed voice of moderation in the region. While Soka Gakkai International has existed since 1975, new moves to consolidate its global citizen perspective since the 1990s may prove to be steering it into a truly global movement.

**4E New Religious Movements Over Time.** Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. Alumni Theatre (LG.09)

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**Anthony T. Fiscella** has a master’s degree in theological studies and a master’s degree in the history and anthropology of religion. He has given presentations at conferences ranging from law and religion to sociology of religion. He’s published articles or chapters on Islam and punk, forms of Islamic anarchism, MOVE, and the role of first followers in new religious movements. Interviewees over the years have come from movements such as Ananda Marga, Re-Evaluation Counseling, and Temple Ov Psychick Youth. Fiscella is currently working on his doctoral dissertation at Lund University, Sweden in which he studies alternative conceptions of freedom in three minority religious communities: Unitarian Universalists, MOVE, and the Taqwacore scene.

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**Communication Breakdown: MOVE, the U.S. Court System, and Critical Religion Theory**

This paper discusses the communication between MOVE members and judges in several U.S. court cases from the 1970s and 1980s. The point is to highlight the gap in communication between the two camps. The gap seems to reveal that a role is played by the clash between a minority religious perspective and majority religious perspective. On one hand there is a privileged, educated, wealthier, predominantly European American group of individuals who defend the existing state of affairs and on the other there is a marginalized, less educated, poorer, predominantly African American group who are challenging it. Nonetheless, it seems apparent in these cases, as if that were not bad enough, that the group suffered additional discrimination additionally due to them being a minority religion. In the intersectionality of oppressions, minority religious status clearly plays a role. Drawing relatively arbitrary distinctions between what is and what is not a religion can help institutionalize that role while simultaneously downplaying it as a factor. The goal of this article is to examine some of the ways in which this discrimination can be recognized as well as addressed while MOVE and other minority religions continue their journey through American society and the courtrooms therein.

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**3A Legal Considerations.** Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

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**Matthew Francis** works in the Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion at Lancaster University on a RCUK Global Uncertainties programme focusing on ideology, decision-making and uncertainty. This builds on previous research where he analysed the move to violence in religious and non-religious groups through mapping the significance of shared non-negotiable beliefs in the public utterances of members and leaders of groups, which included Aum Shinrikyo, al Qaeda, and the Red Army Faction. He is the Editor of the website RadicalisationResearch.org, which brings high-quality academic research on radicalisation and extremism to the attention of people working in policy and media settings.

**Non-negotiable beliefs: making a useful distinction between the ‘sacred’ and ‘religion’**.

In this paper, based on research challenging the privileged place given to religion in many discourses on terrorist organisations, I suggest that an analysis of the sacred, or non-negotiable, beliefs of groups provides a more meaningful and constructive approach to understanding the ideologies of religious and secular groups. Many accounts of groups, including al Qaeda, Hizb ut-Tahrir and Aum Shinrikyo, have focused on the role that religious beliefs have played in violent discourses and actions. In this paper, I examine the statements of these
groups to understand the context and details of their beliefs, and where these might suggest the potential for violent conflict with their perceived enemies. In order to avoid privileging the role of religion in these accounts I focus instead on discourses of sacred values and beliefs which might equally be shared in form and or content by non-religious groups. In making this distinction, I demonstrate a model that provides a more nuanced understanding of differences between ‘major’ and ‘minor’ religions, as well as non-religious ideologies. This model, although in my work focusing on violence, can be shown to provide a useful method of analysis of similarities and differences between these kinds of movements more generally.

**3C Minority Religions and Conflict in the UK. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. NAB 2.04.**

**Liselotte Frisk** is professor of Religious Studies, Dalarna University, Sweden. She has studied new religious movements from several years from different perspectives. Her doctoral dissertation from 1993 dealt with new religious movements and their relationship to society/world. In 2007 she published a book about what happens to new religious movements over time. She is currently working with a research project about children in minority religions. She has also conducted research projects about new age and new spiritualities.

**Different Religion – Different Childhood: A Comparison Between the Osho Movement and Jehovah’s Witnesses**

This paper will compare two religious perspectives on children, child upbringing, and the parents’ role in the child’s life. A religion’s child perspective is deeply connected to the overall ideology of the religion. Two very different new religious movements – the Osho Movement and the Jehovah’s Witnesses – have been chosen to demonstrate the vast scope of difference a religious upbringing may mean. The material consists of primary texts from the two religious groups which will be analyzed thematically. Based on the results, Diana Baumrind’s model of four parenting styles – authoritative, authoritarian, permissive-indulgent, and permissive-uninvolved parenting – will be discussed.

**2A The Next Generation. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Thai Theatre (LG.03)**

**Eugene V. Gallagher** is the Rosemary Park Professor of Religious Studies at Connecticut College in New London, CT. He is the author of *The New Religious Movements Experience in America*, co-author of *Why Waco: Cults and the Battle for Religious Freedom in America*, co-editor of the five-volume *Introduction to New and Alternative Religions in the United States* and many essays on new religious movements and religions in the ancient Mediterranean world. He is a co-General Editor of *Nova Religio: The Journal of New and Alternative Religions* and Associate Editor of *Teaching Theology and Religion*.

**A Guaranteed Future for New Religions**

Leaders of new religious movements, some far beyond the boundaries of mainstream Christianity, have frequently appealed to a “prophetic paradigm” in the Christian Scriptures that provides multiple examples of divinely authorized religious innovation. Some, like David Koresh, came to see themselves in the pages of the Bible; others, like Joseph Smith, saw their careers as mirroring those of biblical figures; still others, like Raël, claimed revelations that gave them unprecedented insight into the scriptures. In each case, appeal to the biblical prophetic paradigm served as a central legitimating strategy. The Bible, accordingly, constitutes a potent resource for inspiring and justifying religious innovation, including the formation of new religious movements either in an originally sectarian vein or as independent foundations. Wherever the Bible enjoys widespread credibility, it will continue to inspire religious innovation both within and well beyond the boundaries of orthodoxy. This presentation will offer a preliminary categorization of the ways in which leaders of new religions have used elements of the prophetic paradigm to justify their own religious innovations and argues that the open-ended character of the prophetic paradigm guarantees that further new religious movements will use it for legitimation.

**2E The End of Time? Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)**
Han Gang-Hyen graduated from Mejiro(目白) University Graduate School and is the General Director of the International Academy of Neohumans Culture. I presented my papers in the Korea Academy of New Religions Conference about “the exodus from birth and death & the theory of Eternal life”, at the International New Religions Conference from 2011-2013 with themes “The Hidden Manna and the Philosophy of Eternal Life”, “A New View of the Afterlife and the New Heaven” and “The ultimate aim of New Religion Movements and the New Rule and the Social Structure of the New world”.

Kim Young Suk graduated from Gongju Teachers’ College in Korea. I am a school teacher and the international casting Director of the International Academy of Neohumans Culture. Also I am a writer of “The Secret of New Heaven”, am almost finishing my new book, “The Hidden Secret of the Bible”. I have studied about the world religions for 35 years. I have participated 23th World Congress of Philosophy in Greece Athens as an Education Philosopher.

The Role and Future of a Korean new religious movement: The Victory Altar and the development of neo-humans
There were full scale movements of Korean minority new religions to realize the original religious aim late in the 18th to early of 19th century. I will examine new paradigms and the ultimatum of Korean modern new religions’ movements. Also I will consider the movement of the Victory Altar, which has been weak by persecutions of the new big Christianity, but the unique view of its faith and afterlife is so powerful that it can change the frames of the world religions and philosophies completely. Its new religious movement has been led by the strong spirit of God directly pouring the manna of heaven, is the final process to build new heaven reflecting the Holy Scriptures, so it has a possibility be developed as the world religion soon. Finally, I will reveal perfectly the fruit of life( the possess condition of the true Savior), the secret of the white stone of the Victor, the philosophy of immortality with a physical body, the authority of God’s 5 covenants for Koreans, and the advent of neohumans. So my paper is valuable to study.

4C Insider Perspectives II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Jeff Gary holds an MA in Religion in Contemporary Society from King’s College London, where he specialized in contemporary issues with New Religious Movements and radicalization. While at King’s, he worked on student placement at Inform. He is currently living in New York City.

In Sharp Relief: The Study of New Religious Movements and Radicalization in the UK
The study of New Religious Movements and Islamic groups is fraught with difficulty stemming from concerns within the academy and from external pressures of media and public opinion. Public discourses on NRMs and new Islamist groups, such as brainwashing and the conflation of terrorism with radicalism, impact the ability of sociological research to make meaningful contributions to academic and public discourse. Academics conducting sociological research into NRMs and extremist groups must contend with the realities of public reactions, security needs, and differing opinions within the academy on the proper methods of study. None of these issues are straightforward, and each present a unique challenge to a researcher hoping to make an impact on discourse surrounding NRMs and Islamist groups. This study examines multiple academic and opinion-forming institutions—including Inform and the Westminster Faith Debates—and accounts for media presence in order to explain the information culture that surrounds new contributions to the study of NRMs and Islamic movements.

3C Minority Religions and Conflict in the UK. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. NAB 2.04.

is titled ‘Faith and Dissent: Negotiating norms in Nation of Islam magazines’ (Arkansas University Press) and the second is a co-edited volume titled: ‘New Perspectives on the NOI.’

**Negotiating the generational and gender barrier in Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam**

Sudan was born into Elijah Muhammad’s Nation of Islam in the 1960s. Her parents joined the Black Nationalist organization in the late 1950s and actively contributed to the Nation’s programs. As a young child Sudan embraced the conservative dictates prescribed by the organization. She continues to wear the full head piece and uniforms designed for women in the organization. Sudan’s outfits set her apart from her Sunni Muslim and Christian counterparts in her community. Sudan reads the NOI’s dress code as protectionary. Her experiences of segregation and racial inequality play a significant part in her decision to wear the NOI uniform. Her daughter, Indigo reads the Nation’s dictates about hair covering and customs differently. Unlike her mother, Indigo struggles to wear the hair covering and uniform. Indigo’s experiences of the NOI differ in important ways from those of her mother. Sudan and her daughter’s differences reflect the common problems that older and younger Nation women confront when in dialogue over contentious internal issues. This paper considers the ways in which generational and gender barriers impact and shape dialogue amongst Nation women and in particular Sudan and her daughter.

