

Conference Brochure

The Psychology of Religion in an Entangled World

*Groningen, The Netherlands
21-24 August, 2023*

Dear guest,

We are very happy to welcome you (either in person or online) to the IAPR conference of 2023: 'The Psychology of Religion in an Entangled World'. This programme book includes all the information you need for participating in the conference.

The timetable in this book is interactive, which means that you can click on certain aspects of the programme to receive more information. Clicking on the title of a keynote, paper or poster will automatically bring you to the corresponding abstract in the appendix. For the online attendees: if you click on one of the links in the programme, it will bring you to the online environment you need. Please read the online attendance guide in this programme book for further information.

Some important things:

- You can ask your questions to one of our student assistants.
You can recognize them by the purple t-shirts they are wearing.
You can also ask questions via email: **iapr.2023@rug.nl**.
- The alarm number of The Netherlands is **112**.
- The people present at the front desk of the faculty (Oude Boteringestraat 38) are trained to give first aid.
- It is not allowed to bring food or drinks other than water to the courtroom in the faculty building (Oude Boteringestraat 38). Please take this into account when you attend panels in that room.

We are looking forward to your contributions.

All the best,

The organizing committee of IAPR Groningen 2023.

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Sponsors and partners



Timetable

MONDAY AUGUST 21st

Chair: Hanneke Muthert

10.00 – 15.00: Preconference (information will be shared in a separate email)

Chair: Brenda Mathijssen

15.00 – 17.00: Registration

You can register for the conference in room 17 of the faculty building (see the section on location and maps for more information). After you have registered, you can go to the Doopsgezinde kerk across the street for some coffee and tea.

For the poster presenters: you can hang your poster in the Mennozaal during this time frame as well. The Mennozaal is in the back of the Doopsgezinde kerk.

Alternative registration: if you cannot register for the conference on Monday afternoon, you can register for the conference at the front desk of the faculty building. The front desk is located directly on the left side after you enter the building through the main entrance.

17.00 – 17.30: Opening ceremony, Doopsgezinde kerk

17.30 – 18.30: Keynote, Doopsgezinde kerk

Sarah Pike: Ritual Responses to Environmental Apocalypse in Activist Communities

Respondent: Brian Ostafin

18.30 – 20.00: Reception including buffet, Faculty building

TUESDAY AUGUST 22nd

Chair: Michiel van Elk

09.00-10.00: Keynote, Doopsgezinde Kerk,

Kees van den Bos: Why people radicalize: The role of perceived injustice and religion,
Respondent: Rik Peels

10.00-11.30

1. Being Agnostic, not Atheist

Courtroom RCS

Chair: Vassilis Saroglou

Moise Karim

Agnostics as a Distinct Psychological Type Between Believers and Atheists: A Personality Perspective

Luke Galen

Agnosticism as Self-Identity and as Belief: Predictors of Convergence and Divergence

Vassilis Saroglou

Agnosticism as a Transient State Before Atheism

2. Imagination and Ritual

130 RCS

Chair: Valerie van Mulukom

Valerie van Mulukom

Blurring the boundaries between self and other: How self-transcendence facilitates bonding through religious rituals and artistic performances

Johannes Bronkhorst

Religion as Memory

Felix Budelmann

Make-believe and attitudes to cult statues in ancient Greek religion

3. Altered States I

253 RCS

Chair: Ulrike Popp-Baier

Viktar Niachayeu

Orthodox Hesychast spirituality and Jungian active imagination: approaching self-transcendence

Ulrike Popp-Baier

The Triangle of Sadness and the Death of Spirituality

Jay-Paul Hinds

Hope Behind the Veil: William James, W. E. B. Du Bois, and the Religious Experiences of Black Folk

4. Non-belief I

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Carissa Sharp

Amina Hanif Tarar

Faith Styles of Atheists Living in a Highly Religious Context

Carissa Sharp

Understanding the Impact of the "Conflict Narrative" between Science and Religion on Attitudes: The Influence of Projection and Counter-Projection

Camila Chagas

The strength of atheism and religiosity as protective factors for alcohol and tobacco consumption: analyzing the differences between heterosexual and LGBTQIA+ people

5. Gender

A8 Academy Building

Chair: Matheus F.F. Ribeiro

Matheus F.F. Ribeiro

The role of spirituality and religiosity in the LGBTQIA+ population

Michael Sersch

LGBTQ+ Acceptance within Mainline Denominations in Upper Midwestern US

Hasan Kaplan

The Role of Muslim Collective Narcissism and Extrinsic Religious Orientation in Endorsing Gender Conspiracy Beliefs: Evidence from a Turkish Muslim Sample

TUESDAY AUGUST 22nd

Chair: Michiel van Elk

11.30-12.00 Poster presentations, Mennozaal, Doopsgezinde Kerk
12.00-13.00 Lunch, Faculty Hall (RCS)

13.00-14.30

1. Studying rituals in an entangled world I

Courtroom RCS

Chair: Brenda Mathijssen

Maria Nita

Biosemiotics of Ritual: Power Signs, Feeling Lines and Story Maps in Climate Protest

Auli Vähäkangas

Personalization of rituals and ritual spaces

Joanna Wojtkowiak

Embodied meanings in ritual

2. Measurements I

130 RCS

Chair: Peter Nynäs

Daniel McIntosh

Introducing the IAPR Author Development Initiative

Peter Nynäs

A global study with the Faith Q-sort: some central findings

Alisa Remizova

Explaining why belonging to a denomination is not a trustworthy measure of religiosity across countries

3. Methodological Challenges and New Paths in the Intercultural Study of Religion

253 RCS

Chair: Ramona Bullik

Sakin Özisik

Sensitivity in Conducting Empirical Research on Refugees' Religiosity

Álvaro A. Espinoza Rizo

Ruptures and Reencounters in Nicaraguan Christianity. Interreligious Dialog at the Bases Level

Christopher F. Silver

Mining Data for Holistic Analysis. A Case Study of Utilizing Qualitative Data Analysis Tools to Formalize New Approaches in the Study of Religion and Spirituality

Matthew Durham

Exploring Moral Foundations in a Cross-cultural Sample of Faith Development Interviews

4. Covid / Societal Pressures

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Pierre-Yves Brandt

Steven Graham

Religion, Finding Positives in the Pandemic, and Changing Thoughts about God, Church, and Mortality

Beata Urbańska

Does religiosity predict people's confidence in national resilience? A longitudinal study of Poles in the time of COVID-19 pandemic

Pierre-Yves Brandt

The impact of the covid crisis on elderly people's spirituality: receiving home care and volunteering in Switzerland

Charmaine Sonnex

Exploring the experiences of British Pagan military veterans: A work in progress

5. Religious and Social Identities

A8 Academy Building

Chair: Lotte Pummerer

Douglas L. Piasson

The Religious Identity of Psychologists in Brazil

Rebecca Hughes

Do we Trust Science and Scientists? A Preliminary Cross-Country Exploration into how Social Religious Identity Relates to Trust

Lotte Pummerer

Dissenting with religious leadership – the role of identification and (religious) authority

14.30-15.00 Break

TUESDAY AUGUST 22nd

Chair: Michiel van Elk

15.00-16.30

1. Studying rituals in an entangled world II

Courtroom RCS

Chair: Brenda Mathijssen

Lars J. Danbolt

Causal pathways from ritual to psychological transformation

Jeltje Gordon-Lennox

Coping with Hardship Through Ritualised Behaviours

Brenda Mathijssen

Ritual worldmaking: Embodied subjectivity in ritual landscapes

2. Measurements II

130 RCS

Chair: Üzeyir Ok

George Varvatsoulis

Spiritual intelligence and spiritual exegesis: Constructing and testing a self-devised inventory of interdisciplinary importance for psychology of religion.

Jaroslav Piotrowski

Religiosity's and spirituality's location within in the circumplex of personality metatraits and other circumplex models

Üzeyir Ok

Muslim Religious Trauma Scale: A preliminary study

3. Mental Health I

253 RCS

Chair: Hanneke Schaap-Jonker

Ayşe Demir

Investigation of Grief Process and Spiritual Resources of Women Who Have Experienced Loss During Pregnancy

Hanneke Schaap-Jonker

"Why does this happen to me?" Varieties of religious and spiritual struggles with demographic and clinical correlates in mental health care in The Netherlands

Liliya Wetangterah

Growing from Suffering: The Relation between Human Trafficking Victims' Meaning of Suffering and post-Traumatic Growth

4. Cultural contexts & identities

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Ryan W. LaMothe

Nathan P. Devir

Indigenous Integrative Therapy in Benin: Considerations and Case Studies from Ongoing Ethnographic Fieldwork

Latupeirissa Risvan

The In-between Community: Religious Dilemmas

Ryan W. LaMothe

The Anthropocene Age Reveals the Insanity at the Heart of Western Christian Religious Experience

5. Embodiment & Religion

A8 Academy Building

Chair: Victor Counted

Vineet Gairola

Linking Body, Memory, and Divine Embodiment: Two Cases from the Garhwal Himalayas

Victor Counted

The Nature of Spiritual Ties to Place: Theoretical Clarification and Empirical Investigation

Ayşe B. Goren

Distress Muslim Women Experience when they Decide on (un)dressing Hijab

Dave Vliegthart & Nadine Sajo

Dialectical Thinking in Contemporary Spirituality: Reconciling Contradictory Beliefs towards a Metamodern Secular Religion

16.30-17.00: Break

17.00-18.00: Godin Prize, Doopsgezinde Kerk

Joseph Bulbulia, The causal effects of religion on cooperation: evidence from a national longitudinal panel study

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 23rd

Chair: Hetty Zock

09.00-10.00: Keynote, Doopsgezinde Kerk

Mariecke van den Berg: Yawning in the face of God: religious boredom as a form of activism

Respondent: Patty van Cappellen

10.00-11.30

1. Religion, Spirituality and Meaning in Life in mental health care.

Courtroom RCS

Chair: Eva Ouwehand

Brechtje Hallo - van Bekkum

Finding meaning in psychiatric recovery: A conceptual approach of aspects of meaning in life for patients with severe mental illness.

Line de Bruijn

Motivations of professionals in ambulatory mental healthcare to pay attention to spirituality and meaning in life (S/MiL).

Bart van den Brink

Dimensions of Religion Associated with Suicide Attempt and Ideation: A 15-Month Prospective Study in a Dutch Psychiatric Population

Eva Ouwehand

Occurrence and significance of religious experiences (REs) in persons with bipolar disorder (BD)

2. New Perspectives for Faith Development

130 RCS

Chair: Ramona Bullik

Ralph W. Hood, jr.

Idiographic and Nomothetic Evidence for Depth and Breadth of Religious Worldviews and their Relationship to Religious Styles

William Andrews

Religious Deconversion and Secular Disaffiliation

Heinz Streib

Predicting Deconversion

Barbara Keller

What Heals the Brokenhearted? Religious, Spiritual, and Clinical Views on Healing and Meaning-Making in Individual Autobiographical Narratives

3. Meditation

253 RCS

Chair: Job Chen

Havagül Akçe

How Muslim prayer cultivates mindfulness: Can the S-ART framework explain it?

Magdalena Kerestey

Cultural differences in the descriptions of buddhist meditation.

Job Chen

Mystical experiences in Daoism: Qualitative and social network analysis

Claire White

Past Life Meditation Decreases Existential Death Anxiety and Increases Meaning in Life among Individuals who Believe in the Paranormal

4. Nonbelief: Diversity, Causes, Measurement, & Proselytism

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Kyle Messick

Jonathan A. Lanman

The Nature and Diversity of Atheism & Agnosticism

Connair J. S. Russell

Explaining Atheism: Untangling the causes of non-belief

Valerie van Mulukom

Worldly Worldviews Worldwide: Introducing the Secular Worldviews Scale

Graceyn Yonce

(Non)Religious Proselytizing: Explaining the Desire to (De)Convert Others

5. Altered States II

A8 Academy Building

Chair: André van der Braak

Aaron Cherniak

Does psychedelic use alter religiosity over time? Short-term prospective and developmental patterns

André van der Braak

A Latourian entangled perspective on ayahuasca religiosity in the West

Everton de Oliveira Maraldi

A mixed-methods investigation of the role of spiritual beliefs in sleep paralysis and other anomalous sleep experiences

Brian Ostafin

Awe and spiritual experience

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 23rd

Chair: Hetty Zock

11.30-12.00 Poster presentations, Mennozaal, Doopsgezinde Kerk
Online: Ioana David, Salma Gani
12.00-13.00 Lunch, Faculty Hall (RCS)

13.00-14.30

1. Young adults

Courtroom RCS

Chair: Anke Liefbroer

Feyza Karsli

What Spiritual Resilience Says Among Youth: Evidence for a Mediating Effect on Psychological Resilience and General Health Relations

Kyoung Ok Seol

Perfectionism, anxiety and depression among seminary student: A mediated moderation model of extrinsic religiosity and self-blame

Anke Liefbroer

What is the good that we should strive for? Big life questions among non-religious young adults

2. Health care chaplaincy in times of crisis.

130 RCS

Chair: Anne Austad

Hans Stifoss-Hanssen

Chaplaincy in Norway with a special focus on how PhD projects have contributed to an evidence base for healthcare Chaplaincy

Hilde Frøkedal

The use of existential groups within mental healthcare treatment settings— results from a scooping review

Ane I. Bondahl Søberg

Hospital chaplains as interlocutors on existential themes with patients at risk of suicide: a Norwegian qualitative study

Karsten F. Thomsen

The Chaplain dealt with my problem – highlights from conversations between chaplain and patient

3. Miracles and health in an entangled word

253 RCS

Chair: Marta H. de Freitas

Gillianno Mazzetto de Castro

Born phenomenology: Life as a miracle

Fatima C. Costa Fontes

Meeting of Miracles: Psychotherapeutic Transformation at Four Hands —

Psychotherapist and Candomblé's Mother of Saint.

Marta H. de Freitas

Is there a place for (the study of) miracles in health care?

Miguel Farias

Discussion of presentation from "Miracles and health in an entangled word"

4. Experimental and Cognitive Approaches

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Carmen Callizo-Romero

Piotr Szymanek

Testing the predictive processing model of agency detection in auditory modality

Carmen Callizo-Romero

The role of religiosity on temporal thought in the framework of the uncertainty hypothesis

Geert Franzenburg

Simulation games as a transcultural key for reconciliation and resilience

Leonardo Breno Martins

"Where two or more are gathered": the social influence among equals as a mediator of religious/supernatural beliefs

5. The Open Science of Religion Project

A8 Academy Building

Chair: Michiel van Elk

Kevin L. Ladd

Shelia, Karin, Chad, & Paul Chat with Psychologists of Religion

Jordan P. LaBouff

Registered Reports Make Peer Review Collaborative - an Editor's Perspective

Aryeh Lazar

The Moderating Function of Sexual Sanctification on the Relation between Sexual and Relationship Satisfaction among Men and Women – An Open Science of Religion Project

Isabelle Zammit

Stage 1 Registered Report: Parental and Children's Religiosity in Early Childhood: Implications for Transmission

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 23rd

Chair: Hetty Zock

14.30-15.00 Break

15.00-16.30

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| 1. Demystifying the Sufi Zekr <i>Courtroom RCS</i> Chair: Payam Yousefi Saloumeh DeGood <i>The Sufi Zekr in a Clinical Setting</i> Maryam Balke <i>Practice of Sufi Zekr from a Neurobiological View</i> Payam Yousefi <i>Case Study of Meditative Listening in Public Health: Sufi Music of the MTO Zende Delan Ensemble in Community Outreach</i> | 2. Constructivism in the psychology of religion and spirituality <i>130 RCS</i> Chair: Agnieszka Krzysztof-Świdarska Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska <i>Deconstruction before construction: Why the constructivist approach requires a critical approach to previously held perspectives?</i> Agnieszka Krzysztof-Świdarska <i>Private definitions of spirituality in the artistic milieu</i> Jacek Prusak <i>Proximity and distance to God. Construing spiritual measure</i> | 3. Religious/Spiritual beliefs and behaviours affecting health outcomes in a UK longitudinal cohort <i>253 RCS</i> Chair: Connie Svob Daniel Major-Smith <i>An overview of the ALSPAC study and how it can contribute to understanding the causal relations between religion and health.</i> Jimmy Morgan <i>The associations between traumatic life events and religious beliefs and behaviours.</i> Isaac Halstead <i>The Role of Maternal Religiosity in Offspring Mental Health: A Latent Class Approach</i> Hamid R. Tohidinik <i>The associations between attending faith schools and later mental health and religious beliefs.</i> |
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4. Open Science Practices in the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Michiel van Elk

Suzanne Hoogeveen

The Many-Analysts Religion Project: Key findings and meta-scientific insights

Elisah Lepine

Church Contexts Matter: An ongoing registered report investigating the link between religious practice and meaning in life

Jana Nenadalova

Revisiting feeling of threat and agency detection: Towards an OSR preregistered study

Michiel van Elk

The religious replication project

5. Recent Advances on the Role of (non)Religious Identity and Beliefs on Intergroup Relations

A8 Academy Building

Chair: Patty Van Cappellen

Daryl R. Van Tongeren

The Sheep in Wolf's Clothing: Intergroup Perceptions of Religious Dones

Jordan P. LaBouff

White Christian Nationalism and Prejudice towards Black Americans

Patty Van Cappellen

Religious factors predicting reduced outgroup derogation

Sally B. Barker

Participating in Types of Interreligious Dialogue: The role of Religious Identity and Threat

16.30-17.00: Break

17.00-19.00: Early career awards, Nieuwe Kerk (see Social Event Page)

Jordan Moon, Religion as a natural laboratory for understanding human behavior
Job Chen, Psychology of Mysticism

19.00: Social Event at Huize Maas (See Social Event Page)

THURSDAY AUGUST 24th

Chair: Hanneke Muthert

9.00-10.30

1. God representations, personality pathology and group psychotherapy

Courtroom RCS

Chair: Nathan van der Velde

Nathan van der Velde

God representations and psychotherapy: a longitudinal cluster approach

Allard Sierksma

God representations in schema focused therapy: a longitudinal mediation analysis

Gerda Mosterd

Faith Relationship interview in psychotherapy

2. Spiritual and existential care – obstacles and possibilities of collaboration between professions

130 RCS

Chair: Niels C. Hvidt

Suvi-Maria Saarelainen

Appearance of meaninglessness and existential loneliness among older people

Catharina Gerigk

Retaining ICU nurses: impact and recognition in work

Lars Mandelkow

Existential competence in mental health care

Ricko Damberg Nissen

Vicar and GP: Match made in Heaven? A relational coordination project from Denmark

3. The Spiritual Needs and Vocabulary of Children in Highly Secularized Denmark.

253 RCS

Chair: Dorte T. Viftrup

Sara Stage Voetmann

Spiritual and Existential Needs and Resources of Danish Children and Youth when They are Next of Kin to a Dying Family Member

Charlotte Ege

Spiritual, Religious, and Existential Resources and Development among 7-10-year-olds

Ann C. Nørremark

Danish Children's Existential and Spiritual Vocabulary, Resources, and Needs When Experiencing Difficulties in Life

Christina Prinds

Prayer and meditation practices in a secular context - world's largest survey among pregnant women

4. Outcome-oriented research among spiritual caregivers and religious professionals

Courtroom RCS

Chair: Anke Liefbroer

Annemarie Foppen

The benefits of outcome-oriented research among religious professionals and spiritual caregivers

Eva Buelens

Quasi-experimental studies on outcomes of healthcare chaplaincy on patients

Anja Visser

Developing a PROM for spiritual care at home

Jonna Ojalampi

Visual elicitation methods as a tool to study religious and spiritual care needs

5. Meaning Making and Resilience

A8 Academy Building

Chair: Torgeir Sørensen

Tor-Arne Isene

Meaning in life and identity in patients with severe dementia in Norway

Noora Palmi

Meaning in Life among the Lutheran Clergy in Finland

Torgeir Sørensen

Relationships of Sources of Meaning and Resilience with Meaningfulness and Satisfaction with Life: A Population-Based Study of Norwegians in Late Adulthood

Sema Yilmaz

Thematic Analysis of Children's Questions About Death

THURSDAY AUGUST 24th

Chair: Hanneke Muthert

10.30-12.00

1. Mental Health II

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Hetty Zock

Neil Goulding

Associations between belief in God or a Divine power and circulating inflammatory proteins

Fatumetul Zehra Guldas

The Associations Between Different Islamic Prayer Types, Trait Resilience (EEA), and the Five-Factor Personality Model: A Cross-Sectional Study in British Muslims

Nihal İşbilen

Bishr-i Hafi Syndrome: How Spirituality Might Hinders Addiction Recovery

2. Is any meaning good?

130 RCS

Chair: Peter la Cour

Peter la Cour

Mapping more terrain: Is meaning in life a dominant concept in existential health?

Aryan Aghdami

A cross-sectional study of meaning in life among patients with personality disorders in Norway.

Bendik Sparre Hovet

For whom does a crisis of meaning open the door to belief in COVID-19 conspiracies?

From belief in a higher power to conspiracy: a new meaning when foundations shake

Tatjana Schnell

Meaning in life in times of crisis: supporting personal, but not public health?

3. Non-belief II

253 RCS

Chair: David Bell

Roosa Haimila

Beyond 'Scientific Worldviews': The Relationship between Belief in Science and the Supernatural in Science-Oriented Finns

Kati Tervo-Niemelä

Youth wellbeing and religion – The role of religion in families, happiness in childhood and youth and the continuity of religion and non-religion

Jonna Ojalamm

Non-religious spirituality in Finnish older adults

David Bell

Black 'Nones': Reframing Quantitative Measures of Secularism Through the Lenses of Black Identity and the Black Church

4. The psycho-social-spiritual effects of the earthquake in Turkey

A7 Academy Building

Chair: Sevde Düzgüner

Rahime E. Bakır

Does coping style with disasters affect mental health? A study in the context of earthquakes in türkiye

Muhammet E. Vural

All for one, and one for all: on the mediating role of religious attribution in the relationship between collective resilience, secondary traumatic stress, and anxiety in the post-earthquake process

Hakan Sari

A qualitative research on religious attributions and religious coping strategies of direct and indirect victims of the earthquake

Sevde Düzgüner

A qualitative research on coping strategies of religious officials who provided funeral services and spiritual support in the earthquake in türkiye

5. Morality & Extremism

A8 Academy Building

Chair: Maia Mestvirishvili

Sarah Demmr

An International Review of Empirical Research on the Psychology of Fundamentalism

Maia Mestvirishvili

Religiosity and Moral Judgment: Moderating Role of Moral Internalization and Moral Competence

Magdalena Žemojtel-Piotrowska

Religiosity, spirituality, and beliefs justifying war

THURSDAY AUGUST 24th

Chair: Hanneke Muthert

12.00-13.00: Lunch, Faculty Hall (RCS)

13.00-13.15: Poster presentations, Mennozaal, Doopsgezinde Kerk

13.15-13.30: Poster prize, Mennozaal, Doopsgezinde Kerk

13.30-14.30: Keynote, Doopsgezinde Kerk

Tyler VanderWeele, Religion and Mental Health: Is the Relationship Causal?

Respondent: Anne Austad

14.30-14.45: Closing ceremony, Doopsgezinde Kerk

14.45-15.15: Break

15.15-16.15: General assembly, Doopsgezinde Kerk

The general assembly is for IAPR members only

List of poster presentations

Offline

Maiken Langhoff Kidholm

eHealth intervention supporting spiritual well being in patient with cancer - a user involvement project

Laura Kvorning

Development of eHeart, an intervention for children who are next of kin

H.J. Seesink

Spiritual struggles matter in Patients with SUD

Fatima C. Costa Fontes

What do the children of scientists believe in an entangled world?

Amna Khan

Associations between religiosity and mental health in Christian and Muslim emerging adults: The moderating role of parental bond

Michelle Suh

Transitions in Emerging Adulthood and Faith-Oriented Support Needs

Raegan B. Thompson

A Review of Reiki and Mental and Physical Health

Pavel Moravec

Attitudes of Czech University Students to Christianity and its Connections to Personality Traits.

Fatima Machado

Science and Religion or Science vs. Religion? The perspective of professors/researchers from Brazilian universities

Mateus Donia Martinez

An investigation of the study on religious behavior in childhood in Brazil

Miriam Martins Leal

Relationship between belief in miracles and religion-spiritual coping in the context of a fetal malformation

Peter Nynäs

A global study with the Faith Q-sort: some central findings

Online

Wednesday

Salma Gani

Religiosity, health and coping among South African Muslims during the COVID-19 pandemic

Ioana David

Religious attitudes and belief in miracles

Locations and Maps

The conference will be held on three different locations, which are all located in the city center of Groningen and are next to each other.



Building of the Faculty of Religion, Culture and Society. (RCS)
Address: Oude Boteringestraat 38, 9712 GK Groningen.



Doopsgezinde kerk Groningen.
Address: Oude Boteringestraat 33, 9712 GD Groningen.

The entrance on the left of the church brings you to the Mennozaal. This entrance should be used if you want to peruse the posters. The main entrance can be used for the other parts of the conference, like the keynotes, the opening and closing ceremonies and the general assembly.



Academy building of the University of Groningen.
Address: Broerstraat 5, 9712 CP Groningen.

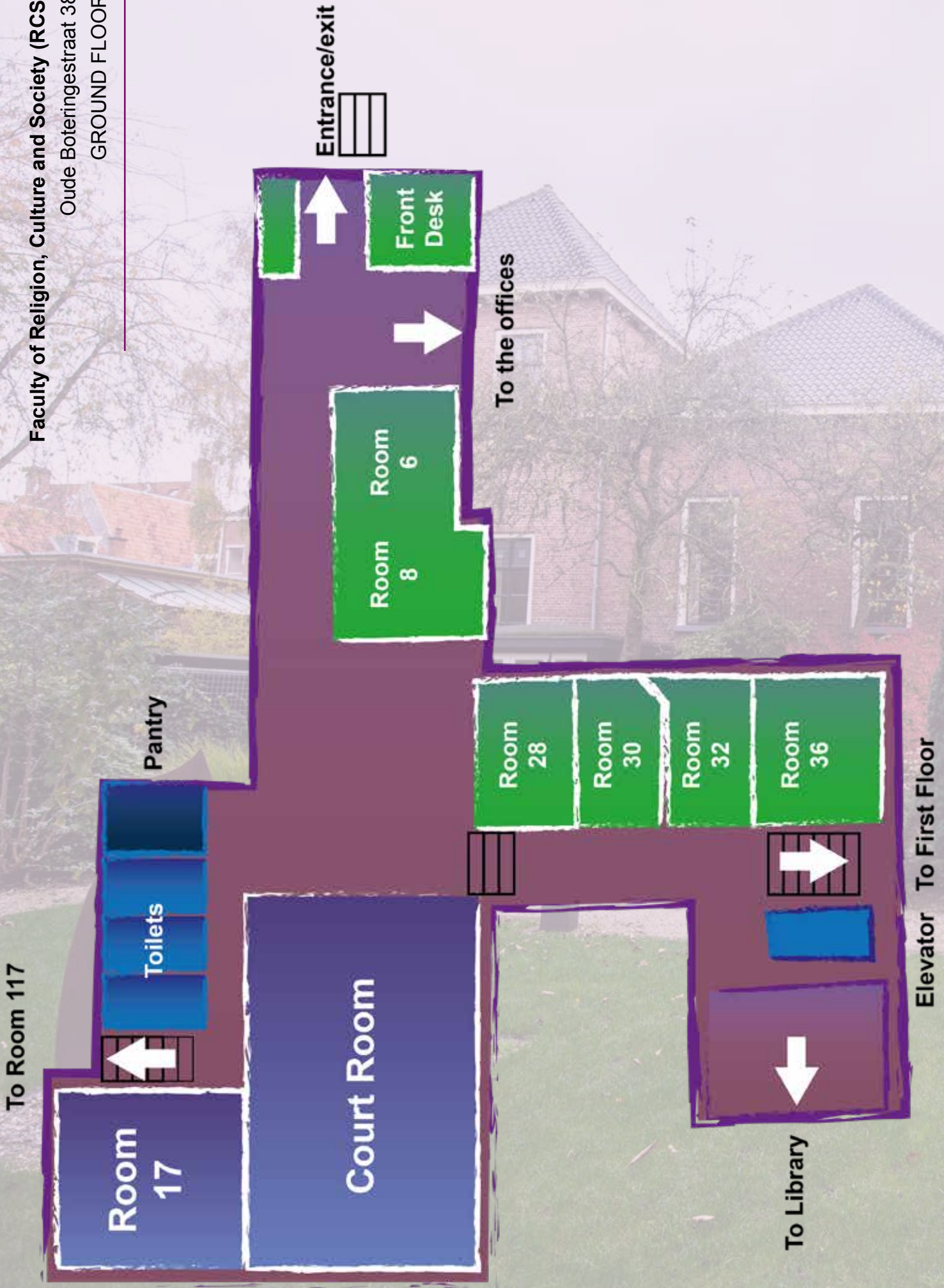
The rooms that are used for the conference, A7 and A8, are on the ground floor. After you enter through the main entrance, the rooms are in the hallway to your left.

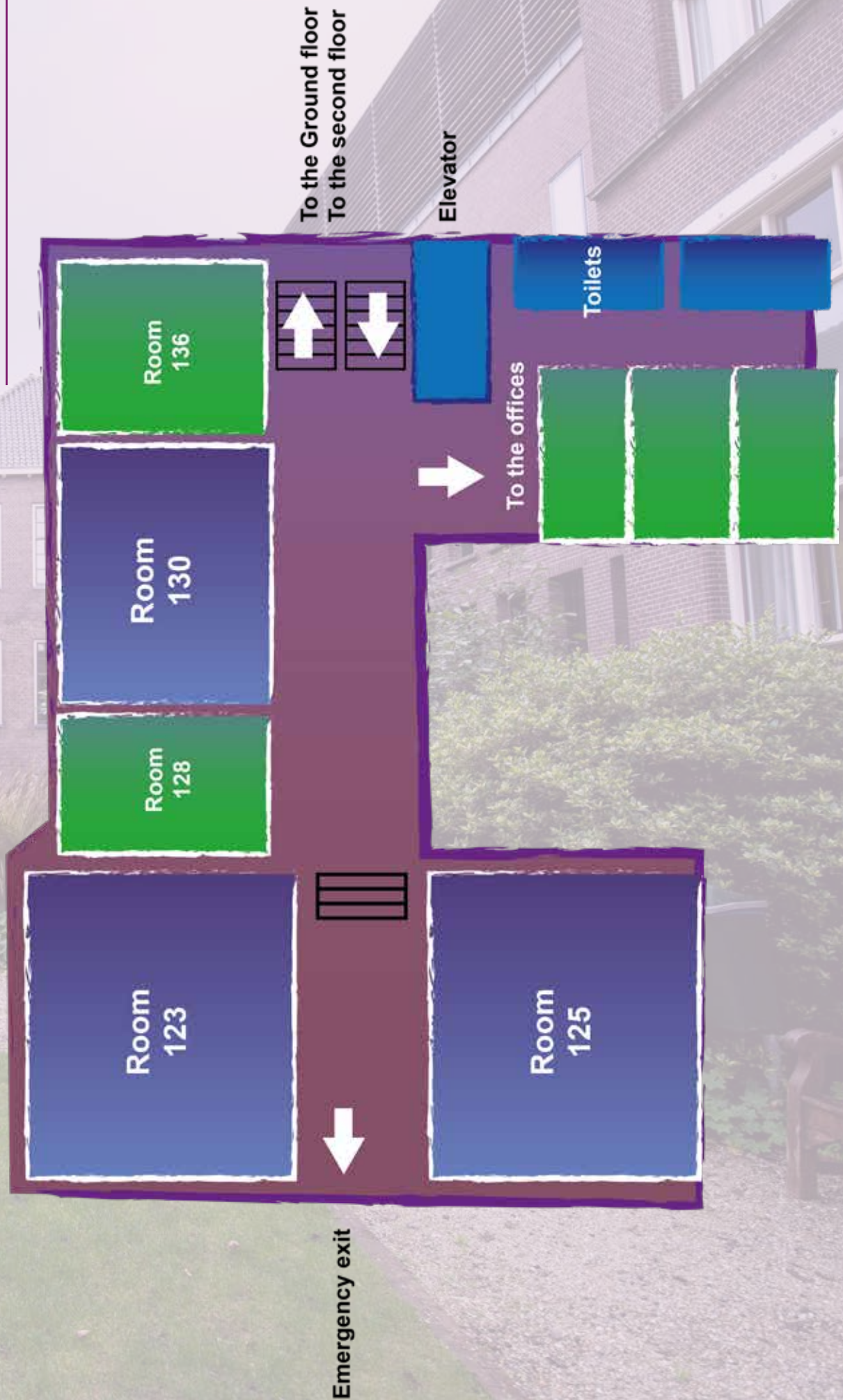


Route from Groningen, Trainstation To Oude Boteringestraat

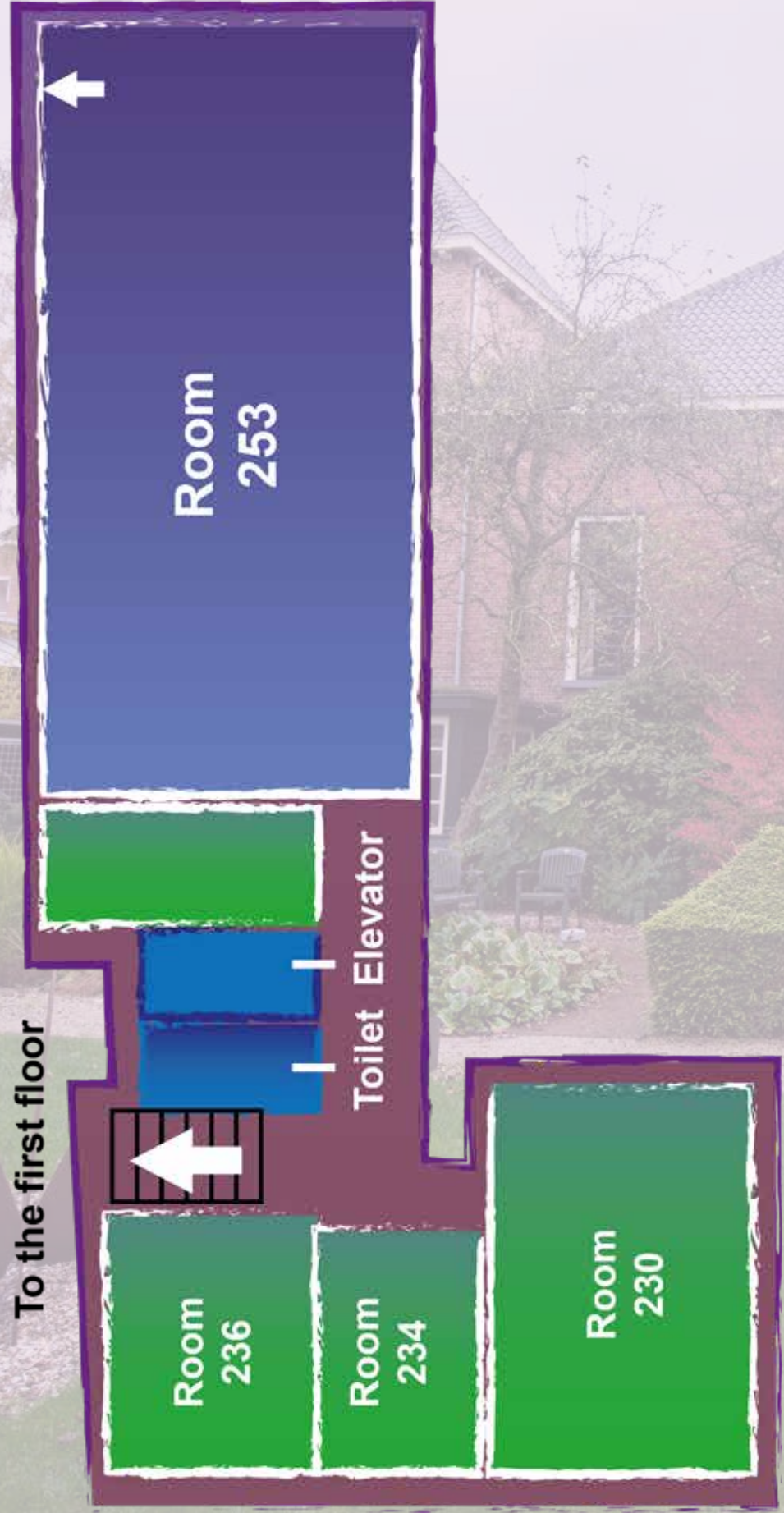
- 1 Go to the H.N. Werkmanbrug, across the street
- 2 Follow the road to the Ubbo Emmiusstraat
- 3 Follow the road to Folkingestraat
- 4 At the end of the Folkingestraat, Go right Vismarkt
- 5 Cross the Vismarkt and proceed on Guldenstraat
- 6 Follow this road to Oude Boteringestraat

- A) On your left you can proceed to Broerstraat for the Academy Building
B) On your right, Oude Boteringestraat 33, is the Doopsgezinde Kerk
C) On your left, Oude Boteringestraat 38, is the Faculty building of the Faculty of Religion, Culture and Society.

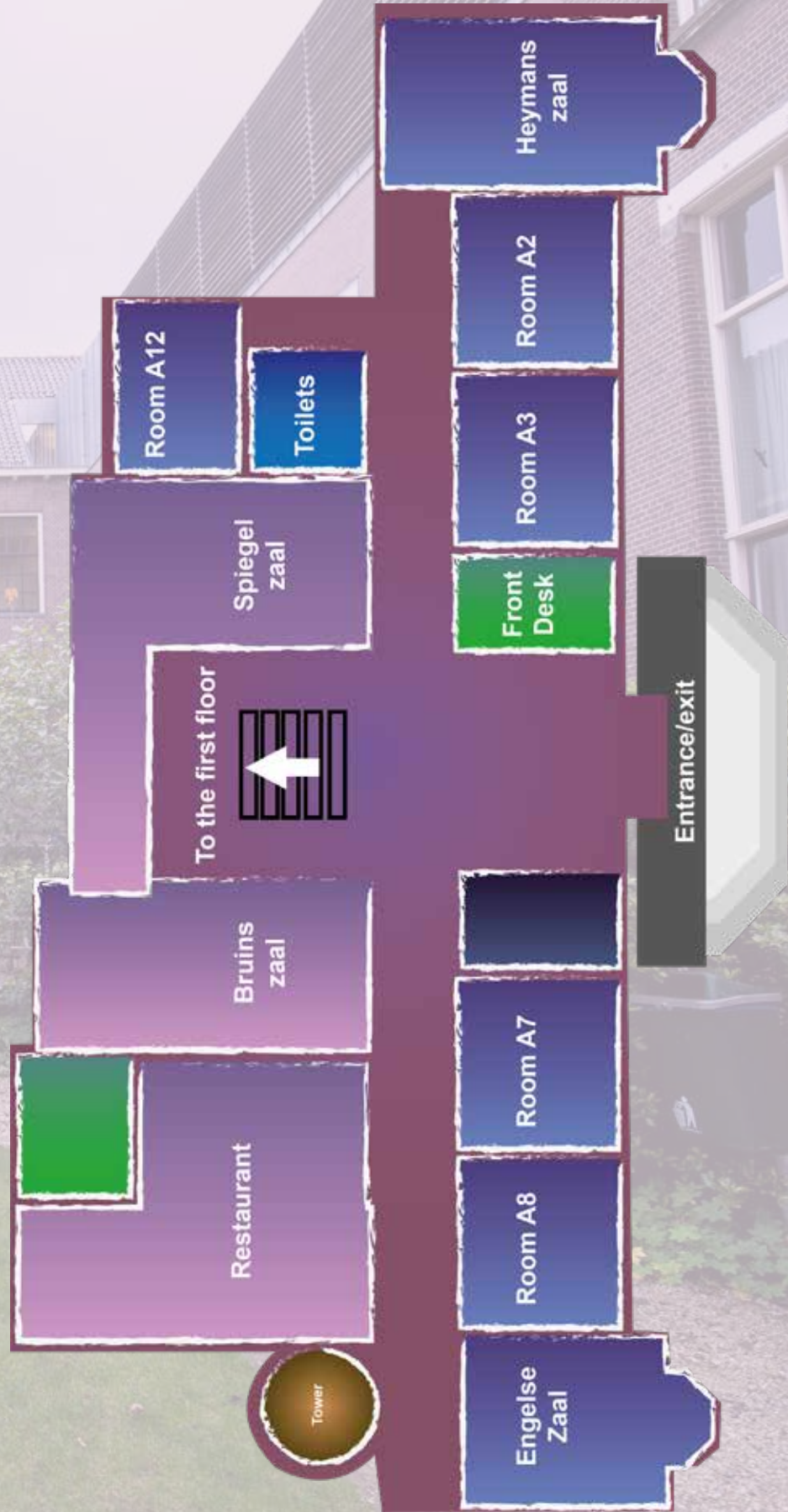




Emergency Exit



Academy Building
Broerstraat 5
FIRST FLOOR



Catering

This page offers an overview of the catering that will be provided during the conference. If you prefer to make other arrangements regarding food, the section in this booklet on 'how to spend your time in Groningen' mentions some good locations.

Monday:

On Monday, after the first keynote, there is a buffet in the faculty building (Oude Boteringestraat 38) for all on-site attendees of the conference.

Tuesday:

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, lunch will be provided in the hall of the faculty building (Oude Boteringestraat 38). The lunch will be served from 12.00 until 13.00 on those days. You are free to eat anywhere in the faculty building and garden, except from the courtroom. If you would like to go for a walk, slightly to the north of city center is the park Noorderplantsoen.

Wednesday:

On Wednesday, there is a dinner at an external location for the people who signed up for the social event. This dinner will take place at Huize Maas/Jantje's (Vismarkt 52).

Good to know:

The quality of tap water in The Netherlands is excellent. If you bring a reusable water bottle to the conference, you can use water taps in all conference buildings to refill your water.

Coffee and tea will also be provided during most of the breaks during the conference. In the afternoon, there will also be some fruit available.

Tamarkoz: A Sufi Meditation Break

Tuesday at 18:30 - 19:15

Wednesday 08:05 - 08:45

Thursday 08:05 - 08:45

Room 123 RCS

This session will relax and recharge you. The Tamarkoz method is based on the 1400-year-old Sufi tradition and has been utilized in clinical settings, hospitals, universities, as well as other environments to reduce stress, increase awareness, and bring an overall sense of balance. As it's based on the tradition of Sufism, the goal of Tamarkoz is self-knowledge. This experiential practice incorporates meditation, breathwork, movement, and imagery to release the external focus and center within.

Please dress comfortably for this session.

Social Event

This social event of the conference takes place on **Wednesday evening**. The social event consists of two parts. The first part can be attended by everyone, while the second part is only an option for the people who signed up for the social event during registration.

Part one: Nieuwe Kerk

The first part of the social event consists of the early career award ceremony and a talk on the special organs of Groningen. This part takes place in the Nieuwe Kerk.

Nieuwe Kerkhof 1, 9712 PT Groningen
We will be in the Nieuwe Kerk from ±17.00 until 19.00.

Part two: Huize Maas/Jantje's

The second part of the social event is only accessible to people who signed up for the social event. We will check this with you during registration on Monday (or on the day you arrive). This part of the social event takes place at Huize Maas/Jantje's:

Vismarkt 52, 9711 KV.
This part includes dinner and will last until approximately 23.00.

Online guide

This guide provides all the information you need for attending the IAPR conference online.

Keynotes

The keynotes will be streamed directly from the livestream of the Doopsgezinde Kerk. The same is the case for the opening ceremony, the closing ceremony and the general assembly. You can view this livestream via this link: kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/2067-Doopsgezinde-Gemeente-Groningen

To make sure you are able to interact, you also need to log into the interactive blackboard environment we created. The link to access this environment is listed in the programme. Please note that this link is unique for each keynote and meeting during the conference. So, make sure you click on the correct one in the programme.

One of our student assistants is monitoring the environment to make sure that your questions and contributions are noticed and included.

Panels

The panels just work with the interactive blackboard environment. You can enter this environment by clicking on the link in the programme. Please note that each panel has a unique link.

One of our student assistants is monitoring the environment to make sure that your questions and contributions are noticed and included.

Posters

Only the posters that are presented online can be attended from a distance. The online poster presentations have been allocated a specific slot in the programme. Each poster also has a unique link to the poster presentation.

Each online poster presentation is monitored by one of our student assistants.

Questions?

If you encounter any problems with your online attendance, you can contact us via:

Email: iapr.2023@rug.nl

Links IAPR Programme

The online spaces will open 45 minutes in advance!

Keynotes

Opening ceremony & Keynote Sarah Pike

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/32cf416f27ae4827b495de3e770f815f>

kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/2067-Doopsgezinde-Gemeente-Groningen

Keynote Kees van den Bos

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/d0aaf22df975457ebda2e5290b8cdd53>

kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/2067-Doopsgezinde-Gemeente-Groningen

Keynote Mariecke van den Berg

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/27c2b13d2a154d28b81b36818158822a>

kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/2067-Doopsgezinde-Gemeente-Groningen

Keynote Tyler VanderWeele & Closing ceremony

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/a9c8b8d108bc4aa392e65d92a242e57a>

kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/2067-Doopsgezinde-Gemeente-Groningen

Links IAPR Programme

The online spaces will open 45 minutes in advance!

Godin Prize

Joseph Bulbulia, The causal effects of religion on cooperation: evidence from a national longitudinal panel study

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/547968ceaedf4e7f9175d3e54a65385f>

kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/2067-Doopsgezinde-Gemeente-Groningen

Panels

Tuesday

Being Agnostic, not Atheist

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/afb1373a56424479850fd14e657f7394>

Imagination and Ritual

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/814e92cffde449fe9eec978733b1c442>

Altered States I

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/a07ffbb093c74000afe7ed30529539b4>

Non-belief I

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/f75d67402a3e4e18b27aaf8e1b0afa43>

Gender

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/ddf4d25408d44d12bde6e04db1602c27>

Studying rituals in an entangled world I

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/3e02d83eec2b42b4906af03fa5968b51>

Measurements I

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/61349ced9cb74662b7727c502fba1478>

Methodological Challenges and New Paths in the Intercultural Study of Religion

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/0f89773d8d2b4fb7bee69465d2facb9c>

Covid/Societal Pressures

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/3b5c0bf9fe374ffc925c83931aad4cc8>

Religious Identity

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/137711e49e344244b89fb5e07235a948>

Studying Rituals in an entangled world II

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/38382083ceb544069f8e05f65eb58558>

Measurements II

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/ed1d08498f1a452ba31e384dfb519ea5>

Mental Health I

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/749418992c40493ebc3076a27be0eef4>

Cultural contexts & identities

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/22b538b6754e45e7a3ffcaef353295df>

Embodiment & Religion

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/852a7b3e62514b20a702ee640ce5ceb3>

Links IAPR Programme

The online spaces will open 45 minutes in advance!

Wednesday

Religion, Spirituality and Meaning in Life in mental health care

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/144c0ea0c00d4647bf2ed5ee96590e7f>

New Perspectives for Faith Development

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/32d9e658b50141edb910b5cb83c995ea>

Meditation

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/8bcd4d103332472a85b7800e01d4567c>

Nonbelief: Diversity, Causes, Measurement & Proselytism

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/f64a9a8677a04312abacf34f1f218f07>

Altered States II

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/fc1f4e3277594c2b8098865be553070a>

Young Adults

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/5ebbd765374e4a9182aa9fd78fee45cd>

Health care chaplaincy in times of crisis

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/d5f265ceccd54188ae881387ef8887b>

Miracles and health in an entangled world

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/c5ea37a4189e4fd7bc89b9b63eba19d1>

Experimental and Cognitive Approaches

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/7b658d89df38495d8057c50454543d3a>

The Open Science of Religion Project

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/7b658d89df38495d8057c50454543d3a>

Demystifying the Sufi Zekr

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/ad5762f5f1e64f6c8ff518a129978402>

Constructivism in the psychology of religion and spirituality

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/e9ee74c7ba5f46a5b6dc2eb4e798c0fa>

Religious/spiritual beliefs and behaviours affecting health outcomes in a UK longitudinal cohort

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/d310510d41b84a999d9c0f4c9c7ce897>

Open Science Practices in the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/5deb49e9832a4b5fb1f4d2f6346ccbfc>

Recent Advances on the Role of (non)Religious Identity and beliefs on Intergroup Relations

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/f556232d0bb24628ba012f93d6dbac2a>

Links IAPR Programme

The online spaces will open 45 minutes in advance!

Thursday

God representations, personality pathology and group psychotherapy

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/edf1aea6f934daf8aba91a59df7c857>

Spiritual and existential care – obstacles and possibilities of collaboration between professions

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/6a85eb445329455dbf0e1f51beb59d8c>

The spiritual needs and vocabulary of children in highly secularized Denmark

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/f8cbd9f99dc546f79cf11fc376adc675>

Outcome-oriented research among spiritual caregivers and religious professionals

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/4ac4eccb3a6b459c8bf32340ecc82bc0>

Meaning Making and Resilience

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/4ac4eccb3a6b459c8bf32340ecc82bc0>

Mental Health II

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/2d6ffddd90ec4121a7b3d8b17dee3a23>

Is any meaning good?

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/5ec133d0aebd4aa7b6ea9af84e21fb19>

Non-belief II

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/5ec133d0aebd4aa7b6ea9af84e21fb19>

The psycho-social effects of the earthquake in Turkey

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/ca404f86142b4704b5686058b2316b8c>

Morality & Extremism

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/161fd24a7063461d8610462a77c1fb4b>

Posters

Ioana David, Religious attitudes and belief in miracles

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/544befcc2f6942f48988ac7f1e254491>

Salma Gani, Religiosity, health and coping among South African Muslims during the COVID-19 pandemic

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/950d89b1279e4495a1d51983c506373e>

General Assembly

General Assembly – Members Only

<https://eu.bbcollab.com/guest/aded53ec4f204f1493278c5d80c5e8b3>

kerkdienstgemist.nl/stations/2067-Doopsgezinde-Gemeente-Groningen

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Front Desk Office (first aid): **+3150363817**

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Photographer



Marleen Boersma



Lauree Groenwold



Meike Barkmeijer



Imani Uddin

How to spend your time in Groningen

Activities

General information about the city can be found on this website: <https://www.visitgroningen.nl/en>

Forum Groningen

Nieuwe Markt 1, 9712 KN Groningen

The Forum building located in the heart of Groningen. With international exhibitions, the Storyworld museum, a cinema, the public library, a Smartlab, a skylounge bar + restaurant and a roof terrace with a phenomenal panoramic view, it is definitely worth a visit.

<https://forum.nl/en>

The VVV Tourist Office is also located in Het Forum:

<https://www.visitgroningen.nl/en/location/117554618/groningen-store-tourist-information>

Noorderzon (17th until 27th of August 2023)

Noorderzon Festival of Performing Arts & Society is the somewhat curious combination of a cutting-edge international art festival and a large-scale summer fest for 135,000 visitors. The heart of the festival is the idyllic Noorderplantsoen (a city park) in Groningen, NL, where, for eleven summer days, a freely accessible festival village appears almost out of nowhere to provide a setting for theatre, dance, music, literature, aftertalks and lectures in combination with eating, drinking and social encounters. Performances take place in tents or on outdoor stages in the Noorderplantsoen, as well as at many locations in the inner city of Groningen (Noorderzon DownTown).

More information about the programme and tickets for events can be found here: <https://www.noorderzon.nl/en>

City Walks

More information on walks in the city of Groningen can be found here: <https://www.visitgroningen.nl/en/plan-your-visit/city-walks>

Food & Drinks

Coffee

Pure

Vismarkt 10, 9711 KS Groningen

This place sells coffee, tea, shakes and delicious pastries. Many of their drinks and pastries are vegan as well!

Koffiestation

Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 21, 9712 EA Groningen

This place is simultaneously a bookstore and a coffee place.

P.S.

Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 24, 9712 EJ Groningen

This place serves the most delicious apple pie of the city.

Lunch

Pigalle

Stoeldraaierstraat 17, 9712 BT Groningen

This lunch café is modeled as a French bistro. The food is affordable, but delicious.

Werkman

Grote Markt 41, 9711 LV Groningen

This restaurant has a great location in the middle of the city center.

Wadapartja

*Pottebakkersrijge 21, 9718 AG Groningen &
Gedempte Zuiderdiep 39 – 41, 9711 HB Groningen*

Wadapartja only serves locally produced products. So, if you would like to have a taste of Groningen, Wadapartja is a great place for lunch.

Dinner

De Olijfboom

Oosterstraat 40, 9711 NV Groningen (Greek Canteen)

This Greek canteen serves traditional Greek streetfood.

Konbu

*Oosterstraat 10, 9711 NT Groningen (Streetfood)
Oosterstraat 11a, 9711 NN Groningen (Jiro)*

Konbu's streetfood location serves dishes from a variety of Asian cuisines. The Jiro location focuses on Korean food, including Korean barbecue. Konbu is a favorite of many students of the University of Groningen.

Anno Domini 47

Rademarkt 15, 9711 CS Groningen

This restaurant serves Italian food.

Food & Drinks

If you would like to have dinner that is a little fancier:

Bistro Boys

Folkingestraat 46, 9711 JZ Groningen

Bla Bla

Nieuw Boteringestraat 9, 9712 PE Groningen (vegan)

Dokjard

Noorderhaven 63, 9712 VJ Groningen

Drinks

Mr. Mofongo

Oude Boteringestraat 26, 9712 GJ

This place, which is located next to the conference site, has an amazing wine and cocktailbar (also non-alcoholic drinks). Additionally, they serve good food and great snacks. So, this is also a good spot for lunch or dinner.

Concerthuis

Poelestraat 30, 9712 KB Groningen

Concerthuis is located on one of the 'gezelligste' (coziest) squares of Groningen. They serve many different drinks and have boardgames available that can be played.

Pacific

Oosterstraat 65, 9711 NS Groningen

The Pacific is an Australian bar in the city center of Groningen. It is known for its nice ambiance. The neighboring café, O'Malleys, is a great Irish bar.

Abstracts

Keynotes

Keynote speeches

Mon 21 Aug, 17.30-18.30

Ritual Responses to Environmental Apocalypse in Activist Communities

Sarah M. Pike

Respondent: Brian Ostafin

This talk will explore ritualized responses to grief and loss around environmental collapse and disaster, focusing on the ways in which these rituals both express and constitute a world of spiritually rich relationships to landscapes, plants, animals, and other humans. My talk will be informed by case studies from my ethnographic research among radical environmental activists across the United States and Indigenous led restoration projects in California, comparing and contrasting the ways these different activist communities use ritual to remake the world.

Tue 22 Aug, 09.00-10.00

Why people radicalize: The role of perceived injustice and religion

Kees van den Bos

Respondent: Rik Peels

My work focuses on the social psychology of radicalization, leading people to be tempted to engage in violent extremism or perhaps terrorist acts. I will be focusing especially on the role of perceived injustice in this process and the role of religion.

Wed 23 Aug, 09.00-10.00

Yawning in the face of God: religious boredom as a form of activism

Mariecke van den Berg

Respondent: Patty van Cappellen

I explore the experience of boredom within religious contexts, specifically Christianity. I argue that next to minority stress, we might also speak of minority boredom. That is the deep sense of disconnect a person can feel when the shared narrative of a tradition does not reflect the perspective, experiences, hopes and dreams of those who find themselves in the margins of this tradition. I explore boredom as one possible strategy of resistance to exclusion. When people withhold emotions, such as anger, grief or regret, but openly display the yawn, the shared narrative finds itself under critique. Boredom is thus full of transformative potential.

Thur 24 Aug, 13.30-14.30

Religion and Mental Health: Is the Relationship Causal?

Tyler VanderWeele

Respondent: Anne Austad

The presentation will consider associations between religious service attendance and subsequent depression, suicide, and anxiety using data from several large longitudinal cohort studies. Critical attention will be given to the question of whether the associations provide evidence for causal relationships. Methodological and statistical challenges will be discussed including study design, the possibility of reverse causation, approaches to assessing mechanisms, and potential robustness to confounding. Discussion will be given to the public health and clinical implications of the research.

Abstracts

Awards

Godin Prize

The causal effects of religion on cooperation: evidence from a national longitudinal panel study

Joseph Bubulia

Evolutionary theories propose that religious beliefs and practices enhance cooperation, yet quantifying these effects in contemporary society is challenging. Over a 14-year span, we have collated longitudinal data from 70,000 New Zealanders. Here, we employ robust methods for causal inference to investigate the influence of religion on three cooperative dimensions:

1. Ethical behaviour
2. Prejudice
3. Community support received (a novel measure)

Our research reveals that religious beliefs bolster volunteering and diminish prejudice. Attending religious services yields the most powerful effects on volunteering, charitable giving, and prejudice reduction. Notably, we find that only participation in religious services is causally associated with enhanced community support. This study clarifies religion's persistent role in shaping social attitudes and behaviours, even within a predominantly secular, Western society.

Early Career Award

Title: Religion as a natural laboratory for understanding human behavior.

Jordan Moon

What do we gain from the scientific study of religion? One possibility is that religious contexts are unique, and cognition within these contexts is worth understanding. Another possibility is that religion can be viewed as a laboratory for understanding psychology and culture more broadly. Rather than demoting the study of religion to a single context, I argue that the study of religion is useful precisely because it illuminates secular psychological and cultural processes. I discuss several domains in which studying religion has led to important insights, including culture, prejudice, and cognition.

Title: Psychology of Mysticism

Job Chen

Abstract: Mysticism is broadly defined as a direct experience of a deepened connection or unity with the ultimate reality, a shifting away from the centrality of self or an altered sense of the physical body, and an intuitive type of knowing. This presentation provides a model of mysticism as a common thread that unites various human spiritual experiences. I will present literature and empirical research on experiences of cosmic consciousness and unity (monistic mysticism), experiences of divine beings (nondualist mysticism), experiences of spiritism and nonordinary reality (dualist mysticism), and experiences of self- and body-transcendence (pluralist mysticism). Recent psychological studies on Daoism will be highlighted as an example of these various aspects of mystical type experiences. In these expositions, mysticism will be shown both as a direct experience of reality itself and as a channel through which the person sees a deeper level of reality that otherwise remains hidden.