2A The Next Generation. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00, Thai Theatre (LG.03)

**Megan Goodwin** is the Visiting Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Elon University for 2013-14. She received her doctorate in Religion and Culture from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and holds masters' degrees in Religious Studies and Women’s Studies from UNC and Drew University respectively. Her research focuses on religion, gender, and sexuality, with particular attention public rhetoric and minority religions in the contemporary United States.

‘The Wall Between Us’: American Sexual Exceptionalism and Minority Religions

My research focuses on the ways American assumptions regarding normative sexuality function to marginalize minority religious communities while seeming to uphold professed national commitments to religious freedom. In this paper, I argue that public rhetoric about minority religions demonstrates the extent to which normative sexuality has shaped and constrained popular understandings of “real” American religion since the early 1980s. I engage several popular narratives that portray minority religions (Islam, Mormonism, and witchcraft) as predatory, coercing or duping vulnerable American women and children into religious nonconformity and sexual transgression. While some minority religions condone or even encourage non-normative sexual behaviors for their adherents, American public responses to such practices is massively disproportionate to the number of citizens persuaded by or engaged in them. More: minority religions are frequently suspected and accused of sexual deviance and even coercion regardless of their communities’ mores or practices. In this piece, I consider possible explanations for why religious outsiders are so often suspected of sexual predation or coercion, and why sex works so well to marginalize suspect religiosities. I suggest that public rhetoric that fosters sexual suspicion toward minority religions discourages religious nonconformity while encouraging normative sexual practices. I conclude that scholars of minority religions must take seriously the role normative sexuality plays in marginalizing minority religious communities.

1C Cult Reputations. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25, Thai Theatre (LG.03)

**Christian Greer** holds a B.A. from Boston University’s University Professor’s Honor Degree Program, a M.A. in the History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents from the University of Amsterdam, a M.Div. from Harvard Divinity School, and is currently working on his Ph.D. entitled Angelheaded Hipsters: From the Birth of Beatnik Antinomianism to Psychedelic Millenarianism at the University of Amsterdam. His publications include the chapter titled “Deep Ecology and the Study of Esotericism” in Contemporary Esotericism (2012), a forthcoming article in Anarchist Developments in Cultural Studies entitled “Occult Origins: Hakim Bey’s Ontological Post-anarchism,” as well as a number of book reviews.
Beneath the Underground: The Dissemination of The Church of The SubGenius Through the Marginal Press

The Church of the SubGenius remains one of the most organized and long-standing representatives of the so-called “occult counterculture” active in the US in the 1970s. As the most visible religion that emerged from the loosely affiliated network of magicians, anarchists, and sex radicals associated with the Chaos Magick milieu, the church set itself apart with membership fees, well-attended annual rituals, as well as a systematized iconography and vocabulary. Premised on liberating its adherents from the rigid constraints of consensus reality through the acceptance of the openly fabricated prophet J.R. “Bob” Dobbs, the church has been able to maintain a devoted religious community for over four decades without the help or notice of the culture industry or mainstream media. My paper will describe the most prominent mediums through which the church propagates their subversive ideas, and in so doing focus on what could arguably be the most overlooked mediums to be utilized by minority religions within the last fifty years. The church first forwarded its message through homemade “fanzines” and later expanded to include a number of (pirate) radio call-in shows. These channels of communication act as horizontal, decentralized means by which SubGenii communicate and collaborate outside the bounds of conventional culture. In drawing attention to the church’s use of these “underground” mediums, my paper will draw attention to novel patterns of exchange within minority religious communities.

1C Cult Reputations, Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25, Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Robin Harragin’s main research topic is Church History and in particular the history of Christian Science in the UK. She has an MTH from Kings College, London and is a Fellow of The Mary Baker Eddy Library in Boston, Mass. Much of her research work was undertaken at Bath Spa University. Currently she is Head of Religion and Philosophy at Claremont Fan Court School and is a Philosophy Specialist Teacher with The Philosophy Foundation. Aside from academic work, Robin has run a Christian Science Nursing Facility and is on the Board of The Aid Fund For Christian Scientists in Need of Nursing Care.

Christian Scientists - pioneers or has-beens? - A review of research on how Christian Science migrated across the Atlantic at the end of the nineteenth century with views on its future.

Our paper shows reasons why Christian Science gained a popular following in Britain and who it appealed to. This insider, qualitative research is based on an extensive study of the correspondence between Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, and early British converts. The letters are in the archives of the Mary Baker Eddy Library, and the research also includes some oral interviews with elderly Christian Scientists. For the ‘anticipating the future’ element of the paper, we have interviewed contemporary thought leaders in the church community. Our findings indicate that in the early days of Christian Science, it was primarily healing, combined with a familiar biblical basis that appealed. In the church today, there is a renewed emphasis on healing in its engagement in today’s dialogue on health care. But by contrast, there is now a greater stress on ecumenical and interfaith fellowship, which is reclaiming the church’s Christian heritage and serving to dispel public mistrust. Expanded dialogue with the medical profession and ecumenical leadership allays public concerns about spiritual healing and provides the means for more frequent mutual sharing of religious gifts.

2B Insider Perspectives I, Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00, NAB 1.04.

Melissa Harrington is a senior visiting lecturer in the department of Health and Wellbeing at the University of Cumbria, where she teaches research methods and cognitive theory. Her work has focused on esoteric religiosity, especially within Paganism, and she is interested in contemporary religion and its expression within the zeitgeist of late modernity.
Paganism – from occult anomaly to Britain’s largest New Religious Movement in 50 years; contemplating the past, and anticipating the future.

Modern Pagan religion emerged in the mid-20th century as an esoteric anomaly that was thought to be a surviving remnant of ancient religion. In fifty years it grew to Britain’s largest new religious movement, with a significant following across the globe. This paper charts the development of contemporary Paganism. It discusses how its mythos has changed as it has grown, how it spread, and how its adherents changed, and continue to change, their religious traditions within the overall parameters of modern Pagan religiosity. It discusses how Pagans draw on the past for inspiration, but see themselves as embracing the choice of a religion which is congruent with concerns of late modernity, and offers an inviting vision for the future. The paper concludes by examining factors which caused the rapid growth of Paganism, and discussing whether these will continue to help the religion grow, or may naturally curb further expansion.

**5B Paganism: Past and Future. Sunday 2 February, 11.40 – 13.25. NAB 1.04**

Sarah Harvey is a Research Officer at Inform where she has worked since 2001. She is also a PhD candidate in the School of European Culture and Languages at the University of Kent where she is exploring the sacred in the natural childbirth movement. She has recently co-edited, with Dr Suzanne Newcombe, *Prophecy in the New Millennium: When Prophecies Persist*, part of the Ashgate Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements. She has also been a guest editor for a special issue of *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 2009, 11(1) Equinox: London, and has written a number of short pieces for journals, magazines and encyclopedias.

Ayahuasca in limbo, the UK situation

Ayahuasca has long been used as a religious sacrament in established religious groups including Santo Daime and Uniao Do Vegetal (UDV). Both were founded in the twentieth century (although they claim much older roots) and have spread to America and to Europe where they have been involved in a number of legal cases. In addition, since the 1960s onwards, individuals interested in aspects of Shamanism/Paganism/the ‘New Age’ have begun to experiment with the ingestion of ayahuasca and other such substances – either in an individualistic setting or as part of a retreat.

This paper will focus on the use of ayahuasca in the UK context through an examination of enquiries to Inform and through two legal cases (2011 and 2012). I argue that despite these test cases, the legal status of ayahuasca in the UK remains a grey area. I also speculate as to the potential differences between its use in an organised religious group as opposed to more ‘New Age’ healing rituals/’experiences’ – for whilst the UK Santo Daime are in legal limbo and cannot currently use their sacrament, numerous other groups are advertising ayahuasca ceremonies in the UK. Is it simply the case that more organised groups are easier for law enforcement to target?

**1C Cult Reputations. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Thai Theatre (LG.03)**


*Paradoxes of Religious Legitimacy and Authenticity in an Age of Expediency*

Claims about the ‘return of religion’ or living in a ‘post-secular’ age seem to have supplanted and reversed the secularisation thesis as the received wisdom about the role of religion in the modern world. But what does this ‘return’ mean and what are its implications for minority religions? I argue, following Jim Beckford (2011), that religion has increasingly become ‘expedient’, a source for policies and practices to tackle social problems and to
integrate minority populations into an imagined community. This politicisation of religion leads to situations where religious groups are ‘interpellated’ by the public discourse to formulate strategies of legitimacy. On the one hand, religious groups may be encouraged to assert their legitimacy by, for example, registering for recognised and/or tax-exempt status. On the other hand, religious groups may also become drawn into legitimacy struggles by outside forces (state, media), as in the case of suspected ‘extremism’ among Muslim groups in the West. I argue that these legitimation processes have the paradoxical effect of creating internal authenticity struggles within the groups. These in turn may lead to schism, polarisation and radicalisation. I use a failed registration attempt by Finnish Wiccans as an example of the dynamics of legitimacy and authenticity.

3D Minority Religions and the State I. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Dr. James Holt is a Senior Lecturer in Religious Education and PGCE Programmes Leader at the University of Chester. His PhD thesis explored Mormon engagement with inter-faith dialogue, and is to be published in 2014 by Greg Kofford Books. James has also served as a Bishop, a member of a Stake Presidency, and is currently a national spokesperson in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. James has lectured internationally on issues surrounding Mormonism.

Mormons and the Media. A historical analysis of a media history and the contextual framework for “I’m a Mormon”

In response to “The Book of Mormon” musical, a satirical and, some would say offensive look at aspects of Mormon beliefs, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints launched an integrated media campaign. This campaign, first of all in New York, extended to Los Angeles and in 2013 to London utilizes a variety of media to deliver the message of Mormonism. But what message is being conveyed? This paper will explore the various efforts through the later 20th century and early part of the 21st century to posit the various messages and purposes that these media campaigns have been designed to promote. What has changed? Why has it changed? Is a result of what Mauss has called a movement towards assimilation into the mainstream? He suggests that movements like Mormonism swing pendulum like between retrenchment and assimilation. Is this just another phase in sect development, or is it finding success as a proselyting tool and confirming Mormons in a place of retrenchment? The paper will then posit a potential way forward for the Church’s media efforts in the United Kingdom.