Abstracts
Presentations

Being Agnostic, not Atheist: Investigating Personality, Beliefs, and Development of a Specific Type of Irreligion

Panel keywords: Agnosticism, Atheism, Personality, Beliefs, Secularism

Panel abstract:

Across psychological and sociological studies, the two major categories of nonbelievers are atheists and agnostics. The psychology of agnostics remains unexplored. Do agnostics differ from atheists only on an epistemic issue (the God's existence question) or on deeper personality characteristics? Are beliefs and worldviews of agnostics similar to those of atheists or do agnostics identify themselves in opposition to atheism? Finally, as societies secularize, do agnostics become predominant (no need to strongly oppose religion) or does atheism generalize among nonbelievers (no need to hide one's own disbelief)? This symposium will address these three questions through three papers presenting results from, respectively, a study on 537 UK adults self-identified as Christian, agnostic, and atheist (Moise Karim), a study on 360 US secular and nonreligious people self-identified as agnostic, atheist, or both (Luke Galen), and analyses of data from the EVS-European Values Survey (three waves) in 17 countries (Vassilis Saroglou).

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Vassilis Saroglou
- Affiliation: Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium
- Email: vassilis.saroglou@uclouvain.be

Title: Agnostics as a Distinct Psychological Type Between Believers and Atheists: A Personality Perspective

Keywords: Agnosticism, Atheism, Prosociality, Open-mindedness, Spirituality

Abstract:

Is the distinction between agnosticism and atheism only epistemic or does it reflect deeper personality and other individual differences? Does family religious versus irreligious socialization count? When present, is spirituality of agnostics similar to the ones of atheists and the religionists? We investigated these questions on an online sample of 537 UK adults, self-identified as Christian, agnostic, or atheist. Agnostics were midway between religionists and atheists on prosocial dispositions (agreeableness and belief in world's benevolence), outcomes of intuitive thinking (paranormal beliefs, religiosity), and non-theistic and immanent forms of spirituality; and showed higher openness to experience and weaker convictional self-identification than atheists. Personality uniquely, beyond (ir)religious socialization, predicted agnosticism versus atheism. Spirituality denoted, across all three convictional groups, connectedness with the world, interest in the paranormal, and life satisfaction; among nonbelievers, personal belief in a just-world; and prosocial dispositions and openness to experience among agnostics and Christians but not atheists.

Presenter:

- Name: Moise Karim
- Affiliation: Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium
- Email: moise.karim@uclouvain.be

Co-authors:

Vassilis Saroglou, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

Title: Agnosticism as Self-Identity and as Belief: Predictors of Convergence and Divergence

Keywords: Agnosticism, Atheism, Nonreligious, Secular, Psychosocial, Epistemology

Abstract:

The nonreligious self-identity of "agnostic" includes a diverse range of metaphysical stances (e.g., degrees of certainty in God's existence). Members of a coalition of secular and nonreligious groups located around a metropolitan area in a southern U.S. state were surveyed regarding their nonreligious identity as well as their specific epistemology and metaphysical views. Out of 1,264 members contacted from the social media and email lists, n = 360 responded and provided complete data. Results reveal that some individuals identifying as agnostic share belief systems indistinguishable from those who self-identify as atheists, with some individuals endorsing either or both identities. Conversely, some individuals report uncertainty in their metaphysical beliefs without self-identifying as agnostic. Self-identifying as agnostic reflects a mixture of metaphysical beliefs (e.g., uncertainty, God is unknowable) together with stylistic preferences and psychosocial/ demographic patterns.

Presenter:

- Name: Luke Galen
- Affiliation: Grand Valley State University, Allendale Michigan, USA
- Email: galenl@gvsu.edu

Title: Agnosticism as a Transient State Before Atheism

Keywords: Agnosticism, Atheism, Secularization, Normativity, Religious Trajectory

Abstract:

Recent research shows that, among nonbelievers, agnostics are a distinct from atheists category in terms of personality, cognition, worldviews, and existential attitudes. This work addresses a further question: does agnosticism constitute a transient convictional status before atheism? Using EVS data from 17 Western European countries, we investigated this question both cross-sectionally (EVS 2017) and across three cohorts (EVS 1999 to 2017). Cross-sectionally, in more secular societies, the proportion of atheists among nonbelievers is higher—and agnostics' one lower. From 1999 to 2017, in most countries, the proportion of agnostics among nonbelievers decreased—and inversely the one of atheists increased, a pattern that followed secularization. Nevertheless, the proportion of agnostics remain important. These findings suggest that the more secularism/nonbelief becomes socially normative, more people become or “come out” as clear atheists. Agnosticism seems partly a transient convictional status between religious faith and atheism and partly a sui-generis category.

Presenter:

- Name: Vassilis Saroglou
- Affiliation: Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium
- Email: vassilis.saroglou@uclouvain.be

Co-authors:

Moise Karim, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

Imagination and ritual

Panel keywords: imagination, ritual, religious experience, altered states of consciousness, absorption

Panel abstract:

Imagination plays a crucial role in religion across time and cultures. In the present panel we explore the role of imagination and imaginative processes in religious and ritual experiences. The papers will present research on the role of imagination in ritual-induced liminal states that allow for self-other boundary blurring and subsequent social bonding; on the adult preservation of a sense of imagination and wonder from one's childhood in religious experiences; and on the role of imagination in interacting with gods and god statues during rituals. The presentations examine psychological underpinnings of altered states of consciousness during religious experiences and rituals, including potential predispositions for these experiences such as absorption and awe proneness. Together, they highlight the importance of understanding the role of imagination in shaping religious experiences.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Valerie van Mulukom
- Affiliation: Coventry University
- Email: ac2492@coventry.ac.uk

Title: Blurring the boundaries between self and other: How self-transcendence facilitates bonding through religious rituals and artistic performances

Keywords: self-transcendence, imagination, bonding, ritual, art

Abstract:

Rituals have often been found to induce intense feelings of social togetherness, termed 'collective effervescence'. Ritual components such as synchronous movement induce a liminal state which allows group members to transcend the boundaries between self and others. Indeed, previous experimental fieldwork studies of our lab have revealed an important role of self-transcendence in effecting bonding during religious and secular rituals. In addition to psychological self-other boundary blurring, synchrony can also induce perceptual self-other boundary blurring, such as in body ownership illusions; we hypothesised that this would similarly increase bonding. We tested this through an experiment involving 70 participants from the general public and a performance art piece. We found an increase in bonding from before to after the arts experience, which was predicted by the experience of perceptual and psychological self-other boundary blurring during the performance. I will discuss implications of these findings for our understanding of religion and art.

Presenter:

- Name: Valerie van Mulukom
- Affiliation: Coventry University
- Email: ac2492@coventry.ac.uk

Co-authors:

David Newheiser, Australian Catholic University
Lexi Eikelboom, Australian Catholic University
Miguel Farias, Coventry University

Title: Religion as Memory

Keywords: religious beliefs, child awareness, absorption, shared hallucinations, mystical experience

Abstract:

This paper will argue that memory from early childhood underlies many practices and beliefs that we commonly refer to as "religious". The consciousness of young children does not yet have certain features that characterizes adult consciousness. This paper will concentrate on four of these: (I) a reality that is recognizable; (II) a sense of temporal duration; (III) a sense of self; (IV) an experience of the world that is deeply affected by our acquaintance with (a) language. Absence of these features presumably characterizes the consciousness of infants. It also often characterizes mystical experiences. The paper will argue that the human tendency to engage in so-called religious practices and beliefs makes most sense on the assumption that adults somehow preserve the memory of their state of being in childhood.

Presenter:

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Title: Make-believe and attitudes to cult statues in ancient Greek religion

Keywords: make-belief, imagination, representations, ritual, ancient religion

Abstract:

Interactions with anthropomorphic gods in ancient Greek religion were often mediated through cult statues. These statues embodied a presence of the divine in public space and the household ; they were washed, dressed, touched, greeted, and kissed (Chaniotis, 2017:44). But did worshippers experience the cult statue as merely a representation of the god, or was it in their imagination itself the god? Our paper adds to this long-standing scholarly debate by exploring the issue in terms of make-believe, focusing on the specific example of theoxenia, a ritual where the (statue of the) god was invited to share a meal with humans. We draw on the work of Tanya Luhrmann about make-believe phenomena in evangelical Christianity, aiming to develop a more properly psychologically grounded understanding of the relationship with statues in Greek religion and to compare and contrast those attitudes with make-believe in contemporary case studies.

Presenter:

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Altered States I

Title: Orthodox Hesychast spirituality and Jungian active imagination: approaching self-transcendence

Keywords: Hesychast spirituality, Jungian active imagination, theosis, true Self, self-transcendence

Abstract:

Might the vision of God in ancient Hesychast spirituality and the vision of Self as described in Jungian psychology be essentially the same experience? The Orthodox Christian practice of Hesychast spirituality leads to theoria, a vision of God that constitutes union with God (theosis); the parallels we draw imply that this is also what happens on the psychological level, through encountering the true Self on the journey of individuation. Spiritual or psychological development occurs in both approaches through three stages of catharsis, contemplation/illumination, and ultimate union - or in alchemical language, the nigredo, albedo, and rubedo. Therefore, neither Jungian psychology nor Eastern Orthodox spirituality view themselves as closed conceptual systems; they both take pride in placing lived experiences in approaching the real. Our presentation will focus on the experience of reality and the way it is accessed by these methods: one, an ancient technique of prayer dating back to the early centuries of Christian practice, known as Hesychasm; the other, a psychotherapeutic method suggested by Jung in the 20th century, which he termed "active imagination." More specifically, we will suggest, compare, and contrast ways in which these different approaches to the vision of the Divine may reach their goal.

Presenter:

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Byron Gaist

Title: The Triangle of Sadness and the Death of Spirituality

Keywords: Religion Spirituality Secularity Pluralism

Abstract:

During the last decades, the religious/secular binary has been extended to the religious/spiritual/secular triangle that explicitly or implicitly delineates our field of research for social scientific analyses. Although this refinement has contributed to or even inspired progressive research programs, severe conceptual and methodological critique has risen doubts about the value of these research programs, as well (e.g. research on secular transitions or spiritual transformations in contemporary societies). This paper will focus on the concept of spirituality and evaluate recent efforts to improve this concept. In addition, the results of survey research addressing a possible spiritual transformation in the Netherlands will be discussed and accompanied by exploratory qualitative research into the understandings of spirituality among highly educated young Dutch adults who describe themselves as not religious and not spiritual ("nones"). These empirical studies in combination with conceptual critique will sustain the more general argument that "spirituality" has lost its impact in recent years and that our terminology should go beyond the triangle of religion, spirituality and secularity in order to adequately address and reconstruct the different kinds of pluralism in our "glocal" societies in Western Europe.

Presenter:

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Title: Hope Behind the Veil: William James, W. E. B. Du Bois, and the Religious Experiences of Black Folk

Keywords: William James, W. E. B. Du Bois, Religious Experience, Color Line, Hope

Abstract:

In the fall of 1888, W. E. B. Du Bois walked onto the majestic campus of Harvard University, hoping to attain the intellectual tools needed to better understand America's most urgent problem, the color line. Despite feeling like an outsider, stating that he is "at but not of Harvard," Du Bois sought out "the tutelage of teachers," which was provided by such renowned Harvard professors as Josiah Royce, George Herbert Palmer, and George Santayana. In the end, though, no professor on Harvard's campus captivated the heart and mind of the young Du Bois like William James. To date, scholars have suggested that James's greatest influence was helping Du Bois develop his own style of pragmatic philosophy, not just in terms of his academic pursuits but towards life in general. What this session introduces and explores, instead, is the influence that James's theories on religious experience had on Du Bois's views on such experiences in the African American context. Of particular interest will be Du Bois's conviction that religious experiences are integral to how African Americans overcome the shame and terror of America's color line. According to Du Bois, this living religion was "the true expression of a people's sorrow, despair, and hope."

Presenter:

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Nonbelief: Diversity, Causes, Measurement, & Proselytism

Panel keywords: atheism, nonreligion, unbelief, agnosticism, proselytism

Panel abstract:

Research on non-belief has grown substantially in the last 15 years and this panel provides an overview of current and cutting-edge research on the topic. The four talks encompass a further understanding of the nature and diversity of non-belief across cultures, new findings about the causes of non-belief from the Explaining Atheism project, a new measure intended to explore secular worldviews, and an investigation into nonreligious proselytism. Each talk represents an exciting new direction in non-belief research that will provide insight into an underexplored population.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Kyle J. Messick
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Title: The Nature and Diversity of Atheism & Agnosticism

Keywords: atheism, agnosticism, unbelief, worldview, nonreligion

Abstract:

Developing a better descriptive understanding of the nature and diversity of atheism and agnosticism has both public and scientific importance. In this talk, I will present the findings of the Understanding Unbelief (UU) programme (2017-2020), an interdisciplinary research effort across Brazil, China, Denmark, Japan, the UK and the USA to better understand the nature and diversity of atheism and agnosticism. I will outline our results indicating that atheism and agnosticism do not necessarily entail naturalism or anti-religion, that simplistic dichotomies between theists and non-

theists on morals and values are not supported, that atheists and agnostics embrace a diversity of labels and identities, and that while no clear 'atheist' or 'agnostic' demographic profile exists, both can exhibit distinct national features.

Presenter:

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- Lois Lee, University of Kent
- Stephen Bullivant, St. Mary's University/University of Notre Dame Australia
- Miguel Farias, Coventry University
- Ryan Hornbeck, Xiamen University

Title: Explaining Atheism: Untangling the causes of non-belief

Keywords: atheism, agnosticism, non-belief, causality, open-science

Abstract:

Belief and non-belief are complex processes with explanations transcending different psychological domains. The Explaining Atheism project looks to build upon the findings of Understanding Unbelief by examining the causal factors that may explain non-belief. Examining possible explanations from a range of areas of psychology such as Cognitive Biases, Thinking Styles, Socialisation, Motivation, and Morals and Values, the Explaining Atheism project will look cross-culturally at the causal pathways by which these factors may drive non-belief. In this talk I will present early findings of the project, specifically the results of our first round of large scale piloting in Brazil, Denmark, the UK, and Japan, along with future plans for this work including China and the USA.

Presenter:

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Co-authors:

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- Stephen Bullivant, St. Mary's University/University of Notre Dame Australia
- Miguel Farias, Coventry University
- Lois Lee, University of Kent
- Aiyana Willard, Brunel University, London
- Jonathan A. Lanman, Queen's University Belfast

Title: Worldly Worldviews Worldwide: Introducing the Secular Worldviews Scale

Keywords: Worldviews, secular, nonreligion, unbelief, scale development

Abstract:

Despite a consistent increase in individuals who do not consider themselves religious and who do not believe in God, only relatively little is known about their worldviews. We previously identified 51 categories of secular worldview beliefs of non-religious, non-believing individuals from 10 predominantly Western countries through an open-ended question and a bottom-up coding approach (van Mulukom et al., 2022). However, it is not always possible to use this resource-intensive method in psychological belief studies, which typically use short online surveys. Here, we introduce the Secular Worldviews Scale. The scale includes items which reflect the previous 51 belief categories and answer the Big Questions, including questions of axiology, teleology, epistemology, ontology, cosmology, praxeology, anthropology, and societal vision. We will address reliability and construct validity of the scale, emerged worldview belief clusters, and planned future research, including applications of this quantitative measure for nonreligion and worldview research, and beyond.

Presenter:

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- Annick de Witt, Utrecht University

Title: (Non)Religious Proselytizing: Explaining the Desire to (De)Convert Others

Keywords: proselytizing, conversion, deconversion, atheism, unbelief

Abstract:

Despite expansive writings on conversion and deconversion processes targeting the self, there is little investigation into the desire of one individual to convert or deconvert others. Research on proselytization often focuses on endorsement at the institutional level while overlooking personal interactions between individuals. Attempts to look at nonreligious proselytizing behaviors – where a nonbeliever attempts to deconvert believers – are fewer still. New findings are reported on attitudes towards nonreligious, Christian, and Muslim proselytizing behaviors based on typologies of nonbelief and belief, spiritual struggles, Christian nationalism, religious fundamentalism, right-wing authoritarianism, scrupulosity, personality traits, and demographic variables. These findings provide insight into variables that contribute to nonreligious and religious proselytizing behaviors at the individual level.

Presenter:

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Gender

Title: The role of spirituality and religiosity in the LGBTQIA+ population

Keywords: LGTBQIA+ population; health inequalities; religious transit; depression symptoms; coping

Abstract:

This is a transversal, exploratory and mixed method study that aimed to comprehend the role of spirituality/religiosity (S/R) in LGBTQIA+ population and its relation to depressive symptoms, religious transit, attachment style, religious attitudes, religious centrality and coping strategies. This population is three times more susceptible to develop depression and it is not clear the role of S/R on the development of such clinical condition. Religious transit in general population in Brazil is very high, but its psychological factors remain unclear. We wonder whether gender may predict that. The sample was composed by 83 Brazilian participants, mean age 28.2 (SD 7.87). Data were collected online via Qualtrics platform and distributed in a snowballing sampling by LGBTQIA+ local activists' leaders. As instruments, the following questionnaires were used: Patient Health Questionnaire, Spiritual/Religious Coping Scale - SRCOPE-14, Attachment to God Inventory (IAD-Br), Centrality of Religiosity Scale and Religious Attitudes Scale (RAE-20), sociodemographic data including questions about religious transit. The quantitative results were analyzed in descriptive and inferential ways. The qualitative results were analyzed via IRaMuTEQ. Results are discussed in terms of health inequities, gender identity, LGBTQIA+ specificities and religious transit and cognition.

Presenter:

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Title: LGBTQ+ Acceptance within Mainline Denominations in Upper Midwestern US

Keywords: LGBTQ+, mainline, Midwest US, liberal Christianity

Abstract:

Mental distress, including suicidal ideation, is concerningly common within the LGBTQ+ population. Protective factors otherwise seen in religious membership has not been duplicated in this population, especially in this region of the US. One possible explanation is historic condemnations, which have changed among liberal traditions within Christianity and Judaism. This survey will explore specific effectiveness in language used in liberal religious communities within the tri-state area in expressing acceptance and welcome for LGBTQ+ individuals and families. A secondary aim is to explore how religious communities further embrace LGBTQ+ individuals through additional activities, such as weddings, use of accepting symbols within worship space, and involvement of LGBTQ+ identified individuals in day-to-day activities including leadership. A QR code will be

shared that links to a SurveyMonkey link. This will be shared with Gundersen patients as well as networks of religious communities, and regional LGBTQ+ organizations using a “snowball” approach, encouraging the sharing of the link among formal and informal networks. Survey participants will be limited to those over the age of 18 and within Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa for this pilot survey.

Presenter:

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Title: The Role of Muslim Collective Narcissism and Extrinsic Religious Orientation in Endorsing Gender Conspiracy Beliefs: Evidence from a Turkish Muslim Sample

Keywords: Women's rights, Conspiracy beliefs, Religiosity, Outgroup hostility, Istanbul Convention

Abstract:

The controversy surrounding women's rights and gender equality in Turkey has sparked debates about the compatibility of these values with family and religious beliefs, resulting in the government's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention. Similar debates have also emerged in several EU countries, portraying gender studies and activism for gender equality as a hidden agenda aimed at undermining traditional values and social structures (Marchlewska et al., 2019). Such beliefs are considered as conspiracy theories, and the present study aimed to investigate their prevalence and psychological predictors among religious Turkish Muslims. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of collective narcissism and extrinsic religious orientation, we hypothesized that individuals with a stronger defensive identification with their religious group and an extrinsic orientation to religion would be more likely to endorse gender conspiracy beliefs. To test our hypotheses, we conducted a study on a sample of 469 religious Turkish Muslims, using the Gender Conspiracy Beliefs Scale, a modified version of the Collective Narcissism Scale, and the Revised Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale. Results showed a significant positive correlation between extrinsic religious orientation, Muslim collective narcissism, and gender conspiracy beliefs, suggesting that a defensive identification with a religious group makes individuals more likely to endorse gender conspiracy beliefs. Additionally, we found that extrinsic religious orientation and Muslim collective narcissism were significant predictors of outgroup hostility. These findings highlight the importance of understanding the relationship between religiosity, collective narcissism, and gender conspiracy beliefs in religious Turkish Muslims, particularly in the context of the ongoing debates surrounding women's rights and gender equality.

Presenter:

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Studying rituals in an entangled world I

Panel keywords: Ritual, embodiment, meaning-making, psychological transformation, interdisciplinarity

Panel abstract:

Ritual meanings, functions and materialities have long been studied by scholars from diverse fields, including anthropology, psychology, and religious studies. Recently, there have been calls for a paradigm shift in the study of ritual. For instance, Taves et al. (2018) call for thick descriptions and cognitive studies to understand how rituals shape (non)human worldviewing. Similarly, Whitehouse (2022) urges the creation of transdisciplinary theories and metrics regarding rituals to address academic inquiries, policy issues, and global cooperation challenges. Such challenges include responses to climate change (Pike, Nita), psychological transformation (Danbolt & Stifoss-Hanssen, Wojtkowiak), coping and addiction (Gordon-Lennox), and engagement with death (Mathijssen, Vähäkangas). These two panels will present empirical research on rituals from transdisciplinary perspectives and include a roundtable discussion on the future study of rituals, including integrating cognitive and ethnographic approaches and the relationship between theory and practice.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Brenda Mathijssen
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Title: Biosemiotics of Ritual: Power Signs, Feeling Lines and Story Maps in Climate Protest

Keywords: Rituals, biosemiotics, climate change, protest performances, ethnographic research

Abstract:

Based on my investigation of protest rituals, this presentation will develop key concepts – such as power sign, feeling line, story map, ritual actant –to advance a biosemiotics model for examining ritual. I will show that by investigating the semiotics and relationality of ritual action and ritual space, we arrive at a new understanding of the identities the ritual is enacting and constructing, for both ritualists and their audience. I will discuss artistic protest performances based on data gathered during my longitudinal ethnographic research of the climate movement in Britain (2008-present), with a focus on a climate protest primer ritual known among activists as ‘Drawing in Oil’. I will ask how these theoretical concepts can help us understand key strategies for cultural change in the climate movement and explore how these strategies are rooted in the Christian tradition and its own power signs, feeling lines and story maps.

Presenter:

- Name: Dr Maria Nita
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Title: Personalization of rituals and ritual spaces

Keywords: Personalization, ritual, ritual spaces, death, sexuality

Abstract:

On the basis of my empirical studies on burial, memorial and prayer rituals, this paper will discuss the need for personalization of rituals and ritual spaces. Finnish burial and memorial rituals are shaped by both Lutheran traditions and by the creation of own rituals, ritualization, and ritual spaces. My work on same-sex prayer rituals shows that the ritual participants considered the personalization of religious rituals to be more important than following heterosexual religious traditions. Whereas the participants in the burial and memorial rituals did not identify themselves very religious, the same-sex couples who opted for a church ritual were mainly very religious. On the basis of my work, I will reflect on how theory and practice must go hand in hand, since both are essential while conducting valid research. My own approach is ethnographic and transdisciplinary but I also value theories and my theological roots.

Presenter:

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Title: Embodied meanings in ritual

Keywords: Embodiment, ritual, meaning making

Abstract:

Rituals can be defined as embodied cultural performances that enact individual or collective emotion. From a psychological perspective, rituals ask for a higher cognitive load because they are performed with a certain focus and in a certain, prescribed way (Boyer & Lienard, 2006). Rituals thus address basic sensory, perceptual, and physical processes, as well as higher cognitive skills for the interpretation of for instance symbols. How these embodied, psychological and processes interact is difficult to study, but current research shows a correlation between physical responses (like heart rate) and psycho-social processes (identification with participants). Moreover, rituals are argued to be meaningful (Cain & Scrivner 2021), but a model of meaning making in rituals is lacking. This paper will theoretically explore processes of meaning from an embodied psychological perspective. I will unravel how embodied meaning making in ritual can theoretically be understood by bringing together insights from psychology, philosophy and ritual theory.

Presenter:

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Measurements I

Title: Introducing the IAPR Author Development Initiative

Keywords: publishing, mentorship, methodology, theory

Abstract:

This session introduces a new IAPR initiative dedicated to the support and development of authors. This initiative addresses three complex and sometimes volatile challenges to the breadth and depth of the field: 1) Institutional pressure to increase publication rates, 2) the expansion of predatory publishing venues, 3) an imperative need to expand the range of voices represented in the field. The program is focused on advancing work beyond atheoretical, non-directional projects by enhancing theory and methodology within the author's context in order to maximize the work's message and influence. We will provide information about how interested authors can apply to be connected with a mentor who will work

closely with them on refining, expanding, and moving ideas toward publication using Open Science and/or related principles as applicable to the author's needs and goals.

Presenter:

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Co-authors:

Kevin L. Ladd, Indiana University South Bend

Title: A global study with the Faith Q-sort: some central findings

Keywords: Q-methodology, Faith Q-sort, Religious Typology, Values, Family Resemblance

Abstract:

What are the main way of being religious among your adults today? The research project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) implemented a cross-cultural, comparative and mixed-method study of religiosity in 12 countries worldwide. At the core of YARG was the use and development of the Faith Q-Sort (FQS), originally designed by David Wulff (2019), but it as combined with a survey and semi-structured interviews. Religion as object of study has become increasingly evasive and the FQS met our ambition to find sensitive ways of assessing contemporary religiosity also in an international perspective. FQS is based on Q-methodology and a novel method in the Study of religions and it allows an interesting shift from a bird's-eye view of the shared patterns of being religious in our international sample, to the exploration of cross-cultural variations of these patterns across our countries reflecting the relevance of Wittgenstein's idea of family resemblance. This presentation describes the project with a specific focus on the FQS and it summarizes the main findings from the project with a focus on religious typology, cross-cultural variations, and associations with basic values.

Presenter:

- Name: Peter Nynäs
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Title: Explaining why belonging to a denomination is not a trustworthy measure of religiosity across countries

Keywords: religiosity, measurement invariance (MI), World Values Survey (WVS), European Values Study (EVS), multilevel structural equation modelling (MLSEM)

Abstract:

Individual religiosity measures have been widely used to compare individuals and societies. However, the cross-country comparability of measures has often been questioned. Comparability is a prerequisite for meaningful analyses of religiosity across countries and depends on measurement invariance. It indicates that the same construct is measured in the same way in all countries, so respondents understand the corresponding survey questions similarly. If the measurement is noninvariant, factors other than religiosity may systematically influence individual scores, and cross-country comparisons may be untrustworthy. While previous studies showed that religiosity measures lack invariance, it remains to be explained why they produce non-comparable data. The current research aims to systematically explain cross-country noninvariance of religiosity measurement. Specifically, I focus on the question that asks respondents about their belonging to a religious denomination. I use the joint dataset of the World Values Survey and European Values Study and employ the multilevel structural equation modelling method that allows accounting for noninvariance in a theoretically driven way. I explain the noninvariance by the cross-country differences in religious composition, regulation of religion, religious taxes, secularisation, history of communism, and cultural background. I conclude with directions for improving religiosity measurement and recommendations for practical researchers using the WVS/EVS data.

Presenter:

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Panel keywords: mixed methods; qualitative research; intercultural research; faith development; Nicaragua

Panel abstract:

This panel assembles a broad variety of intercultural research in religion. The first paper focuses on the question how research among a vulnerable group, i.e. refugees, can be accomplished successfully while maintaining the participants' integrity. The second paper presents research on interreligious dialog in Nicaragua with a focus on how field work can be done in a challenging environment. The last two papers are part of the Bielefeld-Chattanooga Study on Faith Development over the Lifespan and engage with questions of how a very comprehensive sample of qualitative interviews can be assessed using QDA software like Provalis and ATLAS.ti, while at the same time negotiating intercultural differences in conceptions of, for example, morality.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Ramona Bullik
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Title: Sensitivity in Conducting Empirical Research on Refugees' Religiosity

Keywords: Refugees; religiosity; empirical research; vulnerability; faith development interview

Abstract:

Many refugees might suffer from what has been done to them in the name of their own (or another) religion. This aspect makes conducting research on refugees' religiosity a sensitive topic. The data presented is derived from the sub-project of FlÜGe (Bielefeld University) on "Considering the Role of Religion and Spirituality in Coping with Critical Life Events among the Refugees in Germany." 30 Faith Development Interviews were conducted. Rich data about the biographies, social relations, and religiosity of participants were collected. Since there are only few established rules for conducting research among refugees, the role of the researcher and the approach to the participant are crucial. The aim is to advocate for sensibility, consciousness and reflexivity when (1) engaging in research on a demographically diverse population, (2) a vulnerable sample with dramatical life events, (3) a multireligious, multiethnic and multilingual sample.

Presenter:

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Title: Ruptures and Reencounters in Nicaraguan Christianity. Interreligious Dialog at the Bases Level

Keywords: (Neo-)Pentecostalism; democracy; inter-religious dialog; religious persecution; political persecution

Abstract:

Since 2007 in Nicaragua there has been a tendency to identify (Neo-)Pentecostal churches as allies of Daniel Ortega's regime, because of the sacralization of the government's political discourse, and because many evangelical leaders legitimized government actions. Since 2018, a series of protests against Ortega's government led to a strong repression against the protesters by the government. In this context, the Catholic Church and some Evangelical leaders took an open stance against the regime, thus, united by the governmental persecution, Catholic and Evangelical believers came together demanding for democracy and the end of state violence. Based on my doctoral thesis's field work conducted in 2020, in this presentation, I will show how political polarization and persecution reshaped the relationship between Catholic and Evangelical believers, allowing an interreligious dialog at the bases level; furthermore, I will show methodological challenges of conducting field work research in a political persecution context.