3B Minority Religions and New Media. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15, NAB 1.04

Gillie Jenkinson, MA, is a UKCP accredited psychotherapist and PhD Student at University of Nottingham, School of Education, researching ‘What helps former cult members recover from an abusive cult experience’. She offers a specialist counselling approach known as ‘Post Cult Counselling’. She is an international speaker and Mental Health Editor for ICSA Today magazine. She is a published author and co-authored Chapter 13 in Royal College of Psychiatrists publication, in 2009, ‘Spirituality and Psychiatry’ entitled ‘Pathological Spirituality’ with Dr. Nicola Crowley. She published an article in BACP Therapy Today entitled ‘Working with Cult Survivors’, May 2013.

The Love of God Community - Reflections on membership of and recovery from an abusive Bible-based NRM or cult

Gillie Jenkinson will reflect on her past membership of and recovery from an abusive Bible-based NRM/cult, The Love of God Community (LOGC), in the 1970s in Birmingham, England. She will reflect on life in a cult including the physical and psychological harm done and describe her journey of recovery. She will explore what she has discovered is helpful for recovery and briefly present her specialist approach to counselling former cult members - ‘Post Cult Counselling’ (PCC) – which she has developed and used for many years.

2C Therapeutic Considerations. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. NAB 2.04

Dinka Marinović Jerolimov, Ph.D., graduated in Sociology and Pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb where she also received her M.A. and Ph.D. in the field of Sociology of Religion. She is a scientific advisor at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb and a Principal Investigator of International Social Survey Program (ISSP)
for Croatia. Her main fields of interest are traditional church religiosity, New Religious Movements and youth religiosity. Among other published works she is the co-author of the book *Vjerske zajednice u Hrvatskoj (Religious communities in Croatia)* with Ankica Marinović and the book chapter Mutual Relations between the State and Minority Religious Communities. The Case of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Croatia, Poland and Slovenia, in Hall, Dorota and Smoczinsky, Rafal (eds.) *New Religious Movements and Conflict in Selected Countries of Central Europe*.

Ankica Marinović, Ph.D., graduated in Sociology and Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. at the same faculty in the field of Sociology of religion. She is a scientific advisor at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb and teaches undergraduate courses on comparative religion at the University of Zagreb. Her main fields of interest are sociology of religion, particularly unchurched religiosity and religious experience, and sociology of media.

Branko Ančić graduated in Sociology and Croatology at Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb. He is a research assistant at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Croatia. He is currently completing a PhD thesis on the relationship between religion and health. His scientific and research interests are within the field of sociology of religion and social ecology. As an associate he teaches at the Croatian Studies University of Zagreb and as an executive editor participates at the international journal *Religion and Society in Central and Eastern Europe* (RASCEE).

Is there emergence of anti-cult movement in Croatia?

Besides the largest number (87%) of citizens in Croatia who belong to the Catholic Church, there is also a diverse and dynamic minority religious scene which includes 46 registered and socially recognized religious communities, together with at least similar number of different religious and spiritual groups which are not yet registered. These include also new forms of religiosity manifested in numerous new religious groups and movements, more or less visible in a public sphere.

The dominance of Catholicism in Croatia did not result in prolific anti-cult movement like for instance in Poland, but in a past few years two non-governmental associations have appeared emphasizing the struggle against cults and sects in their program (*Guardian Angels* and *Centre for Information on Sects and Cults -CISK*). As we observed that their activities have increased recently, in this paper we explore the possibility of their potential for development of anti-cult movement in Croatian society.

For this purpose a case-study (work in progress) is undertaken where historical overview, analysis of documents, in-depth interviews and content analysis of internet (web pages, blogs, forums, etc.) have been used as the methods of data gathering.

**5D Anti-Cult Reactions.** Sunday 2 February, 11.40 – 13.25. NAB 2.04

Erin Johnston is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology and a graduate fellow at the Center for the Study of Religion at Princeton University. Erin’s research investigates processes of socialization, identity change and self-formation within contemporary spiritual communities. In a recently published article, she draws from fieldwork and in-depth interviews in the New Jersey neo-Pagan community to examine formal similarities in practitioners’ narratives of conversion. Erin’s dissertation investigates the discourses and pedagogical practices through which spiritual selves are constructed and maintained in two organizations dedicated to spiritual formation: an Integral Yoga studio and a Catholic prayer house.

**Anticipating the Future: The Growth of Practice-Oriented Spiritualities**

Within the sociology of religion, the secularization thesis (as defined by religious decline) has increasingly been losing favor. Yet, recent work has highlighted the many qualitative changes that forms of religiosity and religious organization have and continue to undergo. In this paper, I address one shift in the contemporary religious landscape: the development of “communities of practice.” For many contemporary individuals who are less attached to or do not believe in the central tenets of any particular religious doctrine, spiritual practices – as non-creedal and this-worldly – may be an ideal form of cultural adaptation. Practice-oriented spirituality, as defined by
Robert Wuthnow (1998), offers practitioners the benefits of both dwelling and seeking forms of religiosity: a spiritual home and a spiritual journey. Indeed disciplined forms of spiritual practice – from meditation and yoga to contemplative prayer and examen – are increasingly found in both religious and secular spaces across the U.S. In this paper, I draw on data from my dissertation – which involved case studies of two communities of practice: an Integral Yoga Institute and a Catholic prayer house – in order to suggest that these contexts might be best understood as religious communities which seek to transmit new forms of religious subjectivity.

2D Spiritual Spaces. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Alumni Theatre (LG.09).

Adviya Khan has an MA in ‘Islam in Contemporary Britain’ from Cardiff University, for which she won a Jameel Scholarship and a BA (Hons) in History and Politics from Queen Mary, University of London. She has been working at Inform as a research assistant since 2012, looking at NRMs within Islam and the Far Right in particular. She has previously worked on a project looking at faith, slavery and identity with the National Portrait Gallery.

**Black, Female, Muslim and a Hip-Hop artist- A Case Study of Conversion**

Although conversion across religions is not new, the focus on British converts to Islam has recently increased in light of events such as Woolwich, with claims that converts are more prone to radicalisation. Homogenised and stigmatised in the media, a real understanding of convert experiences is missing, especially female converts, who are often portrayed as brainwashed by men and lacking autonomy. Similarly, within the Muslim community, female converts often face challenges of identity and in some cases, have trouble confronting cultural norms. Confident and vocal female converts, especially within domains that are traditionally seen to be that of men, such as hip-hop, are rarely given the space to communicate their own narratives.

Through ethnographic research, including the use of in-depth interviewing and observation, this study hopes to shed some light onto the experiences of two British female converts to Islam, who have formed their own hip-hop group called Poetic Pilgrimage. Carrying on their love for music through their new found faith, the research explores how Poetic Pilgrimage are using hip-hop as a tool to connect, educate and empower young people, whilst negotiating challenges of faith, race and gender. Finally, this study will reflect on the complicated reality of identity construction for the duo and British Muslims in general.


John-Paul King has worked as a qualified social worker for twenty years. He has an academic and personal interest in religion and social care: having worked in several faith-based organisations (an Evangelical nightshelter for the homeless, a residential home for adults with physical disabilities and as a volunteer for a Jewish charity). His PhD research used participative research within two faith-based organisations as the foundation of an examination of the putative assumptions concerning faith based welfare. He has a degree in social work studies (MMU), a MA in Religion in Contemporary Society (KCL) and is completing his PhD at KCL.

**Coming In From The Cold: the use of faith-based social care and action as a means of building social, symbolic capital and community integration for a once marginalised Christian NRM**

The Jesus Army is a Christian New Religious Movement, founded in the early 1970s by Neol Stanton. Initially it gained a reputation as being authoritarian, ‘world-rejecting’ and exclusive: distanced from (or rejected by) other churches – e.g. its expulsion from the Evangelical Alliance in the mid ‘80s. The Jesus Army is once again a member of the Evangelical Alliance and appears to be coming in from the cold.

As part of my PhD research I have been focusing on faith-based welfare – something the Jesus Army has begun to enact in the shape of ‘Jesus Centres’ – community centres providing support for the marginalised and the wider community. My research was participative and I spent six months working as a volunteer at the Jesus Army’s London Jesus Centre.

In my thesis I argue that this decision to organise itself along ‘professional’ lines, working with statutory and other voluntary and faith-based organisations and churches is a means of transition from an exclusive, peripheral NRM to
becoming a more mainstream denomination. I would like to present a paper discussing the findings of my research: a NRM appears to be in transition and I am suggesting the adoption of organised faith-based welfare is a vehicle that is enabling this transition.

4E New Religious Movements Over Time, Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15, Alumni Theatre (LG.09)

Adam Klin-Oron received his PhD in cultural anthropology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he is an adjunct professor. He has presented his work in Italy, France, Israel and the United States, and is the recipient of fellowships and awards from the Morris Ginsberg Foundation, the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, the Shaine Center for Research in the Social Sciences and the Scholion Interdisciplinary Center for Jewish Studies. Adam’s work has been published in the Journal of Alternative Spiritualities and New Age Studies, Israeli Sociology, the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion and edited volumes from Magnes and Brill.

After completing a tenure as visiting scholar at the department of anthropology at the University of California, San Diego, Adam currently serves as the Advanced Studies coordinator at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute. Together with Prof. Boaz Huss and Dr. Rachel Werczberger he is the initiator of Meyda Center – The Israeli Information Center on NRMs.

Rachel Werczberger is a post-doctoral fellow in the Department for Jewish philosophy in Ben Gurion University and a visiting lecturer in the program for Religious Studies in Tel-Aviv University. She received her PhD in anthropology and sociology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her work focuses on New Age Spirituality, New Age Judaism and the Anthropology of contemporary Judaism. Rachel has published in numerous journals and edited volumes, among them the Journal of Contemporary Judaism and Contemporary Religion. Together with Prof. Boaz Huss and Dr. Adam Klin-Oron she is the initiator of Meyda – The Israeli Information Center on NRMs.

Cult, Anti-Cult and Academia in Israel: Ruminations on the Past, Reflections on the Future

The relation between New Religious Movements ('cults'), their opponents ('Anti-Cult') and academia is an intricate one. Academic scholars from various disciplines may be called upon to legitimize new religious perceptions, to propagate objective information, or quite the opposite, to confirm the deviance and danger of such religious beliefs. In Israel, where NRMs emerged in the late 1970s, academics have taken a part in the polemics regarding their activities: they were approached to render expert opinions by government committees, the courts, NRMs, and the media. That being said, Israeli academics have never been a major force in influencing decisions or swaying the public opinion. In fact, the most prominent force in the field was (and still is) the Anti-Cult movement formed by a coalition unique to Israel. In this alliance, Jewish Orthodox anti-missionary groups align themselves with secular anti-cult groups – the former fearing the fate of a Jew’s soul, the latter, the fate of a person's freedom of thought. This unlikely coalition often succeeds in enlisting governmental officials in its effort to restrict NRMs' activities.