Presenter:

- Name: Álvaro Augusto Espinoza Rizo
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Title: Mining Data for Holistic Analysis. A Case Study of Utilizing Qualitative Data Analysis Tools to Formalize New Approaches in the Study of Religion and Spirituality

Keywords: mixed method analysis, longitudinal applications, data mining

Abstract:

Within the field of psychology of religion and spirituality, new analysis methodologies are emerging yearly (Hood et al., 2019). Yet, many of these approaches are still not fully understood or commonly used by research practitioners. Furthermore, many of these new analytic and thematic approaches have required some programming knowledge to undertake complex utilization of the analysis method in the past. This paper provides

explanations and examples of potential new user-friendly analysis approaches currently offered by vendors such as Provalis to incorporate more sophisticated qualitative data mining approaches, data convergence modeling, and factor analysis generation. Utilizing a large sample of interviews collected through the Bielefeld-Chattanooga Longitudinal Study, we will demonstrate the functionality of such modeling and how researchers need not be programmers to generate a useful analysis for answering complex research questions.

Presenter:

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- Ramona Bullik, Bielefeld University, Germany

Title: Exploring Moral Foundations in a Cross-cultural Sample of Faith Development Interviews

Keywords: Moral Foundations Theory, ATLAS.ti, Faith Development Interviews, qualitative research

Abstract:

People's worldviews and their moral convictions are inseparably linked, and thus investigating one cannot be done while ignoring the other. However, doing so is a complicated task as not only are moral positions difficult to clearly separate and define, but the mere concept of morality is also heavily debated. Taking Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) as outlined by Graham and Haidt as a starting point, this presentation aims at proposing an approach to investigate morality as presented in qualitative data. At the core of our proposed method is a coding guideline created by a transatlantic research team using the qualitative data analysis software ATLAS.ti. We will focus on the establishment of such a guideline in a cross-cultural team and on the procedure of coding narrative data from Faith Development Interviews (FDIs) with a US-American and German sample.

Presenter:

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Covid / Societal Pressures

Title: Religion, Finding Positives in the Pandemic, and Changing Thoughts about God, Church, and Mortality

Keywords: Resilience, Benefit Finding, COVID, Belief

Abstract:

Various aspects of religiosity are associated with coping and coping styles in the face of adversity. We conducted a survey approximately six months into pandemic-related shutdowns in the United States to examine the role of religiosity in the tendency to find positives in the pandemic. Belief in deity predicted a greater likelihood of finding positive aspects in the pandemic. Attendance at religious services before or during the pandemic was not significantly associated with finding such positives, although all means were in the direction of attendance co-occurring with finding positives. Participants also answered open-ended questions about whether they had experienced any pandemic-related changes in their thoughts about deity(-ies), their religious community, or about mortality. To the extent that people reported changes in thoughts about deity, they were largely positive, and changes in thoughts about connections with religious communities were largely negative. Changes in thoughts about mortality reflected more thinking about their own (or others') eventual death as well as gratitude and new priorities for their remaining time. These findings add to a substantial body of work on the role of religion in coping with adverse events and suggest that, when appropriate, helping professionals could foster use of this existing resource.

Presenter:

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Title: Does religiosity predict people's confidence in national resilience? A longitudinal study of Poles in the time of COVID-19 pandemic

Keywords: religiosity, national resilience, COVID-19 pandemic, political attitudes, psychological well-being

Abstract:

Religiosity influences people's sense agency when coping with various stressors. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic not only affected physical and mental health but also people's beliefs about their own and their community's abilities to control significant life challenges. Given this context, we examined with a sample of adult Poles (N = 1246) the role of religiosity in predicting confidence in national resilience, operationalized as beliefs that government, its major institutions, and citizens would effectively cope with serious emergencies and crises. Longitudinal data were collected online in July 2021 (Time 1), February 2022 (Time 2) and August 2022 (Time 3). Accounting for demographic variables, Time 1 religiosity explained 15% of the variance in Time 3 national resilience. Is this relationship between religiosity and national resilience simply due to the fact that religiosity is routinely correlated with social conditions and political attitudes? Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted that controlled for demographics, COVID-19 stressors, COVID-19 related sense of community, sense of solidarity, trust in government, personal efficacy and psychological distress as well as political attitudes such as sense of national identity and national narcissism. Results showed that religiosity remained a significant and positive predictor of national resilience. Theoretical and practical implications will be discussed.

Presenter:

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Title: The impact of the covid crisis on elderly people's spirituality: receiving home care and volunteering in Switzerland

Keywords: elderly people homecare, coping, covid, volunteering, existential issues

Abstract:

During the Covid-19 crisis, the Swiss authorities decreed a semi-lockdown from March to June 2020. Some human contacts restrictions were then extended throughout the rest of the year. In our study, we focus on a population that is often being described as particularly vulnerable in the general research on mental and physical health. We collected data from elderly people living at home to assess 1) felt lacks and deprivations during this period, particularly in regard to religion and spirituality (R/S), and 2. the R/S coping resources that were mobilized. Our study adopted a mixed-method approach including surveys and semi-structured interviews following a nested-sample design. Two populations were targeted: (1) older people involved in organized volunteering (n=1344); (2) elderly receiving home care (n=3000). 624 volunteers and 645 seniors receiving home care answered the questionnaire. 43 volunteers and 37 seniors receiving home care had a semi-structured interview. Although the covid crisis had little impact on the feeling of happiness, the need for R/S assistance appears to be strongly linked to the lack felt at this level during the first semi-lockdown. Volunteer activities were transformed. The need to talk about existential issues is partly explained by (mental) health and quality of life.

Presenter:

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Title: Exploring the experiences of British Pagan military veterans: A work in progress

Keywords: Paganism, Neo-Pagan, Military, Qualitative, Reflexive thematic analysis

Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of Pagan veterans of the British military using reflexive thematic analysis. Religious/spiritual beliefs have long been understood to provide benefits during periods of stress, yet there are many elements of Paganism that could clash with military service such as Paganism's emphasis on individual accountability and agency in comparison to the strict hierarchies of the military. The majority of research examining the role and impact of military personnel's religious/spiritual beliefs is either focused on the United States,

or it concentrates on the role of military chaplains. Therefore an absence of studies using a British Pagan military sample indicates a gap in the research. This paper will present initial analysis of interviews with three British Pagan military veterans exploring how they balanced their spiritual beliefs with their military role, how the two may have influenced each other, and the relationships between military and civilian pagans.

Presenter:

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Religious and Social Identities

Title: The Religious Identity of Psychologists in Brazil

Keywords: Religious Identity; Psychologists; Brazil.

Abstract:

This study aims to explore the religious identity of Brazilian psychologists from the perspective of cognitive psychology of religion. Brazil is renowned for its diverse range of religious beliefs and practices, creating a complex landscape of religious identities. In this context, psychologists are required to navigate the religious beliefs of their clients while also developing and maintaining their professional identity. This research seeks to investigate the potential impact of personal beliefs on professional performance and to identify any limitations in psychologists' training concerning religiosity and spirituality. The central research question is therefore: how is the religious identity of Brazilian psychologists constructed in contemporary society? To address this question, a mixed research methodology was employed, using both qualitative and quantitative strategies to organize and analyse the data. A total of 60 interviews were conducted with Brazilian psychologists working in various professional contexts, including private practice and inpatient and outpatient care. The interviews were analysed using content analysis techniques aided by the IRaMuTeQ® software. Preliminary findings suggest that the intersection between professional and religious identity is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, involving elements of psychological science, ethical obligations, and individual life experiences.

Presenter:

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Title: Do we Trust Science and Scientists? A Preliminary Cross-Country Exploration into how Social Religious Identity Relates to Trust

Keywords: Identity; Religion and Science

Abstract:

Previous research investigating perceptions of science and scientists indicates that there are certain physical, behavioural, and belief system related attributes which people associate with being a scientist. Social identity theory indicates that our identification with social groups can impact how we see ourselves and other groups. However, not much research has specifically investigated religious social identity and its relationship to trust of science and scientists. The current research consists of 4 studies (n = 1146) across 4 countries (UK, Germany, Spain, Argentina) investigating perceptions of scientists, relating to religious social identity. This exploratory research includes several targets with multiple identities, combining religious identity (religious, spiritual, atheist, non-religious, or none specified) and scientist identity (science or evolutionary science). Results from mixed ANOVA analyses show that social religious social identity does relate to the view of scientists. Religious participants, regardless of country, rated scientists as more trustworthy than evolutionary scientists. Exploration of trust in scientists with different (non)religious identities (religious, spiritual, atheist, non-religious, or none specified) by personal religious identification revealed not only an ingroup bias, but an overarching bias towards a scientist without any (non)religious identification, which provides an interesting avenue to further explore.

Presenter:

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Title: Dissenting with religious leadership – the role of identification and (religious) authority

Keywords: public dissent, deviance, social norms, religious authority

Abstract:

Challenges of the modern and entangled world require adaptations within organizations, including religious ones. However, religious institutions are not always ready to embrace change, even in the face of a changed public opinion. Under which circumstances are members of religious communities likely to voice public dissent and to demand change from their leaders?

The Normative Conflict Model (Packer, 2008) states that members will show public dissent when they perceive a harmful group norm and when they highly (vs. lowly) identify with the group. We further propose an additional moderator: acceptance of authority. This moderator is not limited to, but might play a special role in religious groups, where authorities often are not democratically but religiously legitimized. We tested the Normative Conflict Model and its proposed extension among members of the Church of the Latter Day Saints in the US (N = 1577), examining the likelihood to publicly dissent predicted by identification and acceptance of authority. Results confirm the proposed interaction between identification and acceptance of authority (Beta = -.191, $p < .001$). The model and extension are further applied to public dissent among members of the Catholic Church in Germany. Implications for society and policy-making are discussed.

Presenter:

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Studying rituals in an entangled world II

Panel keywords: Ritual, embodiment, meaning-making, psychological transformation, interdisciplinarity

Panel abstract:

Ritual meanings, functions and materialities have long been studied by scholars from diverse fields, including anthropology, psychology, and religious studies. Recently, there have been calls for a paradigm shift in the study of ritual. For instance, Taves et al. (2018) call for thick descriptions and cognitive studies to understand how rituals shape (non)human worldviewing. Similarly, Whitehouse (2022) urges the creation of transdisciplinary theories and metrics regarding rituals to address academic inquiries, policy issues, and global cooperation challenges. Such challenges include responses to climate change (Pike, Nita), psychological transformation (Danbolt & Stifoss-Hanssen, Wojtkowiak), coping and addiction (Gordon-Lennox), and engagement with death (Mathijssen, Vähäkangas). These two panels will present empirical research on rituals from transdisciplinary perspectives and include a roundtable discussion on the future study of rituals, including integrating cognitive and ethnographic approaches and the relationship between theory and practice.

Panel chairperson:

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Title: Causal pathways from ritual to psychological transformation

Keywords: ritual, psychological transformation, meaning-making, corona

Abstract:

Recent research points to the dimension of meaning-making through ritualization. From a psychological point of view, rituals can be defined as the practice of making meaning through the use of symbols, and the attribution of a "sacred" character to certain objects and experiences (2014). This theoretical basis opens the field to non-religious and religious actors, to secular, new age, idealistic activists, and others. In this presentation we argue that meaning-making through ritualizing is achieved by allowing participants to participate in ritual performance, symbolic actions, by giving ample space to bodily aspects and the senses, and to fellowship. Elaborated candle lighting ceremonies, and the use of traditional sanctuaries have showed this to be important (2021). We will present a discussion of ritualizations during the corona period (2021), which indicates that a forward direction could be to develop tools that allow ritual creativity to function immediately during emergencies.

Presenter:

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Title: Coping with Hardship Through Ritualised Behaviours

Keywords: ritual, ritualised behaviour, coping, addiction, OCD

Abstract:

A continuum of ritualised behaviours, from ritual to addiction to obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), highlights the diverse approaches we humans may use to meet our deep need for a sense of safety and connection. Many researchers and practitioners are uneasy with the mind-body divide behind much of the current scientific work, medical treatments and psychotherapies. This presentation contributes to the discussion by using a binocular theoretical lens — polyvagal theory (PVT) and structural ritualization theory (SRT) — to focus on how these ritualised behaviours can function as a buffer against the feelings of emptiness, distress and powerlessness associated with hardship.

Presenter:

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Title: Ritual worldmaking: Embodied subjunctivity in ritual landscapes

Keywords: ritual, meaning-making, embodiment, place, subjunctive

Abstract:

Rituals have long been recognized as embodied practices that are imbued with subjunctive qualities. Existing scholarship has offered limited attention to the interdependence of these two dimensions. This paper addresses this gap by exploring current research on embodiment and subjunctivity in rituals. Drawing on examples from qualitative research on rituals in contemporary Europe, including death rituals and ritualizations at megalithic monuments in the Netherlands, it develops the concept of ritual worldmaking to highlight how materiality, embodiment, and subjunctivity interconnect in ritual practice. Through the notion of ritual worldmaking, this paper aims to contribute to the discussion of the complex and dynamic role of rituals in meaning-making processes and in sustaining and/or transforming social realities.

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Measurements II

Title: Spiritual intelligence and spiritual exegesis: Constructing and testing a self-devised inventory of interdisciplinary importance for psychology of religion.

Keywords: Spiritual intelligence; spiritual exegesis; self-love; pleasure; pain.

Abstract:

Spiritual intelligence and spiritual exegesis form constructs in psychology of religion and psychotherapy. They have been studied in several ways within the scientific paradigms of psychology. In psychology of religion, they have been investigated -among others- as adaptive values -especially, spiritual intelligence- towards the attainment of goals. Spiritual exegesis has been a valid explanation for spiritual intelligence in psychology of religion. In this presentation, I will introduce a self-devised inventory of 55 items, which was initially pilot-studied, the rationale of which was to discuss self-love as a criterion variable for pleasure and pain (predictor variables). The pilot study has shown excellent internal reliability/consistency ($\alpha=.984$) on all items of this inventory, which means can be safely employed for the main study. In the main study, the hypotheses investigated, were if pleasure increases, self-love will increase as well, whereas if pain increases, self-love will decrease. Results demonstrated a positive correlation between pleasure and self-love -an increase in pleasure predicted an increase in self-love: $r=0.172$ and significant at $p<0.5$ - and a negative correlation between pain and self-love -an increase of pain predicted a decrease in self-love: $r=0.429$ and significant at $p<0.5$. In the discussion, what will also be explored would be the meaning of spiritual knowledge in view to thoughts, emotions, and behaviours from a cognitive-behavioural perspective and how could that be practically employed via spiritual exegesis in an interdisciplinary association with the writings of Saint Maximus the Confessor.

Presenter:

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Title: Religiosity's and spirituality's location within in the circumplex of personality metatraits and other circumplex models

Keywords: spirituality, religiosity, circumplex models

Abstract:

Religiosity place in the personality structure is quite well known. Existing meta-analyses have shown that religiosity in all its forms is systematically associated positively with conscientiousness and agreeableness, and in some samples some of its forms are also associated weakly with extraversion and openness to change. Yet, no attempts have been made to localize religiosity inside circumplex of personality metatraits or other circumplex models. In case of spirituality, situation is not as clear. First, albeit it was investigated previously, its associations with the personality were not fully assessed independently from the religiosity. Second, measures of spirituality used in many of the studies included in the meta-analyses were of dubious quality or did not allow for differentiation from religiosity. Therefore, in the current three studies on Polish general population (N = 2,729) we aimed to examine the location of religiosity and spirituality on different circumplexes: personality metatraits by Strus et al., interpersonal behaviors by Wiggins, interpersonal motives by Locke, and newly proposed narcissism circumplex by Żemojtel-Piotrowska et al. Similarities between locations of spirituality and religiosity within the circumplexes outweighs differences – in all the analyses they were positioned in the same octant (between gamma+ and alpha+ personality metatraits). We discuss these results in terms of functional and personal underpinnings of these two numinous constructs, also by referring to Piedmont's theory of spiritual transcendence.

Presenter:

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Title: Muslim Religious Trauma Scale: A preliminary study

Keywords: Religious trauma, Muslims, scale

Abstract:

Although religion has numerous positive effects on well-being, its negative influences have hardly been studied. This study aims to develop an instrument to measure traumatic experiences undergone by Muslims caused by religious or secular people in religious contexts. The content of the item pool will cover traumatic experiences such as religious discrimination, restrictions, abuses, sexual offences and harms created by religious and secular people for religious concerns. The data will be collected from 250 Muslim participants aged 16-50. The newly constructed items will be exposed to exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The criterion validity of the new scale will be checked through its comparisons with the spiritual abuse and harm scale (Koch & Edstrom, 2022), the symptoms of trauma scale (Ford et al., 2015) and the religious struggle scale (Exline et al., 2014). The scale will allow for determining the extent of religious trauma among Muslims.

Presenter:

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Mental Health I

Title: Investigation of Grief Process and Spiritual Resources of Women Who Have Experienced Loss During Pregnancy

Keywords: Spirituality, Spiritual Resources, Perinatal Loss, Pregnancy, Grief.

Abstract:

Pregnancy causes many biological, psychological and physiological changes in women, but it also carries many risks. The most painful of these risks is the loss of babies by women pregnant due to miscarriage or other reasons. The woman who lost her baby during pregnancy goes through a difficult process psychologically and goes through a grieving process in which she copes with emotions such as sadness, grief, anger, and guilt. The spiritual resources of the individual have an important place in making sense of difficult life events, and positively affects the coping and her ability to resist the difficulties. In this study, the relation between the spiritual resources of women who experienced loss during pregnancy and the perinatal grief processes were examined with the correlational model, one of the quantitative research methods. The research group consists of voluntary participants (N=168) through purposive sampling method and snowball sampling method. Data were collected online with Personal Information Form, Perinatal Grief Scale (Toedter et al., 1988) and Spirituality Scale (Şirin, 2018). As a result found significant correlations between Perinatal Grief level and sub-factors (Spiritual Coping, Transcendence, Spiritual Experience, Meaning Search, Spiritual Satisfaction, Attachment, Harmony with Nature) and Spirituality level and sub-factors (Active Grief, Difficulty in Coping, Hopelessness) of research group.

Presenter:

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Title: “Why does this happen to me?” Varieties of religious and spiritual struggles with demographic and clinical correlates in mental health care in The Netherlands

Keywords: Religious/spiritual struggles, demographics, diagnoses, mixed methods

Abstract:

Background. Religious and spiritual (R/S) struggles are likely to impede mental health treatment and recovery processes. The current study shows how R/S struggles play a role during mental illness and what approaches are experienced as helpful. Besides it offers new insights in differences of R/S struggles between various diagnostic groups. Methods. Using a mixed methods approach, 35 semi-structured interviews and 201 (baseline) plus 136 (follow-up after 6 months) quantitative questionnaires among clinical mental health patients in a Christian and a secular mental health clinic formed a basis for the analyses. Narrative and inductive content analyses were applied to the interviews and linear regression together with hybrid mixed models were used for the quantitative part. Results. In the core, patients experience R/S struggles as negative feelings (e.g. loneliness, shame, mistrust) and the absence of positive feelings (e.g. hope and peace). R/S struggles are influenced by someone's R/S background and beliefs as well as by the illness and other events. Higher intrinsic religiosity, more depressive symptoms, a longer duration of illness and a higher level of unmet R/S care needs, were associated with higher levels of R/S strain (pietistic reformed showing the highest levels), whereas a higher level of R/S support was associated with lower levels of strain. Diagnostic groups differed in common types of R/S struggles, e.g. among patients with depression, a lack of positive R/S experiences, isolation and feelings of guilt and shame were present, whereas patients with cluster B personality disorders showed ambivalence and anger towards God and others and some reported existential tiredness. All participants appreciated a receptive approach (1) and many preferred an active approach (2) by mental health professionals. Some patients reported benefits from a directive approach (3). Conclusions. R/S struggles are tightly connected to and to some extent may be the language of mental illness. Mental health professionals are recommended to listen to patients' narratives, taking heed of the content of individual R/S struggles, and to carefully consider whether or not further interventions in order to enhance R/S support and reduce R/S struggles might be appropriate.

Presenter:

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Title: growing from suffering: the relation between human trafficking victims' meaning of suffering and post-traumatic growth

Keywords: Human trafficking, Divine Plane, suffering, PTG, Indonesia

Abstract:

The aim of this article is to examine how victims of human trafficking from the migrant worker sector in East Nusa Tenggara-Indonesia meaning their suffering and to determine whether the meaning assist participants' post-traumatic growth. Using semi-structured in-depth interviews for a data collection method and grounded theory for data analysis method. Participants involve eleven direct victims of human trafficking and eight indirect victims, including two parents of victims and three spouses of deceased victims' parents. The results explained that the participants meaning their suffering as a Divine plan: a test or punishment from God. Because suffering is God's plan, God will provide forgiveness and change lives for the better if individuals approach, serve faithfully, and submit. The meaning is influenced by religion and culture, the context in which the participant lives. Furthermore, according to the five domains of post-traumatic growth, most participants showed growth. This growth is dependent on religious significance, family acceptance, and community support. Interpersonal interactions affect religious interpretations of God.

Presenter:

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Title: Indigenous Integrative Therapy in Benin: Considerations and Case Studies from Ongoing Ethnographic Fieldwork

Keywords: Benin; psychology; ontology; indigeneity

Abstract:

This presentation will profile the practice of so-called “indigenous integrative therapy”—that is, treatment that utilizes Global Northern blueprints of the psychological disciplines whilst also leaving open the possibility for traditional and/or supernatural intervention strategies of healing—among psychotherapeutic health professionals in the West African nation of Benin. Using a variety of clinical settings and case studies to stimulate discussion on potential similarities and differences between Global Northern and indigenously specific ontological frameworks, the aims of the presentation (which forms part of a more comprehensive scholarly project on psychospiritual healing in Benin) are twofold: (1) to showcase an array of Beninese outlooks on the causation of mental illness and/or supernatural affliction; and (2) to highlight common diagnostic strategies employed in that country to differentiate between organic, psychological, or spiritual distress.

Presenter:

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Title: The In-between Community: Religious Dilemmas

Keywords: Fluid Process, In-between community, Orang Rimba, Public Policy, Religious Dilemmas

Abstract:

This paper is an unexpected discovery of the so-called in-between communities behind the divergence between Steven Sager's dissertation 14 years ago and the results of recent field research on one of Indonesia's indigenous religious communities. In-between communities are often overlooked in scholarly and public spaces when discussing beliefs and practices in everyday life. This paper encourages a re-awareness that not only are beliefs and practices fluid, but the process of embracing them is also fluid. In the Indonesian context, the neglect of the last point above results in the emergence of regulations, including religious education policies, which tend to maintain rigid assumptions about religion, segregate religious classes, and ignore discussions about religious processes that are in fact fluid and actually experienced by students in schools. With five months of live-in study in an Orang Rimba environment, I chose to re-read Sager's writings and combine them with interviews, as well as using sociological studies in the process of analyzing this paper. There are two main questions; how is the religious dilemma that occurs in this community? What are the impacts and victims that arise when public policies are produced by ignoring the understanding that embracing religion is a fluid process?

Presenter:

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Title: The Anthropocene Age Reveals the Insanity at the Heart of Western Christian Religious Experience

Keywords: Climate Change; Inoperativity; Ontological Rift; Religious Experience; Self-deception

Abstract:

This article claims that the Anthropocene Age reveals the tragic insanity that lies at the core of religious experiences informed by Judeo-Christian scriptures. In brief, I claim that Western Christianity and its apparatuses produce beliefs, which are an integral part of persons' religious experiences, that give rise to an ontological rift between human beings and other species. This rift and its attending beliefs are evident in how religious individuals and communities have 1) overlooked or disavowed the singularities and sufferings of other species, 2) used attending instrumental epistemologies to justify the exploitation of Othered species (and Othered human beings) and the earth, and 3) sought to force nature to adapt to human needs and desires. The article addresses the psychological dynamics and consequences of the ontological rift, which further exposes the madness that attends religious experiences that rely on apparatuses of the ontological rift. The article ends with a brief discussion of an antidote, namely inoperativity.

Presenter:

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Title: Linking Body, Memory, and Divine Embodiment: Two Cases from the Garhwal Himalayas

Keywords: ritual, deity possession, embodiment, Garhwal, India

Abstract:

In the Garhwal Himalayan region, the meanings that individuals and communities form about natural or cultural events are shaped by their relationships with devī-devtās (local Hindu deities). This paper looks at two case studies from the Central Himalayan Region (Garhwal) and documents the psychodynamic processes that resulted in one person becoming a pujārī (priest) and the other a bakkyā (oracle) respectively in two different villages. The occurrence of trance adds truth value to the fact of possession by a deity. The paper explores the relationship between embodiment and memory in the context of deity possession in the Garhwal Himalayas in North India. Positive possession by a deity and its related practices are local forms of embodied memory, through which people undergoing possession and the devotees participating in a worship experience a heightened sense of well-being. The findings based on ethnographic fieldwork suggest that trance and possession are culturally meaningful ways of re-establishing social relations and reinforcing divine presence. The two case studies demonstrate that it is not clinical dissociation but the embodied cultural and personal association of memories with the devī (local goddess) that lies at the genesis of possession. Deity possession and trance are both individually fulfilling and socially connecting experiences. They can be understood as techniques of understanding the depths of life and making life bearable, existentially.

Presenter:

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Title: The Nature of Spiritual Ties to Place: Theoretical Clarification and Empirical Investigation

Keywords: Place, attachment, spirituality, flourishing, spiritual ties to places

Abstract:

How do spiritual ties to place (i.e., place spirituality) contribute to a meaningful spiritual life? Previous work has focused on sacred places, but a proposal is put forward for examining the spiritual connections people develop with many types of places in their search for meaning. We seek to map the conceptual and empirical domain of spiritual ties to place. To do this, we will first conceptually examine spiritual ties to place across three dimensions— affective, cognitive, and behavioral—that may be a critical way in which people satisfy spiritual yearnings and fulfill spiritual needs due to 1) the sacred in a place, 2) social activities in sacred places, and 3) spiritual realities in a place. Second, we will provide a valid measure of spiritual ties to place that can be adapted to numerous specific individual, environmental, and community-level contexts. This will involve some initial qualitative structured and cognitive interviews and psychometric testing using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. We will estimate the test-retest reliability of the measure of spiritual ties to place, and run correlational and regression analyses to assess convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity. Lastly, discussion will also focus on the psychology of religious places, and the broader implications for health and well-being. This could be useful for tracking and reflection purposes, and it might ultimately be used for assessing religious/spiritual realities experienced within the milieu of place.

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Title: Distress Muslim Women Experience when they Decide on (un)dressing Hijab

Keywords: Muslim women, headscarves, distress, trauma

Abstract:

Muslim women dressing headscarf/hijab sometimes pass through a number of stages during which they feel pressured by members of the family, abused by the public people, and restrictions by state institutions. There is not much work on the distress, even trauma, that is caused by spiritual harm and abuse in spiritual contexts when they dress/undress their headscarves. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to investigate the distress and trauma experienced by Muslim women when they decide to dress or undress their headscarves. A semi-structured interview was conducted with 20 Muslim women participants in Turkey on their experiences of stress caused by their social environment. The preliminary thematic analysis indicates that the decisions regarding the dressing/undressing hijab are accompanied by cognitive changes regarding religion and reactions to childhood religiosity. Reading different sources on religion, rigidity in religious groups and quality of higher education are among the most common reasons.

Presenter:

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Title: Dialectical Thinking in Contemporary Spirituality: Reconciling Contradictory Beliefs towards a Metamodern Secular Religion

Keywords: Dual-Process Cognition, Dialectical Thinking, Spirituality, Secular Religion, Metamodernism

Abstract:

Psychologists are paying increasing attention to a distinction between two types of thinking. Cognitive psychologists discern between non-reflective “intuitive” (Type 1) and critical reflective “analytic” (Type 2) thinking. Cultural psychologists discern between context-focused “holistic” and object-focused “analytic” thinking. Both find the former significantly correlated with religious beliefs and Asian cultures, the latter with religious disbelief, secular beliefs and Euro-American cultures. Yet, recent studies have shown or convincingly suggested: first, that analytic thinking does not only relate to secular beliefs, but also to alternative beliefs that straddle the boundaries between secular and religious worldviews; and second, that critical reflective thinking includes both the holistic context-focus of Asian cultures and the analytic object-focus of Euro-American cultures. Our paper supports these recent studies in the psychology of religion, based on recent studies from the history and sociology of religion, regarding contemporary “spirituality.” Combined with a discourse analysis of interviews with members of a typical spiritual movement, as a concrete example, we argue that people who identify as “spiritual, but not religious” use both holistic and analytic thinking in creating alternative belief systems that dialectically reconcile “religious” and “secular” beliefs from “eastern” and “western” cultures. We conclude that this both/and thinking challenges the modern division between the secular and religious, as a metamodern “secular religion.”

Presenter:

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Religion (R) , Spirituality (S) and Meaning in Life (MiL) in mental health care: multidimensional concepts in theory and clinical practice.

Panel keywords: religion, spirituality, meaning in life, mental health care

Panel abstract:

R/S/MiL are important aspects of personal recovery for patients and at the same time belong to the unmet needs of patients in treatment. The multidimensionality of the concepts asks for interdisciplinary studies to clarify these concepts theoretically and gain more insight into the relationship between dimensions of R/S/MiL and aspects of mental health and recovery. Four interdisciplinary studies illuminate the use of various dimensions of R/S/MiL in research in mental health care.

1. A review study of the theoretical use of the concept MiL in 38 included studies in the context of recovery focused care for patients with serious mental illness.
2. A qualitative study into motivation and affinity of professionals to address R/S/MiL-issues in treatment.
3. A follow-up prospective study into dimensions of religion in relation to suicidality.
4. A mixed methods study into occurrence of R/S experiences and interpretations thereof in patients with bipolar disorder.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Eva Ouwehand
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Title: Finding meaning in psychiatric recovery: A conceptual approach of aspects of meaning in life for patients with severe mental illness.