In our lecture we will survey the recent state of affairs of NRMs, anti-cult movements and governmental efforts in regard to NRMs in Israel, and present a recent initiative made by a group of scholars, inspired by INFORM and similar organizations, to counteract these efforts by establishing an Israeli information center providing objective, accurate and bias-freed data on NRMs.

5D Anti-Cult Reactions, Sunday 2 February, 11.40 – 13.25, NAB 2.04

Brigitte Knobel was trained as a sociologist at the University of Lausanne. She is the director of the Information Center on Beliefs in Geneva (Centre intercantonal d’information sur les croyances) in Geneva, a non-profit information centre specializing in new religious movements, created in 2002. During 2012-2013, she led the mapping project of places of worship in Geneva. This project, which has identified and documented all religious communities of Geneva, will be presented on a website for the general public. She was also a member of a research team working on religious diversity in Swiss prisons sponsored by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF, nrp 58).

Camille Gonzales has a MA degree in History of Religions which she obtained at the University of Geneva. As part of her thesis project, she became interested in the relationship between school stakeholders with the religious
phenomena. She joined the CIC in September 2012 for the laying out of the map of Geneva’s places of worship. Being interested in sharing knowledge on religions with a wide public, she writes chronicles and articles on the subject in the Geneva press.

**Mapping of religious minorities in Geneva**

Between 2012 and 2013, the Information Centre on Religious beliefs of Geneva (CIC) has identified, documented and mapped all the religious communities of the Canton of Geneva (this information will be presented at the Geneva population on a website). Of the around 400 religious communities identified, more than 60% belong to religious minorities (i.e. are not Roman Catholic or Protestant Reformed). The presentation of the CIC will aim at giving an overview of these religious minorities, their history, the religious and socio-cultural diversity they represent, of their location in geographic space, the different services they offer, but also of the problems they face. Moreover, by mapping these minorities across a city like Geneva, this presentation will question the past and future importance of urban centers as the place of establishment of religious minorities.

**1A Mapping Minorities. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Alumni Theatre (LG.09)**

**Christiane Königstedt** graduated from the University of Göttingen (Sociology and Religious Studies) in 2009, with a thesis about the impact on everyday life-conduct of spiritual and esoteric beliefs and practices. She has worked and taught as research assistant at the University of Münster and currently holds a follow-up PhD-grant from the University of Leipzig research training group: “Religious Nonconformism and Cultural Dynamics”. In her PhD project she investigated possible reasons for the relatively aggressive French answers towards contemporary non-traditional forms of religion and has given several papers and has published articles about contemporary spirituality and New Religious Movements in France.

**Changes in the Field of New Religions in the Mirror of Secular Law- The example of the French Legal Practices**

The European-wide unique legislation against and the conflicts around assumed-to-be harmful New Religious Movements and alternative forms of religion poses many relevant questions to the researcher: Concerning those and connected to significant changes within the alternative religious field in the last 10 years, many are directly connected to the notion of “community”: Changes in and the relocation of the occurring the tensions between a highly individualised society and a form of community which seemingly does not fit in, cases where a community is attributed superficially or does not in fact (anymore) exist as well as the mere absence of a community while shared beliefs are held make a reconsideration of applied social scientific concepts like “community” itself necessary. Further, the very changes in the alternative religious field change the effects and social meaning of these beliefs and practices. These topics will be discussed in this presentation on the basis of my PhD project, a systematical study of the French “Cult-Controversies” including legal sources and parliamentary debates, precisely, a study of the reasons of the relatively aggressive reactions towards New Religious Movements.

**1A Mapping Minorities. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Alumni Theatre (LG.09)**

**Pavol Kosnáč** is currently a research intern at Inform. He studied Comparative Religion Studies at Comenius University, where he obtained his BA and MA, and Political philosophy, jurisprudence and European culture at Collegium of Anton Neuwirt - both in Bratislava, Slovakia. Afterwards he moved to England to continue his studies at University of Oxford, studying MSt. in Study of Religion. His academic background is mostly in sociology of religion, history of Christianity and Islam and study of new religious movements. He is interested especially in new and alternative religiosity, non-religiosity and actual religious situation in Europe.

**Popculture-based religions: Can it actually work?**

Term ”New Religious Movements" is a traditionally problematic concept, but there are occasions, when it fits perfectly. Popculture-based religions are both new in the sense of time same as the ideas, and equally new in all
parts of the world. In a way, popculture-based religions could be considered the NRM's par excellence. They originated in the end of 20th century, or in the 21st, and are based on some type of popculture phenomena - usually a book, film or character (fictional or real).

This presentation will introduce the participants to several popculture-based religions, from those that are quite well known, like Jediism, to the less known ones like Dudeism or Haruhiism, and will try to answer questions about the claims of legitimacy of this religious groups, how can they be distinguished from mock-religions or fandoms, and what is the motivation of their creators (if they have one) to create a religion based on obviously man-made stories or characters, when there are thousands of other religions they can choose, or mix them at will, that claim to be authentically transcendent, ancient and original.


Shruti Kulkarni has served for the past three years as an executive board member of Sanctum: The Journal of Religion and Spirituality at Columbia University in New York. She has most recently completed a one-year term of service as the religion and spirituality journal’s Editor-in-Chief. She has additionally hosted, organized, and served as a speaker for talks and programmes relating to religion and spirituality as they relate to leadership and management, as well as to social justice. Her interviews and written works have been featured several publications, including Sanctum, Awaaz: The Voice of South Asia, and Project As[Il]Am. Her works have especially focused on Gaudiya Vaishnavism and the Vedic tradition.

Religion and Social Justice: Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future - A Vedic Perspective
Social justice is found in the society that is firmly rooted in fairness and solidarity, which is firmly committed to the upholding of human rights. To maintain and uphold social justice is our moral, ethical, and spiritual duty, and a critical responsibility of our leadership. Social justice emerges from the development of what is described in the Bhagavad Gita as “equal vision”, or the recognition that all living entities share the same inner spiritual nature. Social injustice arises from the disregard of this essential truth, due to polluted consciousness, and the consequent adoption of various temporal identifications that separate us, and that turn us against each other, with the supposed “superiors” attempting to exploit the alleged “inferiors” of the resulting divisions.

Religion and spirituality can be, and have been, powerful motivators for the attempted establishment of social justice. However, religion and spirituality has also been misused for the propagation of social injustice. To ensure that one’s own engagement in religion supports social justice requires proper alignment with the essential truths of faith, and that is brought about by transcendental methods of purification of consciousness.

4C Insider Perspectives II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Roland Littlewood, Professorial Research Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University College London, formerly Professor of Anthropology and Psychiatry UCL. Former President of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Wilde Lecturer in Natural Theology at Oxford University and a consultant psychiatrist in the NHS. Fieldwork in Trinidad, Haiti, Lebanon, Italy and currently Albania. Seven books, c.two hundred papers.

The End of a Religion
When small sects and religious congregations vanish, they seldom achieve the same academic interest as they did in their days of new creation or success. They are just assumed to be no longer compelling. The current paper is based on fieldwork with the last days of a short lived (ten years) millennial community in the Caribbean island of Trinidad. The Earth People were an ‘Afro-centric’ group who revered the Devil as incarnate Nature, and established a settlement in the Trinidad bush organised by their charismatic founder, dedicated to cultivating the land naked, whilst maintaining an opposition to urban and White society, churches and established religion, formal education, government and medical care. Small schisms appeared in the group but it was only with the death of the founder that a serious disintegration occurred into four smaller groups, three of whom maintained some vestiges of the
original doctrine and practice. Continued contact with all four suggests various explanations of the Earth People’s demise, notably the death of the charismatic leader (who was the embodiment of the Devil, of Nature and of Africa) and the departure of her partner, the destruction of their physical base, the appearance in Trinidad of a secular environmental movement which appropriated several of their concerns (such as global warming and the decay of local agriculture), and the failure to recruit new members.

Some general conclusions about the decay of religions are ventured.

**ZE The End of Time? Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)**

Essi Mäkelä is currently working on her PhD in Comparative Religion at the Faculty of World Cultures in the University of Helsinki. Her study concerns the registering processes of neoreligious and pagan communities in Finland, Sweden and UK. She received her MA degree in 2012 with a thesis on the ‘liquid religiosity’ within the neo-parodyreligious Discordian Society. Mäkelä has presented papers based on her MA thesis at the EASR-conferences in 2011 and 2012 and in the Gustav Vasa seminar in 2013. An article based on her thesis was published in the Culture and Religion journal in December 2013.

**Religion and Law Meets New Religiosity**

The concept of religious freedom is deeply rooted in Western social ideology. It is seen as equal for everyone. However, the Finnish law states specifically which religious groups have more rights due to their societal or cultural significance: the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Orthodox Church – and other registered churches or religious communities. The law states some attributes for defining a religious community to be registered. These guidelines are quite vague, leaving room for religious differences. However, this also leaves room for the commission’s subjective ideas concerning religion while evaluating the applications, and might lead to discursive bias due to the liquid concept of religion. Lately a traditional Finnish pagan community was disqualified by a commission with strong connections to the Evangelical Lutheran Church and conservative Christian groups. So far no pagan or neoreligious groups have been registered in Finland, but a few have been accepted in Sweden and in the UK. My PhD thesis focuses on discursive and rhetoric differences of understanding the concept of religion in the process of registering a minority religious community.

Here I present my work so far and plans for the future research.

**SD Anti-Cult Reactions, Sunday 2 February, 11.40 – 13.25. NAB 2.04**

Dr Kishan Manocha has been serving as Director of the Office of Public Affairs of the Bahá’í community since 2010 and has been a member of that community’s national governing council since 1998. He is a psychiatrist and barrister by profession.

**Religion, Social Change and Responding to Persecution – the Case of the Bahá’í Community in Iran**

The Bahá’í community in Iran, that country’s largest religious minority, has been subjected to systematic, state-sponsored persecution since 1979. This paper presents their response to this persecution as a model worthy of further reflection, in that it raises a number of valuable questions. It asks how, in the face of a sustained campaign to eliminate their community, the Bahá’ís have been able to eschew the mantle of victimhood and prevent the seeds of hatred from taking root in their collective consciousness. It explores why the Bahá’ís have refused to respond with violence or become involved in partisan politics, and how the teachings of the Bahá’í Faith have informed their response. In addressing these questions, it seeks to provide insights not only into how religious minorities can maintain their integrity and continue to flourish even under bitter persecution, but also into the role of religion in social change at a time when religion is the focus of much debate around the world. It argues that there is great value in analysing the different conceptions of religion that exist in society and the power that these conceptions
have to engender on the one hand ferocious, bloody persecution and on the other, commitment to long-term social transformation, even under the bleakest of circumstances.