Keywords: meaning in life, severe mental illness, psychiatry, recovery.

Abstract:

Meaning in life (MiL) has a distinct position in caring for people with severe mental illness (SMI) as one of the factors that allow recovery. However, in recent studies patients report MiL as one of their most unmet mental health care needs. It remains unclear what MiL entails for patients with SMI. Research question of this study is: What are multidimensional aspects of meaning in life in mental health care, considering the controversies, lacunas and views on facilitating MiL for patients with SMI?

Through an integrative literature search we analyzed 38 studies on MiL in mental health care, specifically in psychiatry. In these studies it is specified as a personal process involving cognitive, emotional, spiritual and evaluative aspects. We found consensus over the social aspect of MiL and the association of MiL with self-worth and transcendence. Unique finds were MiL as an intimate process and a commonplace experience for patients.

Presenter:

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Title: Motivations of professionals in ambulatory mental healthcare to pay attention to spirituality and meaning in life (S/MiL).

Keywords: mental healthcare, outpatients, spirituality, meaning in life, professionals-perspective

Abstract:

The growing group of outpatients with severe mental health illness have less opportunity to consult spiritual counselors. Therefore, it is important that professionals in ambulatory mental healthcare pay attention to S/MiL. This study focuses on motivations of these professionals to pay attention to S/MiL and how their motivations relate to their own S/MiL and their competences with respect to S/MiL. This qualitative study contains observations of training in spiritual care (N=21) and interviews (explorative, N=11; in depth, N=8) with Dutch professionals. Respondents considered attention to S/MiL as important mostly because of the contribution to personal recovery. However, professionals without a strong affinity with S/MiL focus on everyday meaning making while professionals with a strong affinity focus on existential questions. Training in a contemplative attitude in attention for existential questions is needed.

Presenter:

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Title: Dimensions of Religion Associated with Suicide Attempt and Ideation: A 15-Month Prospective Study in a Dutch Psychiatric Population

Keywords: depression; suicidal ideation; religion; God representation; moral objections to suicide

Abstract:

Dimensions of religion contribute in different ways to the in general protective effect of religiosity and spirituality (R/S) against suicidality. Few studies have included a substantial number of dimensions, and even fewer a follow-up, to clarify the stability and contribution of R/S over the course of psychopathology. In this follow-up study among 155 religiously affiliated in- and outpatients with major depression, religious service attendance, frequency of prayer, type of God representation, moral objections to suicide, and social support were re-assessed in 59 subjects. Diverse statistical analyses show a partial change in R/S parameters. Supportive R/S is persistently associated with lower suicidality. R/S at T0 or change in R/S is not associated with additional changes in suicidality over time. The results suggest that the most important change in suicidality can be understood as an effect of a decline in depressive symptomatology, not of changes in R/S.

Presenter:

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Title: Occurrence and significance of religious experiences (REs) in persons with bipolar disorder (BD)

Keywords: Occurrence and significance of religious experiences (REs) in persons with bipolar disorder (BD).

Abstract:

In clinical practice/literature a distinction is made between 'healthy' and 'pathological' RE. People with BD often struggle with the differentiation between hyperreligiosity and authentic spirituality. Research questions for the study were: which REs do persons with BD have and how do they interpret REs when they are recovered? In a mixed methods design 34 in-depth interviews and a survey were conducted at Altrecht Bipolar, Netherlands (n=196).

A variation of REs was found and their prevalence and associations with BD explored. Secondly, diverse interpretation models of these REs, and their lasting influence were explored. REs can be transient, or have lasting transformative influence, according to respondents. Religious background/affiliation, mood swings, course of the illness and communication about REs influence the ongoing interpretation process. REs related to BD can both have pathological and religious features. Half of the respondents wish to share their REs and positive/negative influence thereof in treatment.

Presenter:

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New Perspectives for Faith Development: Suggestions for Future Research

Panel keywords: faith development; mixed methods; deconversion; longitudinal study; lifespan development

Panel abstract:

In the Bielefeld-Chattanooga Study on Faith Development over the Lifespan, we have, over the course of 20 years, collected a large sample of Faith Development Interviews, including hundreds of re-interviews. Together with questionnaire data, this results in a comprehensive database. This unique data collection not only yields the need to focus on specific research questions, but also offers the opportunity to draw on established concepts such as deconversion to expand the view. This panel assembles a selection of studies that may further the investigation of deconversion and of religious development while also finding connections to other fields of interest, like clinical practice and organizational psychology.

Panel chairperson:

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Title: Idiographic and Nomothetic Evidence for Depth and Breadth of Religious Worldviews and their Relationship to Religious Styles

Keywords: individuative; dialogical; mutual; religious styles; worldviews

Abstract:

The major issue that we focus upon in this presentation is the difference between operationally defined styles and worldview assumptions that suggest a tension between an appreciation for the breadth and diversity associated with the use of various religious styles. We focus upon how it is possible that an individuative-reflective style can mediate between the dialogical style characterized as the preferred style by those who study the faith of others and a mutual style likely to characterize those who exhibit a second naivete and remain deeply embedded in a specified faith tradition. The issue of depth vs. breadth of belief has both conceptual and empirical implications that further advance us in our understanding of faith development.

Presenter:

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Christopher F. Silver, The University of the South at Sewanee, USA

Title: Religious Deconversion and Secular Disaffiliation

Keywords: deconversion; disaffiliation; organizational psychology

Abstract:

The aim of this study is to broaden the theoretical concept of deconverting from a faith or religious community into a more secularized exploration into individuals leaving communities and the interpersonal causes for this departure. This presentation examines self-professed causes into why individuals choose to disaffiliate from communities as well as the forms that disaffiliation manifests post-departure. Deconversion has a substantial body of previous research, but as these studies are rooted in faith-based research, little attention has been given to the potential presence of the phenomenon of deconversion in secular institutions. This analysis provides the theoretical framework needed to broaden deconversion into a secular, organizational concept and can be a proactive tool in combatting dysfunction on an organizational level. This presentation is a first step at what may be an important phenomenon that may warrant a more in-depth analysis in the future.

Presenter:

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Title: Predicting Deconversion

Keywords: deconversion; psychological well-being; exploration model; compensation model; longitudinal

Abstract:

Deconversion is being studied at Bielefeld University and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga since two decades which allows for longitudinal analysis. This presentation will focus on new quantitative results based on three times of measurement. Results: Deconverts,

compared to their peers who stay in their religious organizations, identify as being “more spiritual than religious”; they progress to more advanced religious types; they have lower scores on truth of texts and teachings, a subscale of the Religious Schema Scale, and higher scores on openness to experience in concurrent assessment. Cross-wave analyses corroborate, but also extend previous findings: Predictors of deconversion are lower scores on self-rated religiosity, extraversion, interpretive mysticism, but lower scores also on well-being factors such as environmental mastery, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. In conclusion, current results support not only the exploration model for deconversion, but also the compensation model.

Presenter:

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Title: What Heals the Brokenhearted? Religious, Spiritual, and Clinical Views on Healing and Meaning-Making in Individual Autobiographical Narratives

Keywords: spirituality, psychotherapy, cultural container, development, narrative identity

Abstract:

Biographical interviews from the Bielefeld/Chattanooga Study on the Development of Religion and Worldview over the Adult Lifespan give access to subjective autobiographical reconstructions of efforts to lead healthy and meaningful lives. Repeated interviewing allows to attend to changing negotiations of religious, spiritual, and clinical perspectives in accounts of responses to changing developmental tasks, and of engagement with changing social and cultural contexts. Based on case examples, we suggest to draw on the conceptions of master- and alternative narratives to structure our results and discuss their function as cultural containers for individual experiences in ongoing constructions of narrative identities. In concluding, we discuss implications for conceptions of the development for individual religiosities and/or worldviews.

Presenter:

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Meditation

Title: How Muslim prayer cultivates mindfulness: Can the S-ART framework explain it?

Keywords: Mindfulness, Muslim Prayer, Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Self-transcendence

Abstract:

Although mindfulness became a huge topic in health psychology, there are a few studies on mindfulness and prayer. Despite that the complex relationship between prayer and mindfulness has appeared. The current study investigates how Muslim prayer is related to mindfulness by using the S-ART framework for the first time. This framework states that mindfulness raises the ability of self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence, and is, thus, positively related to mental health. The aim of this study is three-fold: first, to examine the relation between personal, nafl and obligatory prayer, mindfulness, and the S-ART variables; second, to test whether the relationship between personal prayer and mindfulness is mediated by the S-ART variables, and third, to clarify further the relation between self-transcendence and mindfulness by using nafl and obligatory prayer as moderators. A convenient sample of N = 268 Turkish Muslim adults filled a questionnaire. Results are that, first, mindfulness, all types of prayer, and the S-ART variables are mainly positively correlated with each other, except, no correlation was found between obligatory prayer and mindfulness and between nafl prayer and self-transcendence. Second, self-transcendence mediated the relationship between mindfulness and personal prayer. Third, the relationship between self-transcendence and mindfulness was moderated by nafl and obligatory prayer.

Presenter:

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Title: Cultural differences in the descriptions of buddhist meditation.

Keywords: Meditation, Buddhism, cultural differences, qualitative analysis

Abstract:

Interest in meditation practice has been constantly growing in recent years, consequently, the number of publications in this area in the form of both scientific articles and books grows ever larger. Research on meditation rarely gives voice to the meditators. Most research is based on the top-down approach, where West-educated scientists interpret meditation according to their own understanding. This research aimed to characterize the complex phenomenon of Buddhist meditation, performed in its original context of religious practice. An integral aim was to investigate if there is a relation between the culture of origin or gender, and how meditation is described. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 63 Buddhist meditation teachers from Eastern and Western cultures. Collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, followed by a qualitative and quantitative comparative analysis. The analysis showed moderate strength relationships between the description of certain aspects of meditation and the culture of origin as well as differences in how elements of meditation were described (i.e. one or multiple life perspectives). Western teachers seem to combine elements of the Buddhist worldview, rooted in Eastern philosophy, with elements of the Western worldview. They can be seen as being between Eastern and Western cultures, similar to people coming from one culture and brought up in another.

Presenter:

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Title: Mystical experiences in Daoism: Qualitative and social network analysis

Keywords: mysticism, Daoism, Taoism, Eastern religion, qualitative, social network analysis

Abstract:

An indigenous religion to the Chinese people, Daoism traces its roots to philosophical traditions of Laozi and Zhuangzi in the 5th Century BCE. Daoism is also a living religious tradition, widely believed and practiced in Chinese communities. The current study used a phenomenological approach to investigate the mystical experiences in Daoist experiences. The sample included 19 highly experienced Daoist monks and nuns. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using orienting questions that were adapted from the theoretical framework of the modified common core thesis, which taps into eight broad categories of mystical experience (i.e., ego loss, timelessness and spaceless, unity, inner subjectivity, positive affect, sacredness, noetic quality, and ineffability). Thematic coding suggested two clusters of Daoist experiences, one featuring an enstatic group of themes comprising dissolution of self, unitary experiences, and bodily sensations, and the other an ecstatic group of themes including egress of spirit and resonance with divinities and spirits. Network analysis of the theme codes offers quantitative insight into the saliency, organization, and structure of the derived themes. The findings corroborate with the long-standing Daoist theology that emphasizes on the joint cultivation of body and mind, to achieve an "encompassing marvel of form and spirit". We draw on ideas found in Daoist canons and scriptures to provide a contextualized discussion of these findings.

Presenter:

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Title: Past Life Meditation Decreases Existential Death Anxiety and Increases Meaning in Life among Individuals who Believe in the Paranormal

Keywords: New Age practices and beliefs; Past Life Meditation; Paranormal Belief; Fear of death; Meaningfulness in Life.

Abstract:

Past life meditation groups are a contemporary form of spiritual practice. These practices are situated in new age spirituality, which is an umbrella term for hybrid or syncretic contemporary forms of religiosity that typically include a variety of Eastern ideas—including reincarnation—into a Western Context. Despite their growing popularity, little is known about the psychological effects of participating in past-life meditation groups in contemporary western contexts. Following two years of participant-observation by the primary author, we conducted a study to re-create some of the conditions observed in the field by facilitating a group of adults interested in exploring past life meditation in Los Angeles. Before the session, participants completed a survey about their afterlife beliefs and associated experiences. Participants also completed questionnaires measuring meaningfulness in life and fear of death before and after the session. In the sample (n=125), just over half of the participants (52%) reported having a past life memory or vision during the session. Higher paranormal beliefs predicted reporting a past life memory or vision. We also found that having prior memories or visions of having lived before, but not the general belief in having a past life, predicted reporting having past life experiences during the session. Consistent with our predictions, participants who reported having a past life memory or vision also reported reduced existential death distress and increased meaningfulness in life following the session, compared to those who did not report these experiences. Our study suggests that there is legitimacy in popular claims about the transformative potential of such experiences when considered in their ecological contexts—in this instance, as part of new age spiritual groups in Los Angeles.

Presenter:

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Non-belief I

Title: Faith Styles of Atheists Living in a Highly Religious Context

Keywords: Atheism, Faith Styles , religion

Abstract:

Atheism has always been underrated topic due to its sensitivity in a highly religious country like Pakistan where Islam is the dominant religion. The current study was conducted to explore atheists' faith styles by conducting Faith Development Interviews with three atheists (two men, one woman) bringing out their life narratives, social relationships, values and commitments, views of religion and spirituality, and general worldviews. Style aspect maps comprising six aspects of faith namely perspective taking, social horizon, morality, locus of authority, form of world coherence and symbolic function were made by scoring according Manual for the Assessment of Religious Styles in Faith Development Interviews (Streib & Keller, 2018). The results revealed most responses from all three participants reflected individualistic-systematic and dialogical styles of faith. Atheists were capable of maintaining strong social networks within and outside their families and were able to entertain religious worldviews without any defensiveness of their own worldviews. Simultaneously, they showed a criticism of religion not on atheist grounds but more on religion not fulfilling its own merits conveyed in its symbols and rituals. Their loci of authority were people in lives who emphasized a rational and reality based approach to life. Atheists' moral values and commitments showed a preference for serving humanity for its own sake rather than any reward to come. Given that atheists displayed sound perspective taking and inclusive worldviews, atheism in religious contexts can be understood along a continuum of religious styles rather than a dichotomy of believing and not believing. The discussion attempts to link faith styles of atheists with earlier typologies (Silver and Coleman (2014) of atheism as intellectual, activist, seeker-agnostic types and personality traits of atheists in earlier research (Caldwell-Harris, 2012; Saroglou, 2010).

Presenter:

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Title: Understanding the Impact of the "Conflict Narrative" between Science and Religion on Attitudes: The Influence of Projection and Counter-Projection

Keywords: science, religion, atheism, conflict, projection

Abstract:

The "conflict narrative" between science and religion is prevalent across western cultures, but is a narrative particularly prevalent among the nonreligious, who make up a large percentage of the UK population (Elsdon-Baker, Leicht, Mason-Wilkes, Preece, & Piggot, 2017). We predicted that non-religious individuals would project their perceptions of science and religion onto others, with significant consequences for their perceptions of religion, science, and individuals with related social identities, but that religious individuals would not. Interestingly, Study 1 (n = 2,129) shows that in general, people in the UK project their own perceived ability to reconcile evolution and their personal beliefs onto others; however nonreligious participants do not do this for religious targets, instead seeming to engage in a process of counter-projection, where an antagonistic outgroup is perceived as being opposite to the self (Denning & Hodges, 2022). Additionally, using an adaptation of the Ingroup Projection Model (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999), mediation analyses show that this projection and counter-projection affects people's attitudes. For nonreligious participants, both perceived ingroup prototypicality and perceived outgroup prototypicality of ability to reconcile evolution and personal belief relates to increased preference for science over religion. In Study 2 (n = 474) we performed a conceptual replication of this mediation model, where we found that atheists (but not agnostics) in the UK counter-project difficulty reconciling evolution and personal beliefs onto religious individuals. Additionally, similarly to Study 1, both perceived ingroup and outgroup prototypicality of ability to reconcile evolution and personal belief relate to ingroup preference.

Presenter:

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Title: The strength of atheism and religiosity as protective factors for alcohol and tobacco consumption: analyzing the differences between heterosexual and LGBTQIA+ people

Keywords: Atheism; religiosity; beliefs; alcohol consumption; tobacco consumption

Abstract:

Religiousness has been pointed out as a protective factor for drug use; as religiosity increases, drug consumption decreases. However, such an interpretation may not include other variables such as the type of religion, levels of religiosity and strength of belief, and sexual orientation effect. Therefore, this research investigated such dimensions in theistic and atheist people as a risk or protective factor for the consumption of alcohol and tobacco. The study was conducted online in Brazil, with 5007 adults aged 18 years or older. We used the ASSIST scale to assess patterns of drug use and scales to assess degrees of religiosity (Centrality of Religiosity Scale) and atheism (Dimensions of Secularity scale). Binary logistic regression models were conducted. We found that among religious heterosexuals, having a higher level of religiosity is a protective factor only for alcohol consumption. However, for religious LGBTQIA+ there were no significant differences. On the other hand, among heterosexual and LGBTQIA+ atheists, a higher level of atheism was a protective factor for both alcohol and tobacco consumption. Finally, we discuss the implications of degrees of religiosity/ atheism, sexual orientation, and alcohol and tobacco use.

Presenter:

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Title: Does psychedelic use alter religiosity over time? Short-term prospective and developmental patterns

Keywords: psychedelics; religiosity; religious change; beliefs; development

Abstract:

Classic psychedelics have long been used in religious and healing rituals and a recent wave of scientific research has examined the potent effects of psychedelics, including how the experiences they elicit are often described as spiritual, religious, or mystical (Griffiths et al., 2018). However, while studies have focused on psychedelics' acute effects, research has paid insufficient attention to the role of psychedelic experiences in the context of lifespan development generally, and religious/spiritual development specifically. First, using data from multiple birth cohort studies – the 1958 National Child Development Study and the 1970 British Cohort Study, both conducted by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies of the University College of London Social Research Institute (for both, N>11,000) – we explore the relationship between lifetime psychedelic use and religious affiliation, including religious changes (i.e., de/conversion or switching), religious beliefs, and religious attendance. Second, we examine changes in self-identification as religious over a two-month period among people who reported psychedelic use in a representative sample from the UK and US (N=9,732). We contextualize our findings in recent conceptual contributions to the study of religious affiliation and non-affiliation, as well as relevant processes of change, that emphasize cognitive, emotional, moral, and social motives and functions of religion and non-religion (Saroglou, 2011; Van Tongeren & DeWall, 2021).

Presenter:

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Title: A Latourian entangled perspective on ayahuasca religiosity in the West

Keywords: Latour, ayahuasca, religious experience, mysticism, shamanism

Abstract:

As ceremonies involving the Amazonian ayahuasca tea become increasingly popular, new kinds of shamanic religiosity are introduced to the West. As a psychoactive substance, ayahuasca often yields transformative experiences that merge such familiar categories as the sacred and the secular, transcendence and immanence, subject and object, and the human and the nonhuman. However, there is a gap between Western discourses on ayahuasca religiosity (such as “psychedelic mysticism” and “entheogenic shamanism”) and indigenous discourses that frame ayahuasca as a plant teacher and a sacred medicine.

As a way to bridge this gap, this paper uses French philosopher Bruno Latour to ask fundamental ontological questions in order to reimagine ayahuasca religiosity. It will propose a new and integrative entangled discourse on ayahuasca that shifts the focus from ayahuasca experiences to ayahuasca-based ritual practices that aim to cultivate relationships with more-than-human powers.

Presenter:

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Title: A mixed-methods investigation of the role of spiritual beliefs in sleep paralysis and other anomalous sleep experiences

Keywords: sleep paralysis, spiritual experience, spiritual belief, anomalous experience.

Abstract:

Although usually characterized by an inability to move or speak while awakening or falling asleep, sleep paralysis experiences (SPEs) actually involve different phenomenological characteristics, which may overlap with other anomalous sleep experiences (ASEs) such as out-of-body experiences (OBEs) and hypnagogic/hypnopompic hallucinations. Little information is known about how exactly SPEs impact religious and paranormal beliefs, for example, whether SPEs tend to confirm or disconfirm a person's beliefs. The present study examined the phenomenological characteristics of SPEs and their association with spiritual beliefs and other ASEs in a sample of the Brazilian population. We relied on a mixed-method approach, combining psychological scales and thematic content analysis of SPE reports. The findings indicate that those reporting SPEs also tended to report other ASEs such as OBEs and lucid dreams. Almost two-thirds of the sample reported that their ASEs did not change their spiritual beliefs. There was a tendency for participants to report that ASEs confirmed rather than changed their beliefs. These findings may indicate that ASEs such as SPEs are not as transformative as certain mystical experiences. Fear was the most reported emotion in relation to ASEs. When facing difficulties with their ASEs, participants were more likely to resort to spiritual help.

Presenter:

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Title: Awe and spiritual experience

Keywords: awe, spiritual experience, noetic, meaning

Abstract:

Starting with Schleiermacher and Otto, phenomenological approaches to religion have emphasized that religious experience often involves the emotion of awe and a sense of deep meaning. In addition, a number of scholars have proposed that modernity has led to alienation from the divine (and nature, others, and the self) in part because of an overvaluing of rational-logical thinking. The current paper presents two studies (N = 135 and N = 200) that examine the effects of a brief awe induction video on spiritual experience, valuing intuitive thinking, and a sense of meaning. Study 1 showed that compared to control, the awe induction elicited (1) an experience of the divine, (2) greater faith in intuitive thinking, and (3) a greater sense of life meaning. Further, the influence of awe on spiritual experience and on life meaning was partially mediated by intuitive thinking. Study 2 replicated these effects and further showed that the awe-spiritual experience relation is partially mediated by a sense of noetic quality and ineffability during the awe video. Study 2 additionally showed that the effects of awe on spirituality also occur in participants who do not identify as being either religious or spiritual.

Presenter:

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Young adults

Title: What Spiritual Resilience Says Among Youth: Evidence for a Mediating Effect on Psychological Resilience and General Health Relations

Keywords: Psychology of Religion, Mental Health, Spiritual Resilience, Young Adults, Türkiye

Abstract:

Previous studies have largely focused on the impact of psychological resilience on mental health, but research on the individuals' resilience through the use of their religious beliefs and practices has been neglected. To deepen the understanding held as to the relationship between religiosity and its relation to general health, it is crucial to explore the various relevant dimensions of religiosity as it has previously been demonstrated to be linked to better physical and mental health outcomes. Hence, the current study aims to explore the association between spiritual resilience, motivational religiosity, and general health in young adults residing in Türkiye. A total of 217 (Mage= 25.96, SD= 8.63, 82.9% female) young adults participated in the current study. Regression results indicated that spiritual resilience negatively and significantly predicts general health and positively predict psychological resilience. As a result of the mediation analysis, it was observed that spiritual resilience partially mediated the relationship between psychological resilience and general health ($\beta = -.11$, $t = -5.82$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [-.15, -.07]). This study highlights the importance of using religious beliefs that help strengthen and promote psychological and spiritual well-being, and also warrants the necessity of psychological programs and interventions to be designed and implemented for the young believers.

Presenter:

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Title: Perfectionism, anxiety and depression among seminary student: A mediated moderation model of extrinsic religiosity and self-blame

Keywords: Perfectionism, seminary student, mediated moderation model, extrinsic religiosity, self-blame

Abstract:

Pastors often experience pressure to appear "perfect" or blameless (London & Wiseman, 2003). They may develop socially prescribed perfectionism (hereinafter perfectionism) which defines as perception of high expectation from others and society, and strivings to achieve unrealistic goals to be accepted and valued by others (Hewitt & Flett, 2002). Perfectionism is a mental health risk factor (Limburg et al., 2016). The present study aims to investigate how perfectionism is related to anxiety and depression among South Korean seminary students. We hypothesized that the relationship between perfectionism and, anxiety and depression would be moderated by extrinsic religiosity and mediated by self-blame. A sample of 200 seminary students who currently working as a church minister participated in the survey. We found that extrinsic

religiosity played a role as a moderator and self-blame as a mediator in the link between perfectionism, and anxiety and depression. In specific, self-blame mediated when the interaction between perfectionism and extrinsic religiosity predicted seminary students' anxiety and depression. Bootstrapping analyses revealed that this mediated moderation model was significant when extrinsic religiosity was high. That means, perfectionistic and extrinsically religious seminary students are more likely to blame themselves for not appearing perfect, which lead to more anxiety and depression.

Presenter:

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Title: What is the good that we should strive for? Big life questions among non-religious young adults

Keywords: nonreligion; life questions; young adults; in-depth interviews

Abstract:

What is the good that we should strive for? This is just an example of a big life question people may ask themselves throughout their lives. Whereas religious people may draw on sources within their tradition when confronted with such questions, nonreligious people—the majority in the secularized Netherlands—lack such a frame of reference. How do they approach big life questions? What sources do they draw on? We conducted a study focusing on the way in which Dutch nonreligious people handle life questions following the 'big questions' described by Taves et al. (2018). Young adults, aged 18-25 years, were interviewed, both individually and in groups, to investigate the way in which they deal with these questions. We will present the results of this study and discuss the implications of our findings for the way in which nonreligious meaning in life is formed.

Presenter:

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Health care chaplaincy in times of crisis. Studies from Scandinavia

Panel keywords: chaplaincy, spiritual care, existential care, mental health, meaning

Panel abstract:

Studies from Scandinavia have shown that patients consult chaplains in times of crisis to discuss existential, spiritual and health-related themes. However, due to secularization and tight budgets, chaplaincy positions may be subject to cutbacks. As spiritual and existential care is a shared responsibility with health professionals, it has been asked if chaplains are really needed. In this situation, research on substantial and functional aspects of chaplaincy has become pertinent.

This panel provides an overview of chaplaincy research in Norway. Furthermore, it presents results from two studies by Norwegian researchers investigating chaplaincy in mental healthcare, and one study from Denmark on hospital chaplaincy. The two Norwegian studies address the role of chaplaincy in leading existential groups and in encountering people at risk of suicide. The Danish study investigates the conversation between the patient and the chaplain and discusses its perceived influence on the patient's existential and spiritual challenges.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Anne Austad
- Affiliation: VID Specialized University, Faculty of Theology, Diaconia and Leadership studies, Oslo, Norway
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Title: Chaplaincy in Norway with a special focus on how PhD projects have contributed to an evidence base for healthcare Chaplaincy

Keywords: Chaplaincy, research, evidence-based practice, existential issues, meaning

Abstract:

There has been an increasing emphasis on performing so-called evidence-based practice in health services. One response to this challenge among Norwegian chaplains has been to initiate research on chaplaincy practices. My presentation will examine whether this process of research is likely to have contributed to a critical and constructive knowledge base for chaplaincy, and possibly defending the chaplaincy positions from

cutbacks. The research activities have to a large extent been supported by a research group, linked to research institutions. It has resulted in 14 PhDs (eg. the following presentations in this panel), and other research products. The research has covered the fields of death and dying/terminal care; mental health; dementia; ageing; and coping. Many of the projects have applied the concepts of existential issues or meaning.

Presenter:

- Name: Hans Stifoss-Hanssen
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Title: The use of existential groups within mental healthcare treatment settings– results from a scoping review

Keywords: Existential issues, religious, spiritual, group therapy, healthcare chaplaincy, mental healthcare

Abstract:

Addressing existential, spiritual, and religious issues in mental healthcare treatment settings has been proven to be beneficial in a large body of research. However, more knowledge is needed on therapy groups integrating these types of issues. Therefore, we conducted a scoping review focusing on existential issues from the secular, spiritual, and religious domains integrated into therapy groups. The research question was as follows: What is known from the literature about existential groups integrated with clinical treatment settings for an adult population within mental healthcare related to group characteristics, theoretical approaches, and description of outcome? Based on the framework described by Arksey and O'Malley and PRISMA ScR a systematic review was done in APA PsycInfo, Ovid MEDLINE, Embase, Cinahl, Web of Science, Cochrane Library and Epistemonikos. The search process resulted in a total number of 2510 public articles / literature and from this 21 was included in the study. The field of chaplaincy will be emphasised when presenting the result.

Presenter:

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Christina Lloyd, Center for Multidisciplinary Research on Religion and Society, Uppsala University, Sweden
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Title: Hospital chaplains as interlocutors on existential themes with patients at risk of suicide: a Norwegian qualitative study

Keywords: Hospital chaplains, existential themes, patient at risk of suicide, conversation

Abstract:

This study focuses on how hospital chaplains meet and explore existential themes in their conversations with patients at risk of suicide. Hospital chaplains from three of the four health regions in Norway participated in focus group interviews. The interviews were analysed by systematic text condensation, a pragmatic method of thematic cross-case analysis. We found that the participants emphasized support and being a witness to patients' narratives, exploring existential themes and trying to give the patients power to endure their lives. The chaplains understood their role as representing life. Their theological perspectives, pastoral clinical education and experiences were seen as important in these conversations. Further research may investigate how the hospital chaplain's role and existential competence can contribute to interdisciplinary teams working with patients at risk of suicide, examining how conversations about existential themes affect patients' health and whether these conversations prevent suicide.