**2B Insider Perspectives I. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. NAB 1.04.**

**Professor András Máté-Tóth** is the head of the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Szeged. He initiated the research group in the field at the university in 1992, which became a department by the year 2000. He received his PhD degrees from the University of Vienna (1991) and the University of Pécs (2011). He received his habilitation from the University of Vienna (1997). He coordinated the EU Framework Program 6 funded Religion and Values: Central and Eastern European Research Network. He is the author of several scientific publications, a member in several scientific societies.

**Gábor Dániel Nagy** is an assistant professor at the University of Szeged, Department for the Study of Religion. He teaches courses in the field of sociology of religion, and the sociology of new religious movements. He received his PhD from the University of Pécs (2011) in political science. His main research interests are the research of social capital and social networks in a religion related context. He used to participate in researches of New Religious movements led by Professor András Máté-Tóth. He is the author and co-author of several scientific publications, and a member in several scientific societies.

Empirical research among the membership of Scientology in Germany, Hungary and Switzerland

Scientology in Hungary was first scientifically studied by the Department for the Study of Religions at the University of Szeged, managed by the authors of this paper proposal. We used different sociological methods, first of all survey among of long time members (2003: N=170, 2011: N=430), in depth interview about the life course with 20 members in central position of the organisation. We made qualitative content analysis on 500 newspaper articles appeared between 2000-2010 and all national security reports from the same time period. We analyzed all important public conflicts in relation with Scientology between 1990-2010. Based on collected hard data we published a monograph in 2011 by L'Harmattan (Hungary). In this year we have been working to extend our research. We have been working to collect data with the same questionnaire among German and Swiss Scientologist population (planned in Germany N=2000 and in Switzerland N=500). Both studies have been managed in mutual interaction with local representatives of the particular organization. In our paper we plan to present our data in comparison with the Hungarian findings. We analyzed our data regarding the main theoretical frameworks by Willson, Bromley and Lewis. Our original understanding is, that the alternative religion Scientology should be appropriately interpreted as “empty signifier” (Laclau and Mouffe). In the contemporary public discourse Scientology has first of all the function for drawing the line between “us” and “them”.


**Timothy Miller** is a Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Kansas. He studies new religious movements in the United States, with a special focus on groups in the past and present that practice communal living. Among his books are *The Quest for Utopia in Twentieth-Century America*, *The 60s Communes*, and the edited volume *America's Alternative Religions*. His *Encyclopedic Guide to American Intentional Communities* was published in 2012, and his edited volume in the Ashgate series, *Spiritual and Visionary Communities: Out to Save the World*, was published in 2013.

Are the cult wars over, and if so, who won?

I propose to look back over the “cult wars” that raged a few years ago, but seem to be not quite as vehement as they were then. Are they really over? Can anyone claim victory?

“Cult” controversies are nothing new; marginal and new religions have always had detractors and opponents. After glancing back through history at such situations, I will provide a brief recap of the post-1965 conflicts, focusing on strong rhetoric and abusive practices, such as deprogramming.
If the conflicts have died down, why so? Part of the answer, I argue, lies in the fact that a global society has made everyone a bit more familiar with cultural and religious diversity than they once were. Part of the answer lies with the fact that some people involved in conflicted situations reached out peacefully to bridge the ideological gap regarding new religions.

But even if things have become quieter, the tensions and emotions that spawned the cult wars in the first place are hardly gone for good, and gone everywhere. The work of those who seek to educate the public about new religions is, in short, not done.

1B The Academic Study of NRM Over Time. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Sadia Mir has a background in NGO and civil society work. Through her previous employments she has been in contact with the offices of the United Nations and has worked within the European Union bodies. Sadia has researched extensively on the policy mechanisms of the European Council, Commission and Parliament, most recently Sadia’s paper was referenced by the European Commission. She has advised many NGOs and served as a committee member on the women’s committee of Liberation, one of the oldest British NGOs. Her paper evaluates the protection of human rights in an era of global governance from this perspective.

Protecting Human and Minority rights in the era of global governance – examining the methods and acknowledging the challenges, for a way forward
This study/paper examines the progress of human rights of minorities within an era of wider global governance and the main governing bodies that address this. The offices of the United Nations framework of Council and Commission and the European Union are such structures that can be defined as global governing bodies. Discussed is whether they have been conducive towards aiding, protecting the rights and preventing abuses in given situations such as difficult or conflict scenarios. In compassion to the United Nations the European Union is a ‘newcomer’ on the stage of human rights, drawing on certain case studies it is ascertained the EU seems to be more effective in this area and has fast become a recognised leader and an international player. The interplay between the two institutions is then examined and explored. These are often marked and characterised by struggle. What this method enables is the identification of institutional hierarchies and constraints, whilst exploring the relationships they create. Where does that leave the rights of minorities in Europe and in larger context globally? This study evaluates if the above institutions have been effective as the primary protector of human rights, or are their methods challenged and flawed.

3A Legal Considerations. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Dr Moojan Momen was born in Iran, but was raised and educated in England, attending the University of Cambridge. His special interests are the study of the history and doctrines of the Baha’i Faith and Shi’i Islam and also the study of the phenomenon of religion. His principal publications in these fields include: Introduction to Shi’i Islam (Yale University Press, 1985); The Babi and Baha’i Faiths 1844-1944 (George Ronald, Oxford, 1982); and Understanding Religion (Oneworld, Oxford, 2008). He has contributed articles to Encyclopedia Iranica and Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World as well to academic journals.

Change and Development in the Baha’i Faith
Baha’i communities can now be found in almost every country of the world. This paper looks at the spread of the religion and the way in which this has caused change. It looks back at the past and the way that the movement of the Baha’i Faith from the Middle East to North America changed the presentation and self-image of the religion. It then looks at the spread of this religion to rural areas in the Global South in the 1960s and 1970s. This produced a great change in the composition of the religion and led to great problems in terms of incorporating illiterate villagers into the Baha’i community. These problems led to major changes in the community structure and self-image of the
Baha’i community. These changes have only recently been put into action and this paper looks at the direction in which they are taking the religion: towards a less hierarchical religion with decisions increasingly being made at the grass-roots level and towards a weakening of the boundary between believer and non-believer.

4C Insider Perspectives II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. Thai Theatre (LG 03)

Sebastian Năstuță is lecturer PhD at “Petre Andrei” University of Iaşi, Romania. He teaches statistics, methodology and has a special interest for sociology of religion (religious conversion, Jehovah’s Witness and youth religiosity). He wrote some papers as “Choosing to be stigmatized. Rational calculus in religious conversion”, “The impact of Internet on New Religious Movements’ discourse” and presented some others at international conferences. Sebastian is affiliated to professional associations like International Sociological Association; International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA), Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) and International Society for the Sociology of Religion (SISR).

Anticipating the future evolution of Jehovah’s Witness in Europe
Any discussion about minority religions can hardly ignore the Jehovah’s Witnesses, one of the most active, visible and rapidly-growing religious groups around the world. Being in a permanent tension with other religious groups and social environments where they activate this group was capable to increase its number of adepts even in or especially in countries where they endured strong oppositions.

Starting from analysis of previous statistical data (average number of preaching hours, active publishers, biblical studies, baptisms, etc obtained from Jehovah’s Witnesses Yearbooks from 1969 since 2012) we’ll try to anticipate some possible scenarios of evolution of Jehovah’s Witnesses activity in different parts of Europe.

Analysing a consistent amount of statistical data we’ll try to interpret these different patterns of evolution starting from contextual differences between Eastern and Western European countries. Comparisons between evolutions of JW’s activities from “Orthodox”, “Catholic” and “Protestant” countries, in countries with stable democracies or in ex-communist countries will offer us the empirical support to anticipate the possible evolutions scenarios of this religious group across Europe.

5D Anti-Cult Reactions. Sunday 2 February, 11.40 – 13.25. NAB 2.04

Suzanne Newcombe is a Research Officer at Inform where she has been working since 2002. She is also an Associate Lecturer for the Open University in London and has lectured in the field of new and alternative religious at Kingston University. Her PhD research at the University of Cambridge explored the popularization and development of yoga and Ayurvedic medicine in Britain. She continues to be active in research networks in this area. Suzanne has published articles in edited books, the Journal of Contemporary Religion, Religion Compass and Asian Medicine.

The Democratization of Yoga in Britain
This paper will explore how understandings of yoga have shifted from the post-war period to today. The article will briefly outline the popularization of yoga within the structure of state-funded adult education and broadcasting, outlining what the primary concerns were in this context and where the primary restrictions were found. During the state-funded period, there was a focus on creating structures of academic-like accreditation and promoting an educational value to the teaching of yoga. During this period there was an emphasis on explaining and defining yoga, and justifying its practice. While those interesting in yoga might have their own interpretations, there was a paucity of accessible information about yoga practices and history.

Since the mid-1990s commercial yoga studios have proliferated. Private yoga studios usually attempt to place quality and ideology over profit-motives, but there is still a need to break-even and cover liabilities to continue operations. Recently, the academic study of yoga and the accessibility of popular publications on the subject have proliferated.
This paper will argue that this diversification of the market place as shifted the terms of defining yoga to finding – or creating – the yoga that’s “right for you”.