Presenter:

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Lars Johan Danbolt, Research Centre for Existential Health, Innlandet Hospital Trust HF
Torgeir Sørensen, VID Specialized University, Faculty of Health Studies

Title: The Chaplain dealt with my problem – highlights from conversations between chaplain and patient

Keywords: Chaplaincy, pastoral care, spiritual care, existential conversations

Abstract:

This paper presents and discusses results from a Ph.D. thesis, describing the work of hospital chaplains in the Danish healthcare context focusing in particular on the conversation between patient and chaplain concentrating on the following points:

1. the thematical content of the conversations
2. the interaction around the conversations

Methods: A project group of chaplains was established, and three seminars were held to thematize areas in the conversation between chaplain and patient. Main themes were developed, resulting in two questionnaires for chaplains and patients respectively, answered by 52 chaplains and 41 patients. Three chaplain focus group interviews as well as 8 individual patient interviews were obtained to deepen the understanding of the answers.

Analysis: Data is analyzed based on interpretative phenomenological analysis combined with an understanding of spirituality as relational.

Presenter:

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Miracles and health in an entangled word

Panel keywords: Miracle; Health; Mental Health; Science; Religiosity

Panel abstract:

In a world where both secularization and religious vitality coexist, belief in miracles is a widespread and challenging phenomenon, particularly in health settings. Medical doctors tend to conceive of miracles as extraordinary events outside the laws of nature, assuming that people who believe in them are denying physical reality. But, for patients and relatives, miracles are not always lived as a denial of science. They could be, for example, events that lie outside current scientific knowledge or medical science. Despite of its relevance and implications for the psychology of religion, there is a lack of theoretical approaches and research instruments specifically aimed at understanding the psychological role of miracles within health settings. This panel will contribute to advance this literature, by promoting an interdisciplinary debate with speakers from phenomenological, medical, clinical psychological and psychology of religion approaches.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Dr Marta Helena de Freitas
- Affiliation: Religion, Mental Health and Culture Lab, Catholic University of Brasilia, Brazil
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Title: Born phenomenology: Life as a miracle

Keywords: Phenomenology, Michel Henry, Being Born, Science, Religion

Abstract:

This paper will approach Michel Henry's thinking about the religious field. To Henry's phenomenology, the essence of religion phenomenology concerns the act of being born. This process receives the name of "incarnation" and takes a lifetime to be completed. When considering the reality of the miracle from a phenomenological perspective, we can understand life an expression of a mystery and a therapeutic process of achievement. The miraculous condition, from the phenomenological point of view, offers many possibilities for research that differ from that of traditional models. The miracle, as a phenomenon of life, creates the opportunity for a new path of social and human research, particularly when working within psychological dimensions.

Presenter:

- Name: Dr Gilliano Mazzetto de Castro
- Affiliation: UNICATÓLICA, Palmas, Tocantins, Brazil.
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Title: Meeting of Miracles: Psychotherapeutic Transformation at Four Hands —Psychotherapist and Candomblé's Mother of Saint.

Keywords: Psychotherapy; Candomblé; Miracle; Clinical Psychology; Afro-Brazilian Religion

Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to share an experience of integration between psychotherapeutic care and spiritual support given to a patient by a Candomblé's Mother of Saint, where a miraculous experience was deemed fundamental for a patient's mental health. This case illustrates that, despite decades of detachment between the field of Psychotherapy/ Mental Health and Spirituality/Spiritual Healers, which has become more tense because of a growing intolerance towards Afro-Brazilian Religions from Christian Evangelical churches, we can experience new paradigms in which both fields can work as complementary therapeutic resources. In the case study presented here, it was necessary to understand and respect the specific concept of miracle presented by the patient, while working to improve behavioral patterns and interpersonal relationships.

Presenter:

- Name: Dr Fatima Cristina Costa Fontes
- Affiliation: USP, São Paulo, Brazil.
- Email: fatima.fontes@uol.com.br

Title: Is there a place for (the study of) miracles in health care?

Keywords: Miracle; Health Care; Religiosity; Spirituality

Abstract:

The real world, including lived experiences, often escapes the accepted laws of empirical science. The socio-economic, religious, emotional and cultural dimensions of patients and caregivers allow for belief in miracles to coexist alongside the science framework of a hospital medical setting. Here we will provide some examples that routinely take place within hospital contexts in Brazil, which illustrate the role of different concepts of miracles in the lived experiences of patient and health professionals. We will also discuss how different concepts of miracles and its lived experience within health contexts can be studied from a perspective that combines rigor with cultural sensibility.

Presenter:

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- Dr Bettina Schmidt, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter and Carmarthen, Wales, UK.

Title: Discussion of presentation from “Miracles and health in an entangled word”

Keywords: Miracles, health, science and religion, psychology

Abstract:

I will comment on the 3 presentations focusing on the interaction between patients' beliefs and experiences of miracles and the difficulties in acknowledging the role of these experiences for medical professionals. Further, I will discuss how various methodological approaches may help or hinder the psychological study of miracles.

Presenter:

- Name: Dr Miguel Farias
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Experimental and Cognitive Approaches

Title: Testing the predictive processing model of agency detection in auditory modality

Keywords: predictive processing, agency detection, religious experiences, hearing

Abstract:

A recent model of the relationship between agency detection (AD) and religion predicts that due to the predictive architecture of our perceptual processes, we do not detect illusory agents by default, but rather that we start to detect them when 1) the data is unreliable; and 2) our expectations regarding encountering an agent are high (Andersen, 2019). As it was argued, religion can shape these expectations, leading to encounters with supernatural agents in sensorially unreliable environments they are said to inhabit. Andersen et al.'s (2019) study has shown that both of said factors increase AD in virtual reality. However, it is so far unknown whether the effect would hold in a purely auditory setting. To address this question, we will ask 120 blindfolded participants to detect voices in (noisy vs. regular) stimuli, with one group primed to expect a high number of voices (vs. low expectations priming). 50% of trials will contain an actual voice. We expect that the AD specificity will be lower in participants expecting more voices and in the noisy condition. We believe that the results of the study will be relevant for the understanding of

religious phenomena that the predictive model is said to underlie.

Presenter:

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Title: The role of religiosity on temporal thought in the framework of the uncertainty hypothesis

Keywords: Religiosity, temporal focus, temporal discount, temporal depth, existential security

Abstract:

The uncertainty hypothesis predicts that people from more economically unstable countries or contexts are more religious given that religion helps people cope psychologically with unpredictable situations. We study whether or not this also affects temporal thought. Thus, we studied the relationship between people's level of religiosity and their country's GDP with their temporal focus (the attention given to the past and the future both at the personal level and in their cultural values) and four well-known temporal dimensions (self-continuity, time distance, time discounting, and temporal depth) across eight cultures that vary in the two kinds of temporal focus, their religiosity, and their countries vary in GDP (Spaniards, Chinese, Turks, Americans, Moroccans, and Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs from Bosnia Herzegovina; N = 1075).

Our results showed that people from more religious and less affluent cultures and countries were more traditional (past-oriented in their values) but more oriented and concerned about their personal future, discounted more, and had longer time horizons (no differences in self-continuity and temporal distance). This same pattern of results was found at the individual level. We interpret our findings in the framework of the uncertainty hypothesis: perceived economic insecurity may affect temporal thought through religiosity.

Presenter:

- Name: Carmen Callizo-Romero
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- Maja Pandza, University of Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Slavica Tutnjević, University of Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Julio Santiago, University of Granada, Spain

Title: Simulation games as a transcultural key for reconciliation and resilience

Keywords: game, reconciliation, resilience, simulation

Abstract:

Simulation games facilitate real experiences in a safe environment and, therefore, are appropriate for gaining a better sense of the dynamic relationships at work in complex environments, for exploring good fits and practical solutions, and for understanding how mistakes occur, mainly when games, built upon an explicit or implicit model of reality, engage multiple participants and reproduce some of the political, coordination, communication, and coalition-building challenges that often accompany peace and stabilization operations that exist in the real world; thus, they become an exercise in social science theorizing and a research tool to examine the implications of hypothesized relationships and conflict dynamics in a variety of forms (abstract games or role-playing activities). By emphasizing needs, interpretations, stereotypes and resources of all participants, simulation games facilitate strategies for resilience and reconciliation.

The evaluation concern simulation games in religious educational contexts (young and old adults) 2018-23, and focus on psychological models and strategies.

Presenter:

- Name: Dr. Geert Franzenburg
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Title: “Where two or more are gathered”: the social influence among equals as a mediator of religious/ supernatural beliefs

Keywords: religion, supernatural, belief, experience, social interaction

Abstract:

Social psychology has studied the influence of people on each other for the formation and consolidation of religious/supernatural beliefs and experiences. Experimental studies can examine the influence of specific variables on this process which, under everyday conditions, is quite complex. By replicating and expanding two British studies (Wiseman & Greening, 2005; Wilson & French, 2014), our study investigated the effects of verbal suggestion on the testimony and attribution of meaning to an apparently supernatural event. One hundred and eighty-seven Brazilian adult volunteers were subjected to various forms of verbal suggestion while watching a video in which a false medium (actually a magician) simulated a supernatural achievement. The memory about the video, religious/supernatural beliefs, and the tendency to dissociation were also investigated. The results include the decisive impact of horizontal influences (coming from a false volunteer who watched the video with the real volunteers) to the detriment of vertical influences (from the authority figure represented by the false medium) on memory and formation of religious/supernatural beliefs about the video. Implications for understanding the formation and consolidation of religious/supernatural beliefs and experiences are discussed, including believers may exert greater religious influence among themselves than that coming from religious leaders.

Presenter:

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The Open Science of Religion Project

Panel keywords: Open Science; Registered Reports; Confirmatory research

Panel abstract:

This panel will highlight the introduction of registered reports in the psychology of religion. The editors of three PRS journals have recently joined forces in the Open Science of Religion Project, which aims to foster the use of the registered report format. This new publishing format allows researchers to write their introduction and methods prior to conducting the study, thereby increasing the transparency of the research and the reporting of results. The first lecture in this symposium will discuss the value of conducting registered reports to broaden the scope of the psychology of religion and spirituality. The second lecture in this panel will provide an editor's perspective: what is this new publishing format, why should you consider it, and what are our experiences so far? The third and fourth lecture will highlight recent work in progress of authors who have started a registered report study, including a registered report study on the moderating role of sexual sanctification in relationship satisfaction and transmission enhancers in childhood religiosity. We will end the panel with a plenary discussion about the value of registered reports for the PRS field.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Michiel van Elk
- Affiliation: Leiden University
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Title: Shelia, Karin, Chad, & Paul Chat with Psychologists of Religion

Keywords: Open Science; Registered Reports; Cultural Psychology

Abstract:

Robert Bellah wrote of the disintegration of religion into self-centered considerations or “Shelia-ism.” In a similar vein, “Karin” and “Chad” have become memes for self-centered behaviors in the US context. Researchers and writers frequently speak of the problems of these “others.” Paul Meehl turns the lens back on the researchers arguing that the same features can characterize the scholarly community. In this talk, I consider how these observations reflect on the psychology of religion and contemplate the value of Registered Reports as one means of moving the field in new directions.

Presenter:

- Name: Kevin L. Ladd
- Affiliation: Indiana University South Bend
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Title: Registered Reports Make Peer Review Collaborative - an Editor's Perspective

Keywords: Open Science; Registered Reports; Archive for the Psychology of Religion

Abstract:

One of the greatest advantages of Registered Reports is getting feedback from reviewers and editors at the design stage of a study. This early feedback provides the opportunity for the peer-review process to move away from the feeling of defending one's work against critiques from reviewers and to evolve into something more collaborative between authors, reviewers, and editors. This presentation will describe best practices for authors, reviewers, and editors to make the most of the review process under this format.

Presenter:

- Name: Jordan P. LaBouff
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Title: The Moderating Function of Sexual Sanctification on the Relation between Sexual and Relationship Satisfaction among Men and Women – An Open Science of Religion Project

Keywords: Registered Report; Open Science; Sexual Sanctification;

Abstract:

The process of preparing a Registered Report study is not familiar to many researchers. The first part of my presentation will focus on my experiences of preparing such a study within the framework of the Open Science of Religion Project. I will point out some of the special challenges of this process, share some of my insights, and offer suggestions both for future submitters and for journal editorial staff and reviewers. The second part of my presentation will focus on my study. This ongoing study focuses on the possible moderating function of sexual sanctification on the association between sexual and relationship satisfaction. Past research on sanctification has focused on the direct association between domain sanctification and domain satisfaction. The present study examines the purported moderation function of sanctification. At higher levels of sexual sanctification, the well-known positive association between sexual and relationship satisfaction is expected to be stronger in comparison with lower levels of sanctification. An online questionnaire including measures of sexual and relationship satisfaction, sexual sanctification, social desirability, religious behavior, and demographic items is used to collect data from a sample consisting of 650 men and 650 women residing in Israel - Religious, Traditional-Religious, Traditional-Secular, and Secular in equal proportions - married for at least a year, and identifying as being Jewish. Statistical moderation will be tested using the SPSS macro PROCESS (Hayes, 2017) separately for men and for women and age, social desirability, and religiousness will be controlled for.

Presenter:

- Name: Aryeh Lazar
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Title: Stage 1 Registered Report: Parental and Children's Religiosity in Early Childhood: Implications for Transmission

Keywords: Registered Report; Development; Religiosity; Parental influence

Abstract:

Religiosity in early childhood is an important, but underexamined, area of research, particularly in terms of parental influence. This registered report study examines potential 'transmission enhancers' in the association between parental and children's religiosity in early childhood, ages 3 to 6. Overall, we hypothesize that parental religiosity will be positively associated with children's religiosity. We examine religiosity through three dimensions: religious social identity, prayer, and God concept. We further test four potential moderators which can enhance the association between parental and child religiosity, i.e., transmission. Implications of transmission enhancers in the context of family religiosity will be discussed, as well as our more general experience with publishing using a registered report format.

Presenter:

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Laura Taylor

Demystifying the Sufi Zekr: Using Focus and Presence-of-heart in Clinical and Community Settings for Stress Relief, Increased Attention, and Resilience

Panel keywords: sufism, neurobiology, music, meditation, clinical

Panel abstract:

The Sufi practices of zekr (chanting and remembrance) have typically been discussed in terms of spiritual practices for like-minded individuals. Recently, these practices have been presented to the larger public to provide health benefits for diverse populations via psychology and community wellness initiatives. This panel addresses case studies of these applications through a multidisciplinary conversation between a neurologist, psychologist, and ethnomusicologist. The goal of the panel is to demystify the prevalent notions about Sufi zekr and move towards a more comprehensive understanding of the benefits and pragmatic intentions of this experiential practice. Meaningful distinctions frame this conversation and discuss zekr to illuminate Sufi concepts of focus and presence-of-heart, and their applications and benefits in clinical settings. Formulating this roundtable at the crossroads of medicine, humanities and social sciences aims to examine this practice and its effects on the human through a holistic perspective.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Payam Yousefi
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Title: How Sufi Psychology is Bridging Spirituality in Healthcare

Keywords: healthcare, sufism, hospital, pandemic, sufi psychology

Abstract:

The benefits of spiritual practices on wellbeing are well studied yet bringing them into professional settings has been a challenge. Sufi practices such as the Tamarkoz method have been used in the clinical setting for many years, though only by a limited number of professionals and thus a small group of individuals have benefited from them. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic these practices were implemented in over 360 hospitals worldwide to assist healthcare workers in decreasing their stress levels. Since then, these spiritual practices have been used in wellness programming at hospitals and taught to future healthcare workers at the university level. This paper explores how using these spiritual practices are being implemented in healthcare, the reported benefits and presents a pilot study done on pharmacy graduate students taking the course.

Presenter:

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Title: Practice of Sufi Zekr from a Neurobiological View

Keywords: Sufism, Sufi, Zekr, Neurobiology, Public health

Abstract:

Sufi zekr is one of the most important practices within Sufism for the realization of the oneness of God. It is regarded as a multilevel process which engages the heart, soul, spirit, intellect, and innermost conscience. Zekr is a practice with sensory and motor components by which participants find comfort and solace through the experience of self-transcendence. Other chanting traditions in the world have common features: focused attention, repetition, rhythm, synchrony, and belief. Synchronous music activities lead to neurohormonal changes, such as increased dopamine, serotonin and oxytocin. Attention and repetition promote disengagement from automatic thoughts, reduce mind wandering, and diminish a sense of time through semantic satiation. In Sufi zekr the heart is the focus of attention. Brain and heart constantly communicate in a "top-down" system via sympathetic and parasympathetic information. Reading Sufi texts with a neuroscientific lens, we understand that a "bottom-up" connection from heart to brain must be the purpose, which means that Sufi practices aim to alter the brain's state by modulating the state of the heart. We will focus on the connection of the heart and the brain during Sufi zekr and present its implication in therapy.

Presenter:

- Name: Maryam Balke
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Title: Case Study of Meditative Listening in Public Health: Sufi Music of the MTO Zende Delan Ensemble in Community Outreach

Keywords: music, sufism, meditation, public health, community

Abstract:

This study examines how Sufi approaches to meditative listening promote the enhancement of mental presence, emotional regulation, and reduced stress. Philosophical Sufi writings have for centuries made distinctions between 'passive hearing' and 'active listening' (sama):

advocating for the latter as a method for achieving balance through focused musical practices. Through a series of dialogic ethnographic interviews with members of MTO Zendeh Delan—a diasporic European fusion Sufi ensemble—I probe how 'active listening' rooted in zekr guides their creative practices to provide modes of relief and mental regulation in times of crisis. Interviews reveal how the ensemble prioritizes specific concepts rooted in Sufi practices—such as meditative listening, presence of heart, and harmonious presenting—fostering a therapeutic musical space that enables collaboration among the diverse backgrounds of its members. I further examine the contemporary implementations of these centuries-old methods during the COVID-19 pandemic as forms of accessible community-based public health in today's pluralist society.

Presenter:

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Constructivism in the psychology of religion and spirituality

Panel keywords: methodology, philosophical background of research, constructivism, qualitative research

Panel abstract:

The panel presents qualitative research in the psychology of religion and spirituality as a consequence of social constructivism in thinking of human spiritual activity. Social constructivists hold assumptions that individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they live. Since religious and spiritual activity also largely consists in searching and/or finding the meaning of human existence, constructivism appears to be a natural starting point for research on human spirituality and religiosity. Moreover, by conducting and analyzing in-depth interviews or analyzing any other human creation, one can find inspiration for a different kinds of research as well mixed as quantitative methods. Outcomes of qualitative research may also form the basis for the reconstruction or redefinition of concepts in the psychology of religion. It can also lead to the reinterpretation of old outcomes and the design of new research. The presented research could be such a starting point and a possible inspiration for further research activity.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Agnieszka Krzysztof-Świdarska
- Affiliation: Institute of Psychology, Department of Philosophy, Jesuit University in Cracow
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Title: Deconstruction before construction: Why the constructivist approach requires a critical approach to previously held perspectives?

Keywords: deconstruction, refugees, trauma, coping

Abstract:

Specifically: Why do we need a deconstruction strategy while analyzing religion's role in coping with refugee trauma? The answer is we need to acknowledge the competing perspectives on the role of religion in the process. Religion is conceived simultaneously as a positive factor contributing to survival under traumatic conditions, a negative factor causing refugee trauma, and a factor contributing to recovery after refugee trauma. The deconstruction of the concepts is in the service of diversity: we need to specify sub-categories of refugees (their location, age, background, gender, and family situation); to detail different periods in their refugeehood; and finally, we also have to be careful about which researchers employ methodological paradigms and research methods. Conducting such deconstruction will give justice to the diversity of subgroups and contribute further to the theoretical, analytical framework of analysis.

Presenter:

- Name: Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska
- Affiliation: Institute of Psychology, Department of Philosophy, Jesuit University in Cracow
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Title: Private definitions of spirituality in the artistic milieu

Keywords: artistic milieu, spirituality, constructivism, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Abstract:

The speech presents 7 in-depth interviews on understanding, vision, and practicing spirituality in the artistic environment associated with the School of Antoni Kenar in Zakopane. The history of the establishment and activity of the school is related to the activities of the Tatra Society and the need to support the development of talented highlanders and local crafts. This is a unique environment, where high culture meets highlander culture and specific religiosity. It has already been explored using questionnaire experimental methods in the years 2013 - 2017. The results of in-depth qualitative interviews were developed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method using the NVIVO program. This is an example of using the constructivist philosophical approach as the basis for research within the psychology of religion and spirituality.

Presenter:

- Name: Agnieszka Krzysztof-Świdarska
- Affiliation: Institute of Psychology, Department of Philosophy, Jesuit University in Cracow
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Title: Proximity and distance to God. Construing spiritual measure

Keywords: Devine struggles, spiritual dryness, Ignatian retreat, coping

Abstract:

Ignatian retreats are one of the oldest and best-known forms of spiritual training in Christianity. Most psychological publications devoted to this form of spiritual exercises represent speculative 'religious psychology' or are anecdotal in nature. In Poland, these retreats are very popular, but so far only one qualitative (Wielgus, 2002) and one quantitative study (Romanik, 2008) has been devoted to them. The purpose of this presentation will be to present the results of my own research into the experiences of spiritual consolation and desolation conceptualized and measured as the sense of closeness or inaccessibility to God, in adepts of these retreats at different levels of their training.

Presenter:

- Name: Jacek Prusak
- Affiliation: Devine struggles, spiritual dryness, Ignatian retreat, coping
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Religious/Spiritual beliefs and behaviours affecting health outcomes in a UK longitudinal cohort: the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents & Children (ALSPAC).

Panel keywords: ALSPAC, longitudinal cohort, health, well-being, religious beliefs

Panel abstract:

ALSPAC (Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents & Children) is a longitudinal cohort study that recruited 14,000+ pregnant women resident in southwest England 1991-1992. ALSPAC's overall aim is to determine the ways in which the environment influences health and development, and how these may be influenced by genetics. The women, their partners and offspring are followed up frequently including questionnaires, clinical examinations, linkage to education and other records, DNA and biological assays. ALSPAC continues to record biological, psychological, social, environmental, and medical information. A John Templeton Foundation program grant will allow us to elucidate whether different aspects of religious/spiritual beliefs and behaviours (RSBB) are associated with health and well-being within and down the generations. This panel comprises:

1. Overview of ALSPAC and data available.
2. Associations between traumatic life events and subsequent RSBB.
3. Maternal RSBB and offspring mental health.
4. Faith school attendance and subsequent RSBB and mental health.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Dr. Connie Svob
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Title: An overview of the ALSPAC study and how it can contribute to understanding the causal relations between religion and health.

Keywords: ALSPAC, Longitudinal study, Causality, Religion

Abstract:

A key obstacle in unravelling causal relations in the study of religion and health is the lack of large-scale longitudinal population-based studies with detailed and repeated information on religion, exposures, outcomes, and potential confounders and mediators. The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC), based in the southwest of England, is an exception, with detailed and repeated information on religion and health in both parental (mother and partner) and offspring generations. This talk will: i) provide a background to the ALSPAC resource; ii) detail the ALSPAC religion data available; iii) describe some key findings for users of this data (e.g., generational differences in religiosity, trajectories of parental religiosity over three decades, sociodemographic and psychological factors associated with religion, latent classes of religiosity, and issues regarding non-random participation); and iv) discuss how these data can help improve our causal understanding of how religion shapes, and is shaped by, our lives.

Presenter:

- Name: Dr Daniel Major-Smith
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Co-authors:

Jimmy Morgan, University of Bristol Medical School
Isaac Halstead, University of Bristol Medical School
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Neil Goulding, University of Bristol Medical School
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Title: The associations between traumatic life events and religious beliefs and behaviours.

Keywords: ALSPAC, Religion, Trauma

Abstract:

Traumatic events can affect those who suffer them in almost any conceivable way, from causing triggers in everyday life, to completely changing one's world view. How sufferers deal with trauma can affect them and their loved ones for their entire lives. The relationship between traumatic events and religion has been studied extensively, yet the nature and direction of the relationship remains a contentious topic. Using ALSPAC data we are conducting two studies on this: (i) a descriptive study looking at how individuals with different religious beliefs and behaviours dealt with a variety of traumatic events. Initial findings are that there were little identifiable differences between any religious belief and behaviour groups in how they dealt with trauma. (ii) studying the reverse of this relationship, looking at whether those who experience traumatic events are likely to change their religious beliefs or behaviours and will be presented here.

Presenter:

- Name: Jimmy Morgan
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Co-authors:

Daniel Major-Smith, University of Bristol Medical School
Jonathan Jong, Centre for Peace, Trust and Social Relations, Coventry University
Jean Golding, University of Bristol Medical School

Title: The Role of Maternal Religiosity in Offspring Mental Health: A Latent Class Approach

Keywords: ALSPAC, longitudinal study, maternal religion, child mental health, latent classes

Abstract:

Previous studies have examined the role of parental religious belief in offspring mental health, but the findings were limited by small sample size and measurement issues. To address these issues, we examined the prospective relationship between maternal religiosity and offspring mental health in childhood. We used latent classes of religious belief and examined their association with parent-reported mental health problems in their children at age 7 (n = 6079). We used logistic regression analysis adjusted for maternal mental health, adverse childhood experiences, and socioeconomic variables. At age 7 the offspring of the Highly religious and Moderately religious classes were at greater risk of internalising problems, and the offspring of the Atheist class were at greater risk of externalising problems, compared to the offspring of the Agnostic class. These novel findings suggest maternal religious belief can be associated with negative outcomes in offspring.

Presenter:

- Name: Dr Isaac Halstead
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Co-authors:

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Carol Joinson, University of Bristol Medical School

Title: The associations between attending faith schools and later mental health and religious beliefs.

Keywords: ALSPAC, faith school, mental health, depression, anxiety

Abstract:

School experiences in childhood may play an important role in shaping individuals' socio-behavioural characteristics and mental health in later life. The aim of this study was to assess the association between attending a faith school and subsequent religiosity, spirituality and mental health in adolescence/early adulthood in the ALSPAC longitudinal cohort.

Methods: Attending faith schools and duration of the attendance were derived from linked schools data. Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale, anxiety and depression scores were measured at age 17+. Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale and the extent of religiosity and spirituality were measured at 27+. Associations were assessed using multivariable linear and logistic regression models.

Results: There was no association between attending faith schools and later depression, anxiety, mental wellbeing, religiosity and spirituality. The results were similar in both sexes.

Conclusions: No evidence was found supporting any association between attending faith schools and religiosity and mental health outcomes.

Presenter:

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- Jean Golding, University of Bristol Medical School

Open Science Practices in the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality

Panel keywords: Open Science; Replication; Preregistration; Registered Reports; Cross-cultural research

Panel abstract:

The last decade we have witnessed an important move towards open science practices, replication studies, and more transparency in psychological science. These trends have also impacted the psychology of religion and spirituality. This symposium will highlight current trends in open science practices, including the use of large-scale cross-cultural replications, many-analyst approaches, and confirmatory experimental studies. The first lecture will discuss a many-analyst approach to assess the relationship between religion and mental health. The second lecture will present an innovative and ecologically valid experimental preregistered study to assess the role of church context in meaning in life. The third lecture will present results from a registered report study using state-of-the-art VR to experimentally assess the relationship between threat and agency detection. The final lecture will provide an overview of open science practices as conducted in the religious replication project. We will end the panel with a plenary discussion on the prospects for using these open science practices for the psychology of religion and spirituality.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Michiel van Elk
- Affiliation: Leiden University
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Title: The Many-Analysts Religion Project: Key findings and meta-scientific insights

Keywords: many-analyst approach; cross-cultural research; replication; religion; health

Abstract:

The relation between religiosity and well-being is one of the most researched topics in the psychology of religion, yet the directionality and robustness of the effect remains debated. Here, we adopted a many-analysts approach to assess the robustness of this relation based on a new cross-cultural dataset (N = 10,535 participants from 24 countries). We recruited 120 analysis teams who investigated (1) whether religious people self-report higher well-being, and (2) whether the relation between religiosity and self-reported well-being depends on perceived cultural norms of religion (i.e., whether it is considered normal and desirable to be religious in a given country). In this talk, I will discuss key outcomes of the project and share some insights on theoretical specificity (e.g., how to best operationalize religiosity, the role of objective vs. subjective cultural norms), methodology (e.g., measurement invariance, treatment of Likert scale data), and on organizing a many-analyst project.

Presenter:

- Name: Suzanne Hoogeveen
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Title: Church Contexts Matter: An ongoing registered report investigating the link between religious practice and meaning in life

Keywords: Experimental research; Church context; Registered Report; Meaning

Abstract:

Personal religiosity is positively associated with meaning in life; however, religious life is not characterized solely by personal religiosity but also by collectively performed liturgies embedded in specific physical environments. We argue that these other features of religious life—what can be called “socioecological” features—afford different perceptions of meaning in life. In the current study, we employ a common distinction in Christian ecclesiology—“high church” versus “low church”—to investigate how church contexts as socioecologies differentially affect meaning in life. This study is being conducted as a registered report, and is funded by the Open Science of Religion Project. I will outline the process of designing this study and how it evolved over multiple rounds of peer review. This process resulted in a more rigorous, generative, and transparent project.

Presenter:

- Name: Elisah Lepine
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Co-authors:

Joshua D. Perlin
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Erin C. Westgate

Title: Revisiting feeling of threat and agency detection: Towards an OSR preregistered study

Keywords: Agency Detection; Registered Report; Experimental Research; Cognitive science of religion

Abstract:

What kind of neurocognitive mechanism underlies agency detection, and how can it be related to the perception of supernatural beings? In the research project preregistered under the Open Science of Religion framework, we designed an experimental study testing whether the feeling of threat will increase the number of illusory agency detections in a sensorially unreliable virtual reality environment. Whereas no influence of the feeling of threat on agency detection would be in line with the predictive processing neurocognitive approach, positive results would indicate that some form of specialized innate cognitive bias – inspired by older, modular theories of agency detection – is worthy of further consideration. In the talk, we will focus on our experiences with writing a Registered Report and the process of setting up the study, followed by a presentation of preliminary data analysis.