2D Spiritual Spaces. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00, Alumni Theatre (LG.09)

**Paulina Niechciał** is a postdoctoral research and teaching assistant in the Center for Comparative Civilization Studies at Jagiellonian University, she also conducts classes in the Department of Iranian Studies. She completed her M.A. degree both in Ethnology (2006) and Iranian Studies (2008), and Ph.D. degree in Sociology (2012). In her dissertation, based on the field research conducted among contemporary Zoroastrians in Tehran, she analyzed issues of identity and minority religion. Her research interest focuses also on culture and identity in contemporary Tajikistan, where she started her research in 2012, affiliated at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Sacred Homeland, Glorious Ancestors and Old-time Language. Ethnic Elements in the Identity of the Zoroastrian Religious Minority in Modern Tehran

The paper is based on the fieldwork conducted in Tehran and it examines the idea of Zoroastrians as an ethnic group constructed by the social leaders of the community in Tehran. The collective identity, primarily based on common beliefs and religious practices, is strengthen by ethnic elements, such as customs, historical genealogy, specific personality traits, belonging to a particular territory, and dialects of the Zoroastrian Dari language. The language has been neglected during the XX century to some extent, but now some of the Zoroastrians take interest in it, perceiving Dari as the value and symbol of Zoroastrian purity. From this perspective, Zoroastrians are perceived as an ethno-historical community with an essential experience of persecutions from Muslims over the centuries, as well as a biological-racial community. The years of isolation under Muslim rule, as well as the prohibition of apostasy from Islam and of the promotion of non-Islamic religions as incorporated within the legal system of the Islamic Republic of Iran, support the idea of being born as a Zoroastrian (zartoshti-zāde). Using Danièle Hervieu-Léger’s term, Zoroastrianism was turned into an ethnic religion to survive in face of a weakening identity.


**Sanja Nilsson** is a PhD student of religious studies at the University of Dalarna in Sweden. Sanja has studied sociology at Lund University and religious studies at the University of Dalarna where she also teaches religious studies at the undergraduate level since 2010. Sanja’s research interest is in new religious movements. She is particularly interested in children’s and young people’s living conditions in communities whose teachings somehow differ from the majority society’s norms. Her dissertation project will explore ideas about children and childhood in a small number of groups in Sweden and put them in relation to the lived experience of growing up in these movements.

Schooling Krishna’s Swedish grandchildren

The first ISKCON gurukula was opened at the temple Korsnäs gård in 1979 in Sweden. It was subsequently moved to the farm project at Almviks gård, and operated in different forms until the closing down in 2003. In 2010 the inhabitants at Almviks gård again applied for permission to run a school for children, but the application was denied. This article aims to detail the history of the Swedish gurukula in relation to the international development of ISKCON-headed gurukulas and discuss the following questions; why was it instigated and why did it close? How has the applications for a new school been received by the authorities? Is it likely that a new gurukula could open up in Sweden and how would it be organized? What is done to educate the children in religious theory and practice at this point?

2A The Next Generation. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

**Susan J. Palmer** teaches in the Religious Studies department at Concordia University and is a Member of the Religious Studies Faculty at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, where she is currently working on the research
New Religious Responses to Police Raids and State “Persecution”: Collective Memories, Theological Innovation and Social Reorganization

This study explores religious responses to government raids (1984 to 2002) launched against Twelve Tribes (1984), Mandarom (1994, 1995, 2001), the Nation of Yahweh (1990), and the United Nuwaubian Nation (2002). These surprise raids (three heavily militarized) were launched at dawn, and involved seizures of property and children, arrests of messianic prophets, and the desecration/demolition of sacred architecture.

This paper focuses on the aftermath of these traumatic intrusions into community life; on the resulting “deformation of NRMs” (Richardson, 1994) and on new religious responses to “persecution”, both real and imagined. These responses range from expedient revisions of controversial practices, to sectarian withdrawal, to doctrinal innovations (new theodicies, revised myths, apocalyptic prophecy) to more pragmatic legal measures or inflammatory quasi-legal reprisals (e.g. “Common Law” and virtual courts on the internet).

On the basis of data gleaned through participant observer research and interviews, this study explores the mythopoetic creativity of spiritual leaders in trying to redefine collective identities and repositioning symbolic boundaries between their congregation and secular society, in order to foster group morale, address past injustices and claim legal and human rights.

In speculating on the potential effects of these responses to raids, we will contemplate the future of these NRMs. This paper is based on data gathered for the (2011-2014) research project “Exploring Government Raids on Religious Communities” supported by Canada’s Social Science and the Humanities Research Council.

4D Minority Religions and the State II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. NAB 2.04

Nick Parke is the Director of Inform, appointed in August 2013. He was formerly a police officer employed in the gathering, analysis and dissemination of intelligence around major public order and security events in London and the rest of the UK, and responsible for the overall assessment of the threat to the event. He was a point of contact for Inform in the police service over a number of years.

Anticipating the Future – The Director’s Cut

Inform was founded in 1988 to help enquirers by providing information about alternative religions that is as accurate, balanced and up-to-date as possible. Inform’s raison d’être has not changed in those 25 years but the environment in which it operates has altered considerably, both in terms of the type of religious groups, in the nature and origin of the enquiries, and in the accessibility of information provided by the internet. Another constant for Inform is that, as a charity, securing future funding is a constant pre-occupation. Inform needs to find a balance that will maintain its service role in providing information and its presence at the forefront of research into alternative religions but at the same time it must emphasise its usefulness to the relevant parts of government and other bodies that will be prepared to underwrite its functions and services.

The presentation will examine how Inform intends to adapt and survive for another 25 years in the light of contracting government spending and against a background of changes in religious diversity. I will discuss how we intend to raise our profile, how we will look to adapt the focus of our research and how we will strengthen our network and expand it into new areas.

4A Inform: Anticipating the Future. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)
Claude Proeschel, GSRL (EPHE-CNRS), is doctor of political sciences, lecturer at the Nancy University and at the Institute for Political Studies (IEP) in Paris. She is member of the Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités since 2002. At present she studies the relationships between secularity, citizenship and democracy, on a theoretical way, but also in the European societies, mainly the French and Spanish ones. Publications include: “Religion et politique en Espagne, une difficile separation”, Chantiers Politiques, Publications de l’ENS, n°11, avril 2013: L’Espagne, une nation civique ? L’intégration de la minorité juive à la communauté citoyenne et nationale, in Milot, Micheline, Portier, Philippe, Willaime, Jean-Paul (dir), Pluralisme, religion et citoyenneté, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010; and The French Laïcité confronted to new Challenges, in Michaela Moravcikova (dir), Church-State Relations in Europe: contemporary Issues and Trends at the beginning of the 21st Century, Bratislava, Institute for State-Church Relations, 2009.

Religious minorities in democratic Spain: rekindle with the past and part of the future
Since 1978 democratic Spain has been built on the idea of civic nation, which means community of citizens. This idea constitutes a rupture with the notion of national catholicism omnipresent in its history. This founding political project emphasizes above all the notion of equality. The legislative and symbolic evolutions, but also the ensuing public policies directed to the religious minorities had been faced with an original situation rooted in the history of the country.
On the one hand, the Spanish national community has been founded, in the 15th century on the exclusion of religious minorities. Democratic public authorities have made an official rereading of the past in order to reintegrate these minorities in the civic nation.
On the other hand, the public policies of the past twenty years seem to lead to an everyday acceptance of minorities, which multiplied since the democratization. These policies put an emphasis on citizenship and equality of rights, even if numerous obstacles remain. This presentation will focus on several measures, such as the education of the imams.

4D Minority Religions and the State II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15, NAB 2.04

Ringo Ringvee is adviser at the Religious Affairs at the Ministry of the Interior of Estonia. He is also affiliated with the University of Tartu as a member in research group for religious studies at the Center of Excellence in Cultural Theory. He has published several articles on the relations between the state and religious associations in contemporary Estonia.

What do the censuses tell about minority religions? Some reflections.
The paper focuses on minority religions in Estonia with the respect to their visibility in the population census data. Minority religions are often left unnoticed when the results of population census question on religious affiliation are discussed. However, the population census data may provide some interesting insights and dynamics concerning minority religions. The paper discusses about the changes in Estonia on the basis on 2000 and 2011 population census data. During the last ten years new religious movements have emerged or have had considerable growth. What can we tell about the future trends on the basis of the available data and previous developments is the main question of the paper.

1A Mapping Minorities. Saturday 1 February, 11.40 – 13.25, Alumni Theatre (LG.09)

Guillaume Roucoux is a French PhD candidate at l’Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes and at Paris 8 University. He is a member of le Groupe Sociétés Religions Laïcités, le Laboratoire de Théorie Politique et le Centre d’Etudes Féminines et d’Etudes de Genre. His advisors are prof. Régis Dericquebourg and prof. Elsa Dorlin. He is preparing a thesis on Conversion to the Church of Scientology and the Raëlian Movement in France, by focusing on current and past members’ subjectivation, agency and (dis)empowerment. Enième Ere: Carnet de recherche sur les Nouveaux
Mouvements Religieux is his academic blog. He is leading the project of a student association for New Religious Studies in France, with the aim of collecting French “sectes” and “antisectes” archives.

Four Generations of Scholars researching les dites “sectes” in France
Although French anticult movements (such as UNADFI) appeared in the middle of the 1970’s, it took ten years for the government to hear their claims and for a first generation of scholars to start researching les dites “sectes” (groups called “cults”) in France. At some point, it needed the Order of the Solar Temple’s mass suicide in 1995 and the quasi-concomitant Guyard Report’s list of cults to consider them as a major social issue, and for a second generation of scholars to work on the controversy. This generation has been the most productive in terms of publications. It has even given birth to collaborations between scholars and cults-watchers, which did not last long. Despite divergences, a third generation tried to participate in governmental cults-watching MILS and MIVILUDES. Alas, researchers were not welcome anymore. They published about national and international cults’ regulation around 2008. And since, les dites “sectes” came to be seen more and more as “normal” social groups for a fourth generation who happen to be the one of current PhD candidates. In this paper, my aim is to show how researching cults has changed over four generations, each with its own focus, regarding social contexts and their relationships with cults-watchers.

4D Minority Religions and the State II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. NAB 2.04

Eugenia Roussou, anthropologist, received her PhD from University College London in 2010. She has conducted extensive ethnographic research in Greece on the amalgamation of religion and spirituality, gender identity, ritual healing and material religiosity. She is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at CRIA/ FCSH, New University of Lisbon, where she is working on her FCT-funded research project that focuses on esotericism, ‘New Age’ spirituality, alternative healing, religious pluralism and spiritual creativity in present-day Portugal.

Spiritual movements in times of crisis: an anthropological account of esotericism in Portugal and Greece.
Christianity has historically been considered as the predominant religion in/of southern Europe. However, in recent years, alternative forms of spirituality have claimed their presence in everyday religious practice. When it comes to Portuguese and Greek religiosity, in particular, there is an evident shift towards ‘New Age’ spirituality, which (shift) appears to be linked to the socio-economic crisis that both Portugal and Greece are facing at this very moment. From tarot reading to alternative forms of healing, and from practising yoga to attending meditation retreats, people in the Portuguese and the Greek capital pursue a wide range of esoteric paths in order to cope with the disquiet that surrounds them. This paper is based on recent comparative anthropological research on ‘New Age’ spirituality and esotericism in Lisbon and in Athens. Given the fact that the study of esoteric movements in the Portuguese and Greek context is practically non-existent, I aim to provide an account of the presence of esotericism as a ‘minority religion’ in Portugal and Greece, its association with the current crisis, and the potential consequences ‘New Age’ spirituality and esoteric movements may have in the future of the so far Christian-oriented Portuguese and Greek religiosity.