Presenter:

- Name: Jana Nenadalova
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Co-authors:

Piotr Szymanek

Title: The religious replication project

Keywords: Replication; Cross-cultural research; Registered Reports; Religiosity

Abstract:

In the Religious Replication Project (RRP), which we conducted over the past five years, we set out to assess the replicability and cross-cultural generalizability of key findings in the PRS field, by conducting direct replications, registered reports and large-scale cross-cultural replication studies. In this talk I will highlight key findings from the RRP, including results on the neuroscience of religiosity, dualism, source credibility and compensatory control. I will integrate these findings in relation to by-product vs. adaptationist approaches to religion and highlight the central relevance of cultural learning for the proliferation of supernatural beliefs. The RRP also offers a practical toolkit for researchers in the field to implement open science practices and new statistical methods.

Presenter:

- Name: Michiel van Elk
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Recent Advances on the Role of (non)Religious Identity and Beliefs on Intergroup Relations

Panel keywords: Intergroup; Identity; Intervention

Panel abstract:

In our global and heterogeneous society, religious diversity has become an increasingly important issue, and (non)religious identity often is a basis for discrimination. Across 18 studies (N = 8,609), we present recent advances on the science of religion and intergroup relations. Moving beyond simplistic measures of religiosity, we deconstruct (non)religious identity to investigate the role of specific religious beliefs and practices in shaping attitudes and behaviors directed toward religious- and racial-based groups. Our work makes novel contributions on the positive and negative correlates of religious identity: (1) we document the prejudice by and against religious donees, a growing group in secularized countries (Van Tongeren), (2) we unpack the role of religious, national, and racial identities in predicting racism against Blacks (LaBouff), and (3) we investigate whether religious factors (Van Cappellen) and interventions such as interreligious dialogue (Barker) can promote more harmonious intergroup relationships.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Patty Van Cappellen
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Title: The Sheep in Wolf's Clothing: Intergroup Perceptions of Religious Donees

Keywords:

Abstract:

Six studies (N = 5,001; four preregistered), examined the affiliative tendencies of religious donees (no longer identifying as religious) and how they are perceived by other religious groups. In Study 1, using a Cyberball paradigm, religious donees included atheist targets relative to Christian targets. In Studies 2-3, currently religious participants demonstrated attenuated implicit bias toward religious donees compared to never religious targets. In Study 4, using a behavioral sacrifice paradigm, religious donees favored never religious partners (who did not reciprocate) and did not sacrifice as much for currently religious partners (who sacrificed for them as ingroup members). Studies 5- 6 revealed that religious donees hold favorable attitudes toward other donees (and former believers) and the never religious (and never believers), whereas other groups view donees "in the middle." Taken together, religious donees are perceived as "a sheep in wolf's clothing:" inwardly still religious while outwardly nonreligious.

Presenter:

- Name: Daryl R. Van Tongeren
- Affiliation: Hope College
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Co-authors:

- C. Nathan DeWall, University of Kentucky
- Patty Van Cappellen, Duke University

Title: White Christian Nationalism and Prejudice towards Black Americans

Keywords:

Abstract:

Several studies have examined the relationship between white American Christian social identity and prejudice towards Black Americans. In an experimental study of white Christians in the US (N = 486), we disentangle these identity components to investigate which predict racism. We find that although greater religious self-concept ("being a Christian is important to who I am") predicts greater prejudice towards Black Americans, that relationship disappears when controlling for the effects of political conservatism or christian nationalism. We find that American Christian self-concept ("being an American Christian") and christian nationalism ("America should be declared a Christian nation") are the strongest predictors of racism. Asking participants to reflect on their identities as Christians, Americans, or Christian Americans had no significant impact on their expressed attitudes towards Black Americans. These findings suggest that white christian nationalism is an extremely powerful predictor of racist attitudes, even when controlling for the effects of religious self-concept.

Presenter:

- Name: Jordan P. LaBouff
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Co-authors:

- Sally B. Barker, University of Maine
- Alexandria B. Morgan, University of Maine

Title: Religious factors predicting reduced outgroup derogation

Keywords:

Abstract:

Research on the relationship between religion and both prosociality or prejudice has repeatedly shown that religious people will help less and have colder feelings toward value-incongruent outgroups (e.g., LGBTQ+) compared to value-congruent groups. Explanations for this bias have been proposed but we ask which, if any, factors related to religiosity reduce this bias. Across 5 studies (N = 2,042 religious people), we measured various religious factors along with self-reported warm/cold feelings and behavioral prosociality towards value-incongruent (atheists, transgender people), value-congruent (religious people), and value-neutral (Asian Americans) groups. We find that certain afterlife beliefs and a liberal orientation toward religion are among the most consistent factors associated with reduced bias against value-incongruent groups. We discuss lessons learned on the religious factors we tested or attempted to manipulate and that did not reduce outgroup derogation. These findings contribute to our understanding of protective religious factors for a harmonious heterogeneous society.

Presenter:

- Name: Patty Van Cappellen
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Co-authors:

- Gwyn Reece, Duke University
- Daryl R. Van Tongeren, Hope College

Title: Participating in Types of Interreligious Dialogue: The role of Religious Identity and Threat

Keywords:

Abstract:

Although interreligious dialogue (IRD) is a flourishing practice, there is little evidence of how facets of programs promote peacebuilding and initial engagement in practices. Across 6 studies (N = 1,180 Christians in the U.S.), we examine the role of religious self-concept ("my religion is important to my self-image") and perceived threat from outgroup members (American Muslims) on desire to engage in types of IRD that differ by activity, religious-secular content, intimacy, individual vs. group action, and which group benefits from IRD. We find that greater religious self-concept predicts greater desire to engage in IRD, whereas greater perceived threat predicts less desire to engage. Overall, we find people are willing to have every-day conversations but least willing to share religious experiences. Contrarily, our findings support that surface-level conversations may not be an optimal approach to encourage effective interreligious relations; rather, topics with depth, even when describing differences, lead to engagement.

Presenter:

- Name: Sally B. Barker
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Co-authors:

- Jordan P. LaBouff, University of Maine

God representations, personality pathology and group psychotherapy: empirical research and clinical interventions

Panel keywords: religion and mental health; God representations; personality disorders; psychotherapy

Panel abstract:

At Eleos mental healthcare we conduct research on and make efforts to integrate religious and spiritual (R/ S) aspects of functioning in our treatments. In particular, we work with Schema-focused Therapy (ST; e.g. Farrell, Reiss & Shaw, 2016) and Mentalization-based Treatment (MBT; Bateman & Fonagy, 2016). R/ S struggles (cf. Pargament & Exline, 2021) are increasingly becoming a central construct in both research and clinical work concerning mental health and R/ S. In this symposium two papers will report results from a longitudinal study (N = 305) that has been ongoing at Eleos mental healthcare since 2017. Among patients undergoing personality disorder group psychotherapy, we will show how there are different God representation types (study 1), and how early maladaptive schemas and attachment styles are associated with God representations, and how these aspects change during the course of treatment (study 2). The third paper will present an intervention which aims to support the psychological integration of religious relational experiences in treatment.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Nathan van der Velde
- Affiliation: Eleos, Kennisinstituut Christelijke GGZ (KICG)
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Title: God representations and psychotherapy: a longitudinal cluster approach

Keywords: God representations; mental health; longitudinal cluster analysis; R/ S change

Abstract:

Many studies have shown associations between God representations and dimensions of psychological functioning. For example, object relational functioning (e.g. van der Velde et al., 2021) and attachment styles (e.g. Granqvist, 2020) are strongly associated with certain types of God representations, e.g. insecure attachment styles often co-occur with insecure attachment to God. Because treatment can bring about change in psychological functioning, it can be expected that God representations might also change in this process. However, there is hardly any reliable clinical data of patients that looks at this possible change during the course of treatment. The present paper will show that there are distinct God representation types. It will be argued that it is a prerequisite for effective psychotherapy – among patients for whom R/ S is an important aspect of their functioning - to look at the interactions of different (positive and negative) aspects of the perceived relationship with God, instead of isolating them

Presenter:

- Name: Nathan van der Velde
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Title: God representations in schema focused therapy: a longitudinal mediation analysis

Keywords: Attachment style, maladaptive cognitive schemas, schema modes, god representations

Abstract:

Both the attachment and fulfilment of the basic needs, a central concept in schema focused therapy (Young, 2003) effect the inner working model, in particular the concept of 'the other'. In the longitudinal study of R/S struggles in clients with personality disorders, we focused on the effect of attachment style, schemas, schema-modes, and to what extent they are predictive of the God representation. The central question is whether early maladaptive schemas (EMS) mediates the relationship between attachment style and God representation. We also examined to what extent there is a relationship between mode change and God representation change during group schema therapy. The research shows that there are clear connections between modes, EMS and God representations, but that changing EMS and modes during the course of group schema therapy has little effect on the God representation. This outcome suggests that regular schema therapy is insufficient to provide patients with tools in their religious struggles.

Presenter:

- Name: Allard Sierksma
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Title: Faith Relationship interview in psychotherapy

Keywords: Faith Relationship Interview, God representations, intervention, psychotherapy, religion

Abstract:

Religious people experience negative feelings in relation to themselves, others and often also God (Sierksma et al., in preparation; van der Velde, et al., 2021; van Nieuw Amerongen-Meeuse et al, 2022). Practitioners in mental health care can help to put religious problems into words and make patients feel heard. There are two explorative studies of the so-called Faith Relationship interview (FRI), with promising results (Mosterd-

Pol et al., 2021; Helder et al., in preparation). With the FRI, the practitioner asks the patient to tell about the current feelings and thoughts about God, tell the history of the feelings and thoughts about God and asks the patient about correspondence in feelings and thoughts in contact with others and God. This interview gives the patient more insight in one's own God representation and provides the opportunity to integrate religious thoughts and feelings into psychological treatment such as MBT and SFT.

Presenter:

- Name: Gerda Mosterd
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Spiritual and existential care – obstacles and possibilities of collaboration between professions

Panel keywords: Spiritual care, pastoral care, chaplaincy, meaning, coordination

Panel abstract:

Spiritual and existential care is a shared responsibility among different professions. This panel will present four studies on spiritual and existential care from the perspectives of different professions: nurses, psychotherapists, doctors and chaplains. The four studies highlight different approaches to spiritual and existential care and show the importance of recognising unique professional skills. Furthermore, they discuss obstacles and possibilities of collaboration between the professions.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Niels Christian Hvidt
- Affiliation: Research Unit of General Practice, The Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Southern Denmark
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Title: Appearance of meaninglessness and existential loneliness among older people

Keywords: Chaplaincy, pastoral care, meaninglessness, existential loneliness

Abstract:

Using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), the aim of the study is to analyse how pastoral care givers in nursing homes (NH) understand and encounter the phenomena of meaninglessness and existential loneliness among older people living in NHs. The results point out that pastoral carers described meaninglessness and existential loneliness as strongly linked to each other. To encounter the care need risen from these existential ponderings, care givers facilitated client-oriented interaction, helped in practical ways, and made spiritual care more available. Further, pastoral care practices in terms of being present for discussions and listening as well as receiving and enduring difficult emotions of the older people were described. Additionally, carers themselves needed supervision and a mindful attitude in order to cope with their work burden.

Presenter:

- Name: Suvi-Maria Saarelainen
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Title: Retaining ICU nurses: impact and recognition in work

Keywords: Spiritual Care, intensive care, meaning in work, labor retention

Abstract:

Retention of nurses is difficult. Limited possibilities for growth in the profession, high work pressure and relatively low pay play a role in this. A sense of meaning in work may contribute to retention. In this study, we have, therefore, examined what provides ICU nurses with a sense of meaning in their work and how that relates – in their own view - to their willingness to stay in the job. Interviews with 10 ICU nurses suggest that they derive meaning from the experience that they have a large impact on the lives (and deaths) of patients and on the coping processes of family members, in an interdisciplinary team that uses and recognizes their specialized knowledge and skill. Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction about the level of recognition of their impact and skill. Some suggested that they might not stay in the profession much longer, but currently, it still provided them with enough sense of challenge and satisfaction.

Presenter:

- Name: Catharina Gerigk
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Co-authors:

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Anja Visser, University of Groningen;
Hanneke Muthert, University of Groningen;
Ann Reyners, UMC Groningen

Title: Existential competence in mental health care

Keywords: Chaplaincy, pastoral care, secular and spiritual spheres, obstacles to spiritual care

Abstract:

Nordic Chaplains rarely use traditional religious practices but provide existential care. In spiritual care, opening rooms for patients' existential issues is to become a shared responsibility— does this render chaplains superfluous? The study explores existential competence in health care and reflects on the role of chaplaincy in the system. 262 professionals in three Norwegian mental health clinics answered a self-reported competence survey. Results indicate low teamwork around existential issues, individual openness, and a hesitant attitude towards addressing the spiritual domain unless the patient asks for it. An analysis of obstacles might be interpreted in favour of professionals with more time for talking, a mandate for existential issues connected to their role, and a position that connects the secular and spiritual sphere—in other words: chaplains.

Presenter:

- Name: Lars Mandelkow
- Affiliation: Ansgar University College/University of Oslo, Norway
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Title: Vicar and GP: Match made in Heaven? A relational coordination project from Denmark

Keywords: Relational coordination, spiritual care, pastoral care, general practice

Abstract:

This paper explores the understanding of existential and spiritual care, with particular focus on developing a collaboration between the two professions general practitioners and vicars.
Methods: Five focus group interviews between doctors and vicars (N=35), explored the approach to and understanding of care.
Aim: to investigate whether this might lead to a further inclusion of the existential and spiritual themes in general practice and an expanded collaboration between doctors and vicars.
This process is based on 1. the patient's ontological self-understanding, 2. identification of existential and spiritual needs, 3. developing a way to address these needs.
Data is analyzed based on Relational Coordination combined with an understanding of spirituality as relational.
With this, the relational relationship between patient, doctor and vicar becomes central in the understanding of care, letting theology inform GP while theology is redeveloped as practice in a new setting.

Presenter:

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The Spiritual Needs and Vocabulary of Children in Highly Secularized Denmark.

Panel keywords: Children, spiritual development, spiritual needs, secularization, existential needs

Panel abstract:

Religion and spirituality tend to be more privately expressed and less integrated into the general vocabulary in Denmark compared to more religious societies. Danes also have limited resources for coping with spiritual, existential, and religious concerns when faced with crises. These consequences of secularization highly effect Danish children's spirituality. Although Danish children want to, most of them never talk about death, faith, meaning, or other spiritual concerns with their parents or other adults. Therefore, Danish children are often left alone with their spiritual needs and concerns. There is also a scarcity of research on Danish children's spirituality as well as their spiritual needs and development, but recently this field has received new focus within both healthcare and general education. The aim of this panel session is to contribute to a broad range of research in children's spirituality in secular societies. We present papers on four research studies.

Panel chairperson:

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Title: Spiritual and Existential Needs and Resources of Danish Children and Youth when They are Next of Kin to a Dying Family Member

Keywords: children, death, next of kin, spiritual needs, existential needs

Abstract:

Children and youth are at risk of being left alone with overwhelming spiritual and existential concerns in the Danish health care system. In this phenomenological hermeneutical interview study, we explore the spiritual vocabulary, resources, and needs of Danish children and youth when they are next of kin to a dying family member. We performed 17 semi-structured qualitative interviews with young relatives aged 6 to 23 years. They were performed at four Danish hospices from October 2021 to January 2023. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using a phenomenological analytical approach. We found that providing a 'space' where children can talk about their existential and spiritual concerns, as well as having a 'free space' where they were not only a next of kin seemed highly important. These could also be resources for handling life as a next of kin to a dying family member.

Presenter:

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Title: Spiritual, Religious, and Existential Resources and Development among 7-10-year-olds

Keywords: children, spiritual development, schools, SRE

Abstract:

Danish schools must provide settings for children to learn to relate to religious aspects of life. It is considered important for their perception of life, development of interpersonal competencies, and ability to relate to fundamental life issues. However, teachers express barriers for providing these learning settings. In a school setting we explored how 7-10-year-old Danish children articulate spiritual, religious, and existential (SRE) questions, ideas, and experiences. We used a qualitative research design comprising observations in the setting and interviews with 73 children. Nine teachers were interviewed about their own competencies in supporting children's spiritual development and children's concerns regarding death, grief, courage to live, and meaning. We found that children are eager to talk about SRE-experiences and concerns and they reveal varying resources and limitations. They appear nonjudgmental towards each other's spiritual expressions. Despite initial insecurity teachers exclusively report positive experiences and certainty as to the importance of addressing SRE issues.

Presenter:

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Title: Danish Children's Existential and Spiritual Vocabulary, Resources, and Needs When Experiencing Difficulties in Life

Keywords: children, spiritual needs, existential needs, spiritual language

Abstract:

More than 60.000 Danish children aged 10 to 23 years call "BørneTelefonen" (The Children's-telephone) each year to talk anonymously with supportive adults. Approximately 8000 children send an online letter. We studied the children's spiritual and existential needs through inductive thematic coding of 2.799 online letters. These letters had been written in 2017-2021 and were randomly selected from letters categorized by the "Børnetelefonen" under: 1) Family, 2) psycho-social concerns, and 3) body, identity, and sexuality. We found that the children use psychopathological language to describe and understand their internal states. They expressed spiritual and existential concerns about meaning, death, suicide, lack of self-esteem, or feelings of fear and emptiness. They didn't feel they could share these concerns with their parents based on four main reasons. Because the child: 1) Does not feel taken seriously, 2) experiences parents as indifferent, 3) feels unable to share inner thoughts, 4) will not burden parents.

Presenter:

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Prayer and meditation practices in a secular context - world's largest survey among pregnant women

Keywords: Pregnancy; Covid-19; Existential meaning; Prayer; Meditation

Abstract

Background: The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the derived changes in maternity care have created stress and anxiety among pregnant women in different parts of the world. In times of stress and crisis, spirituality, including spiritual and religious practices, may increase, also in secular contexts. Objective: To describe if the COVID-19 pandemic influenced pregnant women's considerations and practices of existential meaning-making and to investigate such considerations and practices during the early pandemic in a large nationwide sample. Methods: We used survey data from a nationwide cross-sectional study sent to all registered pregnant women in Denmark during April and May 2020. We used questions from four core items on prayer and meditation practices. Results: A total of 30,995 women were invited, of whom 16,380 participated (53%). Among respondents, we found that 44% considered themselves believers, 29% confirmed a specific form of prayer, and 18% confirmed a specific form of meditation. In addition, most respondents (88%) reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had not influenced their responses. Conclusion: In a nationwide cohort of pregnant women, existential meaning-making considerations and practices were not changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly half of participants described themselves as believers, and many practiced prayer and/or meditation.

Presenter:

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Mental Health II

Title: Associations between belief in God or a Divine power and circulating inflammatory proteins

Keywords: ALSPAC, Longitudinal study, Inflammation, Religion, Belief

Abstract:

We investigate how religious and/or spiritual belief might influence chronic inflammation and hence health. Toward this aim, 92 proteins were measured using the Olink Inflammation 96 panel, using 9000 blood samples from the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC), based in southwest England. Blood samples were from 2968 fasted mothers approximately 18 years after the birth of the study child (mean age 47.5). In this talk, we will discuss potential associations between belief in God or a Divine power measured via questionnaires during pregnancy and protein levels. Preliminary results from multivariable regression (minimally adjusting for age) suggest associations between belief and levels of 7(8%) proteins (nominal p-value <0.05), although none of these survived adjustment for multiple tests (Bonferroni-adjusted p-value < 0.05 for 92 tests). The strongest association was an estimated 0.17 (95%CI 0.05-0.28, N=2728, p-value =0.002) standard deviation unit decrease in levels of IL22RA1 in believers. Further sensitivity analyses will adjust for potential confounders and/or mediators, such as ethnicity, BMI, adverse childhood experiences, socioeconomic variables and quality of relationship to elucidate whether these may reflect potentially causal relationships. The results may help explain associations between belief and health.

Presenter:

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Title: The Associations Between Different Islamic Prayer Types, Trait Resilience (EEA), and the Five-Factor Personality Model: A Cross-Sectional Study in British Muslims

Keywords: Psychology of Religion, Mental Health, Ecological Resilience, Personality, British Muslims

Abstract:

The purpose of the present study has been to contribute to the scarce literature pertaining to what extent the associations between different Muslim prayer types (obligatory, voluntarily, supplication and invocation) are related to the personality of individuals in terms of the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality and trait resilience (EEA). Here, 173 participants (Mage= 29.09 years, SD= 6.56, 65.3% male) completed a number of preliminary questions pertinent to prayer types (i.e., how frequent, how intense and how important is their performance of prayer) in addition to a measure of the personality inventory within five domains (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness) and a measure of trait resilience within three domains (ecological, engineering and adaptive resilience). The obtained findings suggest that Extraversion (positive) and Conscientiousness (negative) traits are better predictors of the obligatory and supplication prayer types while Ecological (positive) trait resilience scores, over other trait measures, are the strongest predictor of all prayer types, despite the marital status differences being observed. These results may enable a useful understanding to be gained as to the relationship between different prayer types and resilience traits and personality in terms of mental health.

Presenter:

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Title: Bishr-i Hafi Syndrome: How Spirituality Might Hinder Addiction Recovery

Keywords: Alcohol and Substance Addiction, Spirituality, Syndrome, Coping, Bişr-i Hafî Syndrome

Abstract:

This paper presents the Bishr-i Hafi Syndrome, a novel psycho-spiritual phenomenon that impedes the recovery process of alcohol and substance addicts. The syndrome is characterized by a belief among addicts that recovery will be granted by an external power rather than their own efforts, making it challenging for them to overcome their addiction. The study group consisted of ten alcohol and substance addicts who were undergoing treatment at various Green Crescent (Yeşilay) Consultancy Center branches in Istanbul between 2019 and 2021. The syndrome was labeled using phenomenological analysis. During the counseling process, it has been observed that upon hearing the recovery story of Bişr-i Hafî, a symbol of alcohol addiction in Muslim tradition, some addicts idealized his story and ignored their own efforts developing an attitude that recovery would occur through a miracle. The objective of this paper is to develop awareness of this syndrome and contribute to the fight against addiction by discussing the scope of spirituality in addiction treatment.

Presenter:

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Meaning Making and Resilience

Title: Meaning in life and identity in patients with severe dementia in Norway

Keywords: severe dementia, person-centred care, meaning in life, crisis of meaning, personhood

Abstract:

Care of persons with severe dementia in highly specialised healthcare in Norway is based on the principles of person-centred care. Research focusing on healthcare professional's perspective of meaning in life in patients with severe dementia, is scarce. In this study healthcare professionals shared their observations and interpretations of meaning in life from this patient group. The research question was: 'How do healthcare professionals, working in a dementia unit in highly specialised healthcare, recognise experiences of meaning in life in patients with severe dementia?'. The study was qualitative, applying an exploratory design and drawing on data from focus group interviews with healthcare professionals who were trained and highly experienced in working with persons with dementia. The data was analysed with a deductive approach. Recognition of meaning was related to both carer initiated and patient initiated activities. The participants of the study also shared observations of crises of meaning and dilemmas related to the course of dementia. Making use of healthcare professionals' perspectives and experience-based knowledge, psychology of meaning seemed to integrate and add to the understanding of what person-centred care is and how this can be put into practice in this patient group.

Presenter:

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Title: Meaning in Life among the Lutheran Clergy in Finland

Keywords: meaning in life, clergy, religiosity, spirituality, calling

Abstract:

Religiosity, spirituality, and experiencing work as a calling have found to be related to meaning in life. These experiences and phenomena are expected to be strong among Christian Priests, and thus, also their meaning in life is expected to be strong. However, meaningfulness among Christian Priests seems to be understudied. In this presentation meaningfulness among the Clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF) is discussed by comparing it with meaningfulness among other group comprising Church Musicians of the ELCF and Theologians. The exact research questions are: 1) How strong meaningfulness there is among the Clergy of ELCF? 2) Do and how much age, religiosity, spirituality

and experiencing work as a calling explain meaningfulness among the Clergy? 3) Are there statistically significant differences between the Clergy and the other group in the aforementioned questions? The presented results will be based on a nonprobability sample gathered during the Spring 2023 by a quantitative survey among the Clergy and Church Musicians of the ELCF and Theologians in Finland.

Presenter:

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Title: Relationships of Sources of Meaning and Resilience with Meaningfulness and Satisfaction with Life: A Population-Based Study of Norwegians in Late Adulthood

Keywords: meaningfulness, sources of meaning, satisfaction with life, resilience, old adults

Abstract:

Health-promoting initiatives incorporating meaning-making to enhance well-being may be of importance for people in late adulthood. However, few studies have investigated if resilience and sources of meaning are related to older adults' experience of meaningfulness and satisfaction with life. A cross-sectional study with a population-based sample 219 participants ≥ 65 years were compared with 706 participants 18-64 years old employing descriptive statistics and linear regressions. People in late adulthood (≥ 65 years) scored significantly higher on meaningfulness compared to younger adults (18-64). In multivariate analyses the source vertical self-transcendence, including explicit religiosity and spirituality, had the strongest relation to meaningfulness for those ≥ 65 . For the same group, accomplishment, including generativity, also stood out as a prominent source of meaning when related to meaningfulness. No sources of meaning were associated with satisfaction with life. No associations between resilience and meaningfulness, nor between resilience and satisfaction with life, were found among people in late adulthood. However, positive associations were found between resilience and meaningfulness, as well as between resilience and satisfaction with life, in the 18- 64 age group. The findings are discussed related to gero-transcendence theory and a possible shift of meta-perspective from individualistic and materialistic approaches to communal and transcendent entities. Possible implications are presented.

Presenter:

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Title: Thematic Analysis of Children's Questions About Death

Keywords: Childhood, Children's Questions, Concept of Death, Perception of Death, Cognitive Development.

Abstract:

Children begin to be interested in death at very early age, but they don't fully grasp it. Children's understanding of death is not short-term, but a complex process that takes place slowly and gradually, suitable for their cognitive and emotional development. However, experiences with death have a significant impact on their cognitive and psychological development. Limiting talking about death, thinking that children should be protected from the thought of death and associated rituals, will not alleviate their pain of loss, but will instead only interfere with their understanding of death and their ability to cope with it. Children ask questions about death, whether they have experienced it or not. For this reason, the questions asked by children about death and the content of the questions, the explanations and reasons of the parents are important in terms of understanding the concept of death. In this qualitative descriptive study, how children perceive death was examined through the questions they asked their parents. For this purpose, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the parents of 20 children aged 7-13 living in Turkey. Children's questions about death were examined thematically according to their cognitive, affective and developmental characteristics, and their parents' religious and demographic characteristics.

Presenter:

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Outcome-oriented research among spiritual caregivers and religious professionals: methodological challenges and recommendations

Panel keywords: outcome-oriented research, instrument development, empirical methods, religious leadership, spiritual care

Panel abstract:

The psychology of religion has a long tradition of using empirical methods to assess religious and spiritual practices, both quantitative and qualitative. The application of these insights to assessing religious leadership and spiritual care practices is, however, still in its infancy, especially when it comes to measuring the impact of religious leaders and spiritual caregivers. Methodological challenges arise with conducting experimental designs—e.g., regarding practical and ethical considerations with random allocation to different conditions—and developing reliable and valid measurement instruments that best capture intended goals and outcomes. In this panel, scholars will discuss these methodological challenges by reflecting on the goals, designs, and instruments of their current research projects. The reflection and discussion afterward aim to assist scholars in developing future outcome-oriented research among religious professionals and into religious and spiritual (care) practices.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Anke I. Liefbroer, PhD
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Title: The benefits of outcome-oriented research among religious professionals and spiritual caregivers

Keywords: outcome-oriented research, religious leadership, spiritual care, professional assessment

Abstract:

Religious professionals and spiritual caregivers are specialized in addressing existential and spiritual needs; as such, their work is supposed to have a significant influence on the spiritual well-being of their patients and the members of faith communities. The spiritual or existential dimension that characterizes their work leads some to debate whether measuring the impact of religious leaders and spiritual caregivers is appropriate or even possible. In this paper, we make a case for outcome-oriented research in the field of religion and spirituality by showing its importance, benefits, and how such research can be conducted methodologically. Our presentation will be based on the experiences and findings from two empirical studies in The Netherlands, i.e., an intervention study in home-based spiritual care and a study based on the Church Life Survey among members of Protestant churches.

Presenter:

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Title: Quasi-experimental studies on outcomes of healthcare chaplaincy on patients

Keywords: chaplaincy care, outcomes, quasi-experimental design, old age, healthcare

Abstract:

Despite the fact that patients in general value the care by chaplains, it remains unclear what the impact is of (healthcare) chaplaincy on patients. Two quasi-experimental studies are carried out in Belgian hospitals looking into a one-on-one counselling by the chaplain. One study focused on the overall hospital population, the other study studied geriatric patients in particular. The studies examined various outcomes such as hope, (existential) anxiety, depressive symptoms, peace, meaning in life, faith, positive and negative affect. Also the Scottish PROM (Snowden & Telfer 2017), which is created to measure the impact of chaplaincy care, was used. Findings show that some of the outcomes significantly changed after a chaplaincy intervention, compared to the comparison group who received no intervention by the chaplain, and taking into account the baseline scores. Based on the results of both studies, recommendations are made on how to conduct outcome research in healthcare chaplaincy.

Presenter:

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Title: Developing a PROM for spiritual care at home

Keywords: chaplaincy, PROM, outcome measurement, instrument development, Netherlands

Abstract:

Patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) are important instruments to assess if and how people experience benefit from chaplaincy support. However, currently available instruments were not developed with clients and contain outcomes that are not characteristic of spiritual care. In the Kenniswerkplaats Zingeving, a Dutch national knowledge hub on spiritual care in primary care and the social domain, we are developing a PROM that does meet these criteria. To do so, we followed the first steps of the PROM cycle as described by the Dutch Healthcare Institute. In this paper, we will describe this process and discuss further steps.

Presenter:

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Title: Visual elicitation methods as a tool to study religious and spiritual care needs

Keywords: visual elicitation; lifeline; drawing; visual analysis; spiritual care

Abstract:

The visual elicitation methods provide a construction process in which the participant and researcher examine the meaning of a particular life event or experience together. Earlier studies indicate that visual elicitation methods are particularly helpful in situations where it is expected that the informants may have difficulty expressing their feelings. In the presentation, we will examine two kinds of visual methods that were utilized in studies focusing on meaning in life with life changing situation. First, the lifeline methodology with people who were committed to their marriage with mentally ill persons is discussed. Second, life tree drawings which were gathered to study coping processes of young adults with cancer is presented. Benefits and pitfalls of visual elicitation are discussed from the viewpoint of gaining knowledge from religious and spiritual care needs of participants. We will show how visual elicitation provides new layers of interpretation especially in spiritual care.

Presenter:

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Is any meaning good?

Exploring the borders of meaning, identity, and existential health

Panel keywords: Meaning, existential health, personality, conspiracy theory, Covid-19

Panel abstract:

High levels of meaning in life have been linked to psychological well-being, resilience, good health, and coping abilities. However, high levels of meaning in life are also found among religious fundamentalists, political extremists, and some followers of conspiracy theories, which might disturb ideas of meaning in life as purely desirable without a second thought. Meaning is also often linked to suffering. This panel wants to look at some of the ambiguities of the concept of meaning in life, discussing its centrality in existential health, its connections to personality disorders, its links with conspiracy beliefs, and some double-edged functions during the Covid-19 crisis.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Peter la Cour
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Title: Mapping more terrain: Is meaning in life a dominant concept in existential health?

Keywords: Health, meaning, existential, subjectivity

Abstract:

Although the concept of existential health has been around for at least two decades, it still needs consensus on content and a map of core elements. Existential health is still difficult to operationalize. This might be one reason the existential domain is absent in modern health thinking,

dominated by the medical profession. However, contemporary health challenges are still more often described in terms not related to biological matters: Medical ethics (choice of treatments, euthanasia), quality of life (among chronically ill), meaning in life and lack of meaning (among post-covid youth), facing death (hospice), identifying with the body (body consciousness and identity), etc – all topics not well suited for the dominant third-person cognitive psychology perspective. Existential health might be defined as first-person perspectives, and existential health might be defined as the well-function of the subject – opposed to subjective crisis. Is meaning a dominant or juxtaposed concept?

Presenter:

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Title: A cross-sectional study of meaning in life among patients with personality disorders in Norway.

Keywords: meaning in life, personality disorder, avoidant, borderline

Abstract:

Meaning in life is positively associated with mental and physical health. The connection between meaning and personality disorders (PDs) is scarcely studied. We conducted a baseline cross-sectional study involving 1850 patients referred for assessment and/or treatment for PDs across Norway. As predicted, correlation analyses found that meaning is positively correlated with psychosocial functioning, and negatively correlated with depression and anxiety symptoms. Also as predicted, a two-way ANOVA found that persons with PDs have significantly lower meaning than persons who are sub-threshold, which was consistent at low, moderate, and high degrees of psychosocial functioning impairment. Surprisingly for meaning research, but understandable in clinical theory, a moderation analysis found that only sub-threshold patients experienced meaning to buffer the effect of depression on psychosocial functioning. This effect was not found among persons with PDs. Reflections on clinical research and observations on the obstacles to harvesting benefits from meaning are made.

Presenter:

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Title: For whom does a crisis of meaning open the door to belief in COVID-19 conspiracies? From belief in a higher power to conspiracy: a new meaning when foundations shake

Keywords: Conspiracy beliefs, crisis of meaning, Existential Threat Model, Atheism, COVID-19

Abstract:

The Existential Threat Model explains conspiracy beliefs as a normal sense-making reaction to existential threats. However, the model does not address individual differences that could affect this response. Focusing on crisis of meaning as an existential threat, this study aims to nuance for whom a crisis of meaning opens the door to conspiracy beliefs. Using data from a Norwegian sample of N=1.038 that focused on meaning and coping during the COVID-19 pandemic, we examined (i) how meaningfulness, belief in COVID-19 conspiracy theories, conspiracy mentality, and crisis of meaning were correlated, (ii) the moderation of faith, agnosticism and atheism on whether a crisis of meaning was associated with belief in COVID-19 conspiracies. Both atheism and faith moderated the relationship between crisis of meaning and on conspiracy beliefs, but not mentality. This shows that whether people seek meaning in conspiracy beliefs depends on their attitude towards belief in a higher power.

Presenter:

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Title: Meaning in life in times of crisis: supporting personal, but not public health?

Keywords: Meaningfulness; crisis; general mental distress; public health guidelines; COVID-19

Abstract:

Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive consequences of meaning in life for well-being, mental and physical health, and social involvement. Meaningfulness thus often appears to be a good thing per se. But the attribution of meaning is subjective and does not follow

universal norms. We, therefore, claim that experienced meaning does not necessarily imply actions understood as prosocial by the majority. A series of studies during the Corona pandemic demonstrated personal, but not public health benefits of individuals' meaningfulness. In a cross-sectional and a longitudinal study with N=1,538 and N=431 participants, respectively, the repeatedly documented buffering effect of meaningfulness showed again: The pandemic and associated stressors were significantly less related to general mental distress when participants judged their lives as meaningful. When further analysing the longitudinal data, however, meaningfulness had no effect on the agreement with or adherence to public health measures that were widely considered important and necessary.

Presenter:

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Non-belief II

Title: Beyond 'Scientific Worldviews': The Relationship between Belief in Science and the Supernatural in Science-Oriented Finns

Keywords: science and religion, explanatory coexistence, cognitive science of religion, secular worldviews, nonreligion

Abstract:

Although science and supernatural belief (including religious belief) are often seen as contradictory, many people across various cultures endorse both. So far, we know little about supernatural beliefs in 'scientific worldviews' and how they are negotiated with belief in science. This paper aims to answer the question: what is the relationship between belief in science and the supernatural in science-oriented individuals? Here, supernatural beliefs refer to ones that blend ontological core knowledge, comprising the 'traditional' supernatural beliefs (such as belief in God) and more secular beliefs (such as evolution following the 'natural plan'). The data consists of structured and open-ended responses from Finns recruited through pro-science organisations (n = 387). The analysis utilised a mixed-method approach. Many science-oriented Finns who endorsed supernatural causation also integrated it with scientific theories. In line with prior research, higher belief in science entailed less religious belief. However, the relationship between secular supernatural beliefs and belief in science was weak to non-existent. The results suggest that many previous findings on the negative relationship between belief in science and the supernatural have likely been influenced by a cultural expectation of science and religion as conflicting. There may be little (if any) conflict between science endorsement and supernatural belief per se.

Presenter:

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Title: Youth wellbeing and religion – The role of religion in families, happiness in childhood and youth and the continuity of religion and non-religion

Keywords: Religion, wellbeing, family, continuity, happiness

Abstract:

Various studies have touched the relation between religion and wellbeing. Most empirical studies support the positive connection between these two. However, in an increasing secular society religion's role in contributing wellbeing has been questioned. In this paper, the focus is on the role of religion in a family, childhood happiness and the continuity and discontinuity of family religion: How are religion and childhood/youth happiness interlinked and how does happiness contribute to continuity or discontinuity of religion? The analysis is based on two large data sets. The first data set this paper is based on is survey data (N=8402) collected within an international study: The transmission of religion across generations: a comparative international study of continuities and discontinuities in family socialization funded by the John Templeton Foundation (Grant ID 61361) and covering five countries: Finland, Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Canada. The other large data used in this paper is collected among Lutheran youth in Finland during 2018-2023 and consists of responses from over 70.000 youth about at the age of 15. In addition, in-depth biographical family interviews in Finland with three-generation members (N=63) (collected in relation to the Templeton-funded project presented above) are used to deepen the results. The results show in general that children raised in religious families tend to describe their childhood and youth as happier than those raised in non-religious families. Happiness and unhappiness in turn are manifoldly linked with continuity and discontinuity of religion and nonreligion in a family. These different patterns are presented and discussed in this paper.

Presenter:

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Title: Non-religious spirituality in Finnish older adults
Keywords: non-religious spirituality, meaning in life, Finnish older adults

Abstract:

Finnish existential landscape has changed in recent decades as participation within the area of institutional and traditional religiosity has decreased and new forms of spirituality are proliferating. However, in research, Finnish older adults' religiosity is commonly viewed as still taking place within the institutional and traditional religiosity of Evangelical-Lutheran church and little is known about their non-religious spirituality. In this mixed-methods study, we explore non-religious spirituality in Finnish older adults and its connections to their experience of meaning in life. Our qualitative data consist of 24 semi-structured interviews with Finnish older adults. Data was analyzed with thematic analysis. Our quantitative data is based on 300 responses from adults over 60 years. The quantitative data was collected with Tatjana Schnell's Sources of Meaning and Meaning in life -questionnaire translated in Finnish. In this paper we present the findings discussing their practical significance in encountering the spiritual needs of older adults.

Presenter:

- Name: Jonna Ojalampi
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Title: Black 'Nones': Reframing Quantitative Measures of Secularism Through the Lenses of Black Identity and the Black Church

Keywords: Religious Identity, Black Church, Secularism

Abstract:

Prompted by Templeton's Understanding Unbelief project, our work in Atlanta, Georgia looks at the understudied population of African-American 'none's and the process of disaffiliation with the Black Church as a rapidly increasing phenomenon. Quantitative research has revealed a recent increase in measures of Black individuals who identify under the category of 'None,' meaning (in general) those individuals who find their identities and meaning making not attached to particular religious traditions. But what does this mean in a more precise psychological understanding of religious identity? We are finalizing data from psychometric measures (n=268) and semi-structured coded interviews (n=16) to point to a psychosocial phenomenon that can better understand the cultural contexts and psychological manifestations of religious identity salience and irrelevance. The category of 'nones' has received significant criticism due to its inherent complexity. Furthering this critique, we add that the categorical 'none' has largely been spoken about through White Christianity. Combining our quantitative data with qualitative research, we found a pattern in which an increasing number of Black individuals find the Black Church to be irrelevant to their identities. Cognitive research into 'unbelief' has shown a pattern of retaining beliefs in souls, afterlife, and supernatural forces. While not de-converting nor espousing identities associated with atheism, the Black Church is increasingly less central to Black Identity. Overall, this research offers a more complex and descriptive view into understandings of Black secularism.

Presenter:

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Coping With The Disaster Of The Century: Researches On The Psycho-Socio-Spiritual Effects Of The Earthquake In Türkiye

Panel keywords: Earthquake in Türkiye, earthquake victims, psycho-social resilience, religious coping, spiritual care.

Panel abstract:

The 2023 earthquake in Turkey was named the disaster of the century because it spread over a wide area and affected millions of people. Currently, almost everyone in Turkey is either an earthquake victim or a person who was mentally affected by the earthquake. In this panel, we examined the effects of the earthquake on the victims, the public, and the support teams via qualitative and quantitative methods. This panel presents a general description of the psycho-socio-spiritual effects of the quake during primal and secondary trauma processes. Among the main issues are life satisfaction, collective resilience, religious attribution, religious coping, and spiritual sources.

Panel chairperson:

- Name: Associate Professor Sevde Düzgüner
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Title: Does coping style with disasters affect mental health? A study in the context of earthquakes in türkiye

Keywords: Religious coping, mental health, satisfaction with life, meaning in life, earthquake.

Abstract:

This study is a cross-sectional survey design research conducted after the two major earthquakes that occurred in Türkiye on February 6, 2023. The main aim of the study is to determine the effect of religious coping on mental health, also the role of meaning in life and traumatic experience in this interaction. In this study conducted 1 week after the earthquake with Turkish Muslim participants (n=318), the partial mediating role of meaning in life was determined in the effect of positive religious coping on life satisfaction. It was observed that those who were affected by the earthquake or had traumatic experiences have decreased life satisfaction, even if they have a positive religious coping style. The findings reveal that after these earthquakes, the way people deal with events has an impact on mental health, and the meaning in life and trauma experience also has an effect on this interaction.

Presenter:

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Co-authors:

Muhammet Enes Vural, Recep Tayyip Erdogan University

Title: All for one, and one for all: on the mediating role of religious attribution in the relationship between collective resilience, secondary traumatic stress, and anxiety in the post-earthquake process

Keywords: Collective Resilience, Secondary Traumatic Stress, Religious Attribution, Anxiety, Earthquake.

Abstract:

This study focuses on the impact of collective resilience and religious attribution on individuals' social media-related secondary traumatic stress and anxiety levels in the aftermath of two recent major earthquakes in Türkiye. The findings of this cross-sectional study, which was conducted on a sample of Turkish Muslims (n=454), show that collective resilience has a negative effect on social media-related secondary traumatic stress and anxiety levels. Negative religious attribution played a role as a mediating factor in the effect of collective resilience on secondary traumatic stress. Also, it was found that those who were directly affected by the earthquake and who lived in an active earthquake zone had higher levels of secondary traumatic stress and anxiety. These findings indicate that the collective solidarity and spirit of alliance in times of natural disasters have positive effects on mental health and that religious attribution also plays a role in this interaction.

Presenter:

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Co-authors:

Research Assistant Rahime Eymen Bakır (Marmara University)

Title: A Qualitative Research on Religious Attributions and Religious Coping Strategies of Earthquake Victims Received Spiritual Support Services by the Presidency of Religious Affairs

Keywords: Earthquake, Earthquake Victim, Religious Attribution, Religious Coping, Primal Trauma, Spiritual Support

Earthquake is a natural event that affects people not only physically but also psychologically and spiritually. It has been observed that individuals made intense religious attributions and actively used religious coping strategies during and after the earthquake. The Presidency of Religious Affairs has provided spiritual support as well as in-kind and financial aid. Considering this, the study focused on the religious attributions and religious coping strategies of the victims of the earthquake who received spiritual support. In-depth interviews were made with 30 direct victims received spiritual support and content analysis was conducted to the data. As a result of the analysis, it was found that religious attributions, religious coping strategies and the spirit of unity are extremely effective and important in coping with the primal trauma experienced after the earthquake. And research results have shown that spiritual support services by Presidency of Religious Affairs has helped earthquake victims to cope the psychological and spiritual difficulties of the earthquake.

Presenter:

- Name: Research Assistant Hakan Sari
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Title: A qualitative research on coping strategies of religious officials who provided funeral services and spiritual support in the earthquake in Türkiye

Keywords: Earthquake, funeral services, spiritual support teams, religious coping, primal and secondary trauma.

Abstract:

Undoubtedly, the earthquake in Türkiye deeply affected many people. In the face of this great disaster, individuals, non-governmental organizations and state institutions immediately organized and started to support the victims from all aspects. Religious officials of the Presidency of Religious Affairs also took an active role in these support units. Among these, funeral services and spiritual support teams are additionally important. According to Islam, dead bodies must be washed, shrouded and buried. However, it was not easy to complete this ritual because of the fragmented and injured bodies left under the rubble for a long time. In fact, funeral service providers have suffered primary trauma depending on the hardship of their mission. On the other hand, those who offered spiritual support experienced mostly secondary trauma as they talked to earthquake victims. This paper presents the results of the interviews with 50 people who provide funeral services and spiritual support. Content analysis was conducted to the collected data. Both service providers stated that their greatest spiritual resilience source was their belief in Allah.

Presenter:

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Morality & Extremism

Title: An International Review of Empirical Research on the Psychology of Fundamentalism

Keywords: fundamentalism; literature review; fundamentalism scales fundamentalism theory

Abstract:

The empirical study of fundamentalism has amassed a relatively large literature dating from the early 20th century, with the last 20 years being most prolific. Yet, no recent effort has gathered this body of work for critical review. In our recent book, *An International Review of Empirical Research on the Psychology of Fundamentalism* (2023, Brill Research Perspectives in Religion and Psychology), we addressed this concern by (1) collecting 365 empirical studies through the end of 2020, (2) organizing this literature into conceptual categories, and (3) providing a critical review of their findings. In this presentation, we will introduce this collection of investigations and provide a summary of their overall findings. Finally, we will offer some critical observations to consider for future research on the psychology of fundamentalism.

Presenter:

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Title: Religiosity and Moral Judgment: Moderating Role of Moral Internalization and Moral Competence

Keywords: moral judgment; moral competence; moral identity; religiosity; deontological coherence

Abstract:

Religious beliefs have a strong influence on moral judgment, moral values and priorities. In this article we analyze the nature and genesis of utilitarian vs. deontological moral judgment, the role of religiosity in human's morality and, lastly, we present empirical findings on the interrelationship between moral judgment, moral identity, moral competence and religiosity. In a cross-sectional study, 318 individuals (65% female) from the two major universities in Georgia completed self-report psychometric scales including Moral judgment scenarios, Moral Competency Index (MCI) and Self-Importance of Moral identity (SIMI) scale. The study results show that religiosity has a predictive power for deontological moral judgment, Furthermore, bootstrapping analysis confirmed that moral competence and moral identity moderate the relationship between religiosity and deontology. The result fits in the deontological coherence framework, evidencing that the association between consequential vs. deontological moral judgment and religiosity is not simple, rigid and predetermined, but changes on a different level of moral competency and moral internalization. The study is important in understanding the contextual variables and complementary mechanisms that affect the relationship between morality and religiosity.

Presenter:

- Name: Maia Mestvirishvili
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Title: Religiosity, spirituality, and beliefs justifying war

Keywords: religiosity, spirituality, war

Abstract:

In this international study conducted in over 20 countries we examined how different kinds of beliefs justifying war were connected to religiosity (intrinsic and extrinsic), and spirituality. Our samples were different in terms of dominating religion (originating from Buddhist, Shinto, Christian, Hindu, Hebrew, and Muslim societies). Among these countries there were societies heavily experienced by war, including Ukraine. Using newly created measure of justifying war, we have found that in most countries we could find different views on war, which we labeled as “dirty”, “utilitarian”, “just”, and “holy”, based on how people see the means and reasons for war as justified in restricted or unrestricted way. Basically, we have found various relationships between justifying war and religiosity/spirituality. In Ukraine we have found no relationship between religiosity, spirituality, and view on war. Therefore, we conclude that direct experience of war makes it independent from personal worldview (that is, religiosity and spirituality levels), while during peace war is seen in more abstractive way, being related to religiosity and spirituality.

Presenter:

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Abstracts
Posters

Title: eHealth intervention supporting spiritual well being in patient with cancer - a user involvement project

Keywords: spiritual well being, cancer, eHealth intervention, user involvement

Abstract

Suffering from a life-threatening disease may invoke or intensify feelings and thoughts about existential and spiritual themes e.g., identity, meaning, hope and faith. They need psychosocial support and spiritual care from others like health care professionals or caregivers and self-care for maintaining a meaningful life despite illness. Unfortunately, spiritual care gets de-prioritized and may not take place in the Danish healthcare system, which can harm the patient's well-being and coping with the disease.

This project aims to develop and test an eHealth intervention to meet the spiritual needs of people suffering from cancer.

The project's overall framework is a participatory design following three phases: 1) Identification of user needs through a scoping review mapping online and offline interventions and interviews with patients, 2) Design and development of the eHealth intervention in co-creation with patients and healthcare professionals through workshops and cognitive interviews, and 3) Test and evaluation of the intervention.

The project is the first in Denmark to examine the use of an eHealth intervention to support spiritual needs - through a user-involving approach. Thus, the eHealth intervention will be a new approach addressing an important aspect of patients' well-being and coping with their disease.

Presenter:

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Title: Development of eHeart, an intervention for children who are next of kin

Keywords: children next of kin; parental illness; existential and spiritual needs; digital intervention

Abstract:

Children who are next of kin of ill parents or siblings are often overlooked, they can feel loneliness and have feelings and thoughts about existential and spiritual themes e.g. meaning, hope and faith. Thus they need support so everyday life can become meaningful despite illness.

The aim of this project is to develop, test, evaluate and implement an eHealth intervention (hereafter called eHeart) to meet the needs of children who are next of kin. The target group is children 10-13 years old who are next of kin of parents or siblings with chronic or life-threatening somatic and/or mental illness as well as their parents, and healthcare professionals. The project is based on Design Thinking methods, where the users' needs are in focus in throughout the process. The project phases are: 1) mapping of evidence and existing interventions, 2) user-involving process, 3) development of prototype and 4) pilot study and evaluation, 5) implementing eHeart. The result of the project is eHeart, a digital intervention which meet the needs of children who are next of kin at their own pace. Depending on these needs, eHeart can be either an intervention in itself or a starting point for further efforts.

Presenter:

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Title: Spiritual struggles matter in Patients with SUD

Keywords: spiritual struggle, religion, substance use disorder, meaning in life, craving

Abstract:

The study tested the model of spiritual struggles (Pargament & Exline, 2022) during the life event of a 12-week religious-sensitive clinical treatment of 142 patients (75% Christian) with substance use disorder (SUD). Treatment was based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Schema Therapy with the option for patients to relate their beliefs to treatment goals. According to the model, we defined growth one year later as (1) more meaning in life (MiL) and (2) fewer SUD symptoms as dependent variables with the predictors of intrinsic religiosity (as orienting system), spiritual struggles, and craving (as a measure of distress and disorientation) during treatment. Two hierarchical multiple regressions showed that the centered variables intrinsic religiosity, craving and the interaction craving and spiritual struggles best predicted MiL ($R^2 = .234$; $F = 10.466$; p

< .001). However, SUD symptoms were predicted by craving and the interaction of craving with spiritual struggles ($R^2 = .11$; $F = 4.058$; $p = .004$). More craving and more spiritual struggles predicted more MiL and fewer SUD symptoms one year later, indicating that more spiritually struggling patients with more craving presented more growth after treatment. To summarize, the model predicted MiL and partly SUD symptoms.

Presenter:

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- Reinout W. Wiers, University of Amsterdam

Title: What do the children of scientists believe in an entangled world?
Keywords: Psychology. Religion. Professors. Undergraduates. Religious Transmission.

Abstract:

The purpose of this poster is to present the research results of the Post-Doctoral in Psychology at the University of São Paulo, Brazil, entitled: "What do the children of scientists believe in? The Religiosity of university students who are children of professors at Brazilian universities." This research aimed to know the religiosity of university students, children of professors, from the ten best Brazilian universities evaluated according to the classification of the "QS Quacquarelli Symonds University Rankings" 2016, and to investigate how the transmission of religious beliefs from professors to their university children occur and what consequences they have. As research methodology, 23 university students, aged between 18 and 28 years, participate filling in a questionnaire online, which served as the basis for the quantitative analysis of the research. To the qualitative part of the research, the data collection instrument was the online family interview with professors' parents and their 10 university children. As a result of the research, which had a character of novelty, the line of transmission of religious belief of the children of professors' participants has surpass my expectations and it was revealed that the professors' familiar relationship proved to be the great protective membrane of various transmission layers found, and beyond the religious transmission, other layers of transmission were detected: the transmission of religious beliefs and disbeliefs; the transmission of values beliefs of ethical content; the transmission of structuring constructive beliefs. Despite the small research sample, which quantitatively circumscribes the scope of the results, an important research scenario could be opened in PDR, about Religious Transmission in an entangled world.

Presenter:

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Title: Associations between religiosity and mental health in Christian and Muslim emerging adults: The moderating role of parental bond

Keywords: Religiosity; religious affiliation; parental bond; emerging adulthood; mental health

Abstract:

Religiosity has been linked to mental health, but these associations may vary according to the unique context of religious affiliation, which can determine how religious behaviors and beliefs are interpreted and expressed. Developmental stage may also play a role, with the developmental period of emerging adulthood, in particular, marked by the examination of faith identity and worldview. Furthermore, research indicates that positive relationships with parents can contribute to the transmission of religion to children, and are associated with a variety of better mental health outcomes over time. The purpose of the present study is to examine the role of the parental bond in moderating the association between emerging adult religiosity and mental health outcomes, separately for Christians and Muslims. Using data from an online survey given to 201 Christian and Muslim emerging adults, we found several instances of moderation; most notably, paternal overprotection moderated the association between intrinsic religiosity and sadness for Muslims, such that greater intrinsic religiosity is associated with less sadness only for those whose fathers are low on overprotection. Our findings imply that the parental bond may continue to play an important role in religiosity during emerging adulthood but may also depend on religious affiliation.

Presenter:

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Title: Transitions in Emerging Adulthood and Faith-Oriented Support Needs

Keywords: emerging adulthood, faith-oriented support, transitions, identity

Abstract:

Emerging adulthood marks the early stage of young adulthood that is often explorative and unstable. During this developmental period, emerging adults navigate various transitions that shape and prepare them for adulthood. Nevertheless, many religious communities focus their programs and resources towards youth and adults, neglecting the unique lived experiences of emerging adults who no longer identify as adolescents nor claim to have achieved adulthood. Our literature review aims to understand the most prevalent transitions that emerging adults experience and their perception of faith-oriented support as they navigate these transitions. We reviewed relevant literature within the following parameters: research articles and books containing samples from North America, sample age primarily around 18-29, and articles published from 2015 to the present. Our findings suggest seven domains of transitions to be most prominent in emerging adulthood: identity, relationship, vocation, geographic/institution, religion/spirituality, wellness, and responsibility. And our findings also suggest that emerging adults desire mentorship and communal support, identity development, and source of healing from faith-oriented support systems. The implication from these findings can inform religious leaders and communities to consider ways that they could be better equipped and trained to support emerging adults in their various transitions of life through mentorship, identity development, and healing.

Presenter:

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Title: A Review of Reiki and Mental and Physical Health

Keywords: Reiki, Health, Spirituality, Alternative Treatments

Abstract:

In recent years, people around the world have explored non-traditional medical treatments as complements to contemporary medical practices. This has led people to explore psychospiritual options such as Yoga and Reiki in order to expand options. A recent search of: Archive for the Psychology of Religion; Psychology of Religion and Spirituality; International Journal for the Psychology of Religion; and Mental Health, Religion and Culture yielded no results for Reiki. This is curious because our findings suggest that many lay people associate Reiki with spirituality and some researchers use terms related to religion or spirituality in work on Reiki (out of 39 sources we used, 6 used spirit* and 2 used relig*). It is therefore a goal of the present research to introduce Reiki to researchers on the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality. Additional goals include examining the current state of research on Reiki's connections with mental and physical health, and suggesting avenues for future research.. Our review of the literature suggested positive or no relationships between Reiki and health. Future research should use more stringent methods and explore for the possibility of negative effects.

Presenter:

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Steven M. Graham, New College of Florida

Title: Attitudes of Czech University Students to Christianity and its Connections to Personality Traits.

Keywords: Attitudes to Christianity; religious orientation; Big Five; Czech Republic; religious identity

Abstract:

The Czech Republic is a country with less confidence of people in religious institutions. Our research is connected to our previous qualitative research where 15 positive and 14 negative categories of attitudes toward Christianity were found. The aim was to examine these attitudes quantitatively and to examine the connections of these attitudes with the personality traits of the Big Five. We expected Openness to experience to be the strongest positive predictor of the whole rate of positive and negative attitudes toward Christianity. The sample consisted of 273 Czech university students (66 males, 201 females, and 6 respondents did not state their gender). Respondents were divided into three groups according to their religious orientation. The average age was 22 years (SD = 2.2). Factor analysis revealed three factors of positive attitudes (Offering rules for the life, Leading to freedom and personal growth, and Offering rituals and traditions), and three factors of negative attitudes (It is conservative, It manipulates people and It is false and supercilious). The correlations between personality traits and these factors were weak. The whole rate of positive attitudes was predicted positively by Extraversion and Agreeableness, and the whole rate of negative attitudes was predicted negatively by Agreeableness and positively by Openness to experience. However, the predictions were not strong, and personality traits explored only one-tenth of the whole rate of these attitudes. The entire rate of positive and negative attitudes was mainly influenced by the religious orientation of the respondents. Students identified with Christianity scored significantly higher by the entire rate of positive attitudes toward Christianity and significantly less by the whole rate of negative attitudes toward Christianity.

Presenter:

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Title: Science and Religion or Science vs. Religion? The perspective of professors/researchers from Brazilian universities

Keywords: science, religion, conflict, worldview, academic context

Abstract:

This qualitative study aims to contribute to the understanding of how scientists perceive and deal subjectively with the relationship between science and religion, and how it impacts their academic practice. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in Brazil with 30 professors/researchers who work in different scientific fields in the ten most prominent Brazilian universities. The interview addressed the interviewees' life history, focusing on their contact with religion and science, option for research area and professional activity, and worldview, including how they deal with evil, suffering and death. These topics were analyzed as collinear axes of their personal narratives. Results: in general, both religious and non-religious interviewees see no conflict between science and religion once they are understood