Eric Roux has occupied many functions in the Church of Scientology in France since more than 20 years, including lecturing on Scientology religion at many levels. He is currently the President of the Union of the Churches of Scientology in France. He has worked on the topics of religious freedom since many years at national and international levels. He has been a speaker on this topic at many events, including at OSCE, Council of Europe, US capitol, etc. and works in various interfaith platforms. He is a member of the Steering Committee of the European Interreligious Forum for Religious Freedom.
Scientology: from controversy to global expansion and recognition

Since the last 25 years, the Church of Scientology has gone through major changes, and faced many challenges while expanding throughout the world. In this paper I will tackle the changes that occurred internally, with the various efforts made by the Church to get Scientology available for all through global programs and strategies, including the outstanding efforts to locate the original manuscripts and dictation tapes of L. Ron Hubbard’s books—verifying existing texts against those originals, correcting any errors or deviations and returning them to their original unadulterated form, and the recovery (and translations in 15 languages for many of them) of almost 3000 recorded lectures of the Scientology founder that have been made available for scientologists and general public. This program, which started in the 80’s, has been terminated in 2010 with the final release of what scientologists call “the Golden Age of Knowledge”. I will also tackle the “ideal org” program, which consists of building major churches all around the world, these churches being the “cathedrals” for scientologists, and involving major participation from every scientologist worldwide. This paper will also include the various legal battles that have been fought these last 25 years, and brought many changes for the Church, at various degrees depending on which country it has been fought.

4C Insider Perspectives II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Jonny Scaramanga is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Education, University of London. His research is on student experiences of Accelerated Christian Education in the UK. He grew up as a Christian fundamentalist, and attended an ACE school for four years, and this background informs his research investigation. Before commencing his PhD, Jonny lectured at the Bristol Institute of Modern Music.
Jonny has written about ACE for the Times Education Supplement, the Guardian, New Humanist, and he maintains a popular blog at leavingfundamentalism.wordpress.com. He has discussed fundamentalist Christianity on BBC1, BBC2, Channel 4, BBC Radio 4, and BBC local radio.

Accelerated Christian Education: Enforcing Orthodoxy through Loaded Language
Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) is a Christian fundamentalist curriculum (Laats 2010) used in more than 50 private British schools (Christian Education Europe 2009). Children complete a prescribed curriculum of worksheets in study carrels enclosed on three sides (ACE 2012). The curriculum is noted for teaching young Earth creationism and inculcating a conservative Christian viewpoint (Speck and Prideaux 1993).
ACE’s primary purpose is to instil its brand of Christianity (ACE 2013). It is based on B.F. Skinner’s system of operant conditioning (Baumgardt 2006). Its founders wrote that it was designed for “programming” children’s minds (Howard 1979; Johnson 1980). This paper is an investigation of the methods by which ACE attempts to instil and reproduce its beliefs. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 2003), it examines the way ACE curriculum materials construct people, objects, and ideas as entirely good or entirely evil. It is argued that ACE uses ‘thought-terminating clichés’ (Lifton 1961/1989) or ‘ultimate terms’ (Weaver 1953) as labels, without clear explanations or justification. Finally, it is argued that the goal of instilling an unshakeable belief through conditioning is in conflict with ACE’s stated aim of providing general education.

2A The Next Generation. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Thai Theatre (LG.03)

Professor B Scherer, PhD, is Chair of Comparative Religion, Gender and Sexuality at Canterbury Christ Church University. B’s publications include more than a dozen books and numerous articles & book chapters on Buddhist Philosophy; Myth; Queer Studies; and contemporary Buddhist movements.
A Tibetan Buddhist scholar-cum-practitioner, B. was until 2011 a frequent guest teacher in the Diamond Way centers and a prominent voice of criticism against fundamentalist tendencies within the movement.
B’s critical and in-depth appraisals of the Diamond Way have been published in, among others, the Journal of Global Buddhism; Religion & Gender (www.religionandgender.org); and Contemporary Buddhism.
A Neo-orthodox Buddhist Movement in Transition: The late-charismatic status quo and the post-charismatic perspectives of the Diamond Way

The Diamond Way is a neo-orthodox global Buddhist movement of the Tibetan Karma Kagyu school led by a Danish lay teacher, Ole Nydahl whose missionary activities span more than 40 years. With the death of Nydahl’s wife Hannah (2007) and with the establishment of a formal seat of the movement in the German Alps, the movement has arguably entered its late-charismatic phase.

This paper looks at the tensions between Nydahl’s missionary charisma and the institutionalizing forces within the Diamond Way; it analyses the status quo in terms of Nydahl’s display of an increasingly rigid approach towards his students; the movements’ institutionalizing efforts aiming to solidify norms and ensure conformity; and the attempts to preserve the leader’s charisma in the form of his unconventional and controversial style.

Evaluating the perspectives of movement, the paper then identifies the key factors for the development of the Diamond Way in its future post-charismatic phase, including its relations to the Tibetan Karma Kagyu hierarchy; the function and status of the Diamond Way teachers and administrators; and the global cohesion of the centers after Nydahl’s death.


Stephen Suleyman Schwartz is the Executive Director of the Center for Islamic Pluralism in Washington, DC and author of the 2008 book The Other Islam: Sufism and the Road to Global Harmony (Doubleday). In 2002, he published the bestselling The Two Faces of Islam: Saudi Fundamentalism and Its Role In Terrorism (Doubleday). He is an Adjunct Scholar of the U.S.-based Middle East Forum.

During the 1990s he pursued an intensive study of Balkan comparative religion while working as a reporter for the San Francisco Chronicle and an editor for the Albanian Catholic Institute in San Francisco.

URL: www.islamicpluralism.org

The Bektashi-Alevi Continuum from the Balkans to Iran: Sufi Minorities and Politics

The paper, based on original field research, will describe the situation of the Albanian Bektashi Sufi order, the Turkish and Kurdish Alevi-Bektaşi movement, and the Iranian-Kurdish Ahl-e Haqq phenomenon.

The paper will discuss in detail the origins and past associations of these religious movements, all of which began in Islam, and all of which are now involved in debates over whether they should remain within the fold of Islam or declare themselves to be separate religions from Islam. The Albanian Bektashis have long been recognized legally as a separate institution from Sunni Islam in Albania and Kosovo, and the Turkish and Kurdish Alevi-Bektasxis have separate legal status in a number of European countries with significant immigration from Turkey, though not in Turkey itself. The Iranian Ahl-e Haqq are split between a group recognized as legitimate by the Iranian authorities and a group subjected to repression as “heretics.”

The situation of these religions’ legal standing, especially that of the Albanian Bektashis, is aggravated by internal contradictions.

3D Minority Religions and the State I. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Hardeep Singh is a freelance journalist and broadcaster, Press Secretary for the Network of Sikh Organisations and assistant editor of the Sikh Messenger. He was defendant in His Holiness v Singh and a member of the Libel Reform Campaign. He has written for the Telegraph, Guardian, Independent, Index on Censorship, Legalweek and the Rationalist Association. He is a contributor to the forthcoming Inform/Ashgate Series titled Legal Cases, New Religious Movements and Minority Faiths.

Mistaken identity: Facing the Negative Rebound of Islamism in a Post 9/11 Age

The Sikh community is a well-established minority faith in Britain. Sikhs first settled in Britain in the early nineteenth century, the first gurdwara or temple was built in London in 1908. The community played a significant role in both
great wars, forming an integral part of the British Indian Army, Sikhs being awarded 14 Victoria Crosses. According to the 2011 census there are 448,000 people who identified themselves as Sikhs in England & Wales. Notably, in 2011 Lord Singh of Wimbledon was appointed as an independent peer in the House of Lords. Following the September 11th terrorist attacks, Sikhs in Britain and the United States (US) have faced increasing hostility due to mistaken identity. The first person to be shot in retribution for 9/11 was a Sikh American gas station owner in Arizona. The first place attacked in retribution for the July 7th London bombings was a gurdwara in Kent. In 2012 a white supremacist shot dead six Sikhs, injuring others in a gurdwara in Wisconsin, US. There is no knowledge of the motives behind the shooting. It is unknown if the shooter mistook the gurdwara for a mosque. In 2013 the US Justice Department announced it would be tracking hate crimes against Sikhs. In both Britain and the US the community anticipates a continued backlash over the coming years, due to the negative rebound of Islamism, fueled by ignorance and mistaken identity.

3C Minority Religions and Conflict in the UK. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15, NAB 2.04.

Beth Singler is a PhD Candidate at the University of Cambridge where her research is situated at the intersection of web 2.0 and new religious studies. Using digital and real world ethnographical methods, her PhD focuses on the Indigo Children - a New Age re-conception of both children and adults using the language of evolution and spirituality. Beth’s work considers the development of contemporary spirituality as well as wider moral panics around children, parenting, the diagnosis of conditions such as ADHD and autism and conspiracy theories about Big Pharma and vaccinations. Other areas of research include Jediism, Scientology, and Paganisms.

No Leader, No Followers: The Internet and the End of Charisma?
When face-to-face is replaced by avatar-to-avatar we need to rethink the traditional hierarchical models of New Religious Movements and consider what the development of new forms of community and spiritual affiliation mean for New Religious Studies.
Using examples from my research into the New Age Movement and Hyper-Real Religions (Possamai, 2005) such as Jediism, Scientology and online forms of Paganism, this paper will explore the development of ‘networked NRMs’. These are loosely affiliated spiritual communities that have emerged out of Web 2.0’s greater connectivity and interactivity. I will argue that the emergence of these communities is not in fact a sign of the end of Charisma and leadership but a new expression of age old power relationships. Through demonstrations of expertise, the accumulation of reputation and the mystique of anonymity, new charismatic leaders are leading without leading and followers are following without following.
Finally, this paper will explore methodological issues and the likely next steps in the study of networked NRMs and look at how organisations that provide information on NRMs can respond to queries about those movements that people can join without ever leaving their homes.

3B Minority Religions and New Media. Saturday 1 February, 16.30 – 18.15, NAB 1.04.

Silke Steidinger has been Assistant Research Officer at Inform since 2006. The primary focus of her work is researching religious groups for the Inform database and cataloguing the Inform library. In 2004, she received an MSc in Religion in Contemporary Society (Sociology) from the London School of Economics, the focus of her dissertation being on death in New Religious Movements. In 1999, she received a BA (Hons) in Religious Studies from King's College London. She is also in the process of completing her last year of training as an attachment-based psychoanalytic psychotherapist at The Bowlby Centre and works as a psychotherapist in private practice and at Tower Hamlets NHS Personality Disorders Service.

Enlightened or insane? The dilemmas and unique insights of having a sociologist hat and a psychotherapist hat
Sociology and psychotherapy have not exactly started off on the right foot with each other in the field of minority religions. The so-called ‘cult wars’, ‘cult deaths’, the brainwashing metaphor and deprogramming practices often
have not been conducive to collaborative efforts between sociologists and psychotherapists, and might have contributed to suspicion on both sides. The result is that many psychotherapists still today have prejudices about minority religions on one hand, and that organisations with objective expertise often struggle when it comes to providing help or recommendations to those who need more support than objective information. The phenomenon of spirit possession, for example, poses significant challenges to health professionals working in multi-cultural societies and indicates a real need for multidisciplinary approaches.

At Inform we attempt to approach minority religions in a balancing act between Weber’s concept of Verstehen on one hand, and keeping an objective observing distance via methodological agnosticism on the other. In this presentation I will argue that this in fact is very similar to contemporary psychotherapeutic approaches with an empathetic ‘not-knowing’ stance, that maybe the two disciplines are re-approaching each other, and if undertaken carefully might be able to mutually enrich and complement each other, despite all its inherent difficulties.

**2C Therapeutic Considerations. Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. NAB 2.04**


**Scholarship on Seekershio: explaining traffic in and out of (new) religions**

The phenomenon of ‘seekership’, although widely remarked in late modern societies, is surprisingly under-theorised despite scholarship stretching back into the 1950s. This paper will revisit this scholarship, recover pertinent insights and sketch a new direction in explanation. Lofland and Stark (1965) presented the seeker as a ‘personally disoriented searcher’ literally ‘floundering about among religions’, Campbell (1972) used a relative deprivation approach to model the ‘seeker’ as a person who has ‘adopted a problem-solving perspective while defining conventional religious institutions and beliefs as inadequate’, and Richardson (1978) highlighted individuals’ ‘conversion careers’ as they moved ‘in and out of the new religions’. By redescribing individualistic ‘seeking’ as a social institution of ‘seekership’, a crucial step was taken towards modelling a predictable disposition based in a common, public repertoire of representations and practices. More recently, Dumit (2001) defines a ‘seeker’ as someone ‘engaged in a certain logic of practice’. I conclude by modelling seekership as an incipient habitus characterised by adaptation to multiple authorities (Wood 2007) operating across the religious-secular divide.


Piera Talin - 2012: Master degree in “Cultural Anthropology, Ethnology, Ethnolinguisitc” at the University Cà Foscari of Venice. My thesis focus on the Santo Daime religion: The Relationality in the Daimist Ecovillage Céu do Patriarca São José in Florianópolis, based on the ethnographic research during a cultural exchange with the UFSC (Brazil), living in the ecovillage grounded on spirituality and environmental sustainability.

2009: Bachelor degree at the University La Sapienza in Rome with a thesis about holistic therapies and my fieldwork in Biotransenergetics (BTE), an Italian integral psycho-spiritual discipline, developed from the Palo Alto Transpersonal Psychology.

**Building New Age Sustainability in Santo Daime Ecovillage.**

My fieldwork occurred in the ecovillage São José of Florianópolis (SC, Brazil). It is a sustainable community founded on the Santo Daime religion, first among the Brazilian religions based on the christianized use of Amazonian psychoactive decoction called ayahuasca.

The Santo Daime tea represents a focal point for the production of meanings and practices of the community movement. The Santo Daime is the natural divine being, living in the tea, whose by the collective assumption,
seeps through, showing everybody the ancient spiritual family called Juramidam and involving kinship’s union between material and astral world in the ritual expansion of consciousness. The daimist ecovillage is perceived as the field where sacred visions of the Second Coming of Jesus are put into practice to build the New Age. It is conceived as a change of the economic dominant paradigm, a completely social and sustainable time, different from the declining capitalistic based on enviromental and human exploitation. The spiritual evolution is believed to be the real basis of social transformation from the past, shifting consciousness by bringing the community life and cooperative sustainable economy, to prepare to New Age and the Second Coming of Jesus.

2E The End of Time? Saturday 1 February, 14.15 – 16.00. Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)

Dr Sylvie Toscer-Angot is an associate professor in German civilization at the University Paris Est Créteil and a researcher at the research Center “Groupe Sociétés, religions, laïcités” (CNRS). Her research focuses on the relationships between Church and State in France and Germany; religious pluralism and secularism in France and in Germany and models of governance in religious diversity. Recent publications include Les enfants de Luther, Marx et Mahomet. Religion et politique en Allemagne, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 2012 and « Églises, identités non confessionnelles et islam en Allemagne », Amnis : revue numérique de civilisation contemporaine Europe/Ameriques, Entre Dieu et le siècle. Religion, politique et société à l’époque contemporaine, N° spécial, September 2012.

The evolution of the status of Islam in Germany: what implications for the future?
Since the late 1970s, the political decision-makers in Germany have been facing claims from Islamic groups or individuals seeking new rights, public recognition or greater visibility in the public realm. They have often come into conflict with the legal authorities about issues like religious education or the institutionalisation of Islam. For a long time there was no Islamic religious education in state schools according to article 7 of the German basic law. Nevertheless, over the last few years, some German states have reached agreements with various Islamic groups concerning instruction. In 2008 Hesse, Bavaria, Berlin and Baden-Wurttembeg introduced Islamic education as a regular curriculum in primary schools. Programs for the training of imams and teachers of Islamic religious education have also recently been developed at universities in Münster, Osnabrück and Erlangen. Moreover, in August 2013 a Muslim religious community, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (AMJ) in Frankfurt, was for the first time granted the status of “corporation under public law”.

What does this evolution mean for the future of Islam and Muslims in Germany? Will Islam now enjoy the same prerogatives as Christian churches or the Jewish community? Has Islam in Germany outgrown its status as a minority religion?

4D Minority Religions and the State II. Sunday 2 February, 9.30 – 11.15. NAB 2.04

Donald Westbrook is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Religion at Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, USA. He is preparing a dissertation tentatively titled “A People’s History of the Church of Scientology” based on nearly 100 interviews he has conducted with American Scientologists with the coordination of the Church of Scientology International (and with J. Gordon Melton serving on his dissertation committee). In addition to Scientology, Westbrook has researched and lectured on Mormonism, Catholicism, and Evangelicalism in American contexts, as well as the rise of the “nones” in American religious life. He holds an M.A. in Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary and B.A. in Philosophy from University of California, Berkeley.

Inviation to Future Research on the Church of Scientology
There exists a serious methodological problem for those attempting a scholarly examination of the Church of Scientology, namely the quantity and quality of the scant sources in question. There is relatively little written about the Scientology in reputable, academic, and peer-reviewed sources. Most of the existing literature falls
into one of five categories: materials published by (1) the Church of Scientology itself, (2) journalists, (3) “anti- cult” or “counter-cult” literature, (4) ex-members, some of whom also belong to the third category, and others of whom have been ex-communicated from the church yet continue to self-identify as Scientologists, and then (5) academic researchers. This presentation outlines the author’s own successful academic efforts to research the Church of Scientology and its members in America, provides attendees an annotated bibliography of academic work on the church from 1950 to the present, and invites NRM scholars to renew research on the religion, suggesting key open areas in the fields of sociology, history, systematic theology, praxis, and scriptural analysis.


Margaret Z. Wilkins is an independent scholar and researcher, the joint editor of A Reader in New Religious Movements (Continuum, 2006) and joint author of Christians in the Twenty-First Century (Equinox, 2011). She was formerly Reviews Editor of Faith and Freedom. Having obtained a First Class Honours degree in Classics from the University of Bristol, she has long had a particular interest in Eastern Orthodoxy, having encountered Orthodoxy in various forms, both canonical and less than entirely orthodox. She has also had some insight into the world of episcopi vagantes through friendship with a bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church who subsequently founded his own church, supposedly based on primitive Syrian Christian practice. She has been a regular attendee at CESNUR, where she presented a paper on ‘Unorthodox Orthodoxy’ earlier in 2013, and at INFORM, where she has been a group facilitator.

Classical Comments: Treacherous New Rites: Writing on NRMs in the Ancient World
Academic interest in new religious movements may be a relatively recent development, but NRSS, and the reactions they provoke, can be traced back a very long way. This paper seeks to examine some of the earliest contemporary accounts of them we have, from the writers of the ancient world who observed and commented on what they saw. Euripides’ Bacchae can be read as an awful warning about what can go wrong with badly prepared fieldwork on an NRM, and conservative Romans were not happy about exotic religions imported from the east which undermined traditional values; satirists examined the methods used by would-be charismatic religious leaders to dupe their followers, and reflected on the gullibility of those who believed them; and there were rumours of ritual child sacrifice and incestuous orgies. The reactions of contemporaries to the new religious movement of the classical world often sound strangely familiar. In this paper I shall attempt to illustrate the parallels, and the differences, between then and now, and to consider what (if any) conclusions we can draw from them.


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Writing and Researching on New Religious Movements: A View from the American Academy
The academic study of new religious movements (NRMs) in the U.S. context has undergone a remarkable transition over the past three decades. With origins in the sociological study of religion and with some influence from psychology and history, the main researchers are now institutionally located within religious studies departments. The paper considers the reasons for such a transition, the underlying economic, social,
and cultural factors, and the ramifications for how scholars research and write on NRMs. I argue that the major shifts have not resulted from any particular academic developments, but rather changes in the economics of American Higher Education, particularly the availability of grants, institutional support, and changes in the tenure-track system. The net result is both a concentration of scholars within religious studies departments, as well as a diffusion of such NRM scholars across different subfields of religious studies, including the burgeoning fields of critical cultural studies of religion and North American Religions (NAR). The impact for how scholars write about NRMs is therefore profound, as the authors’ disciplinary location shapes their approaches, topics, and perspectives.


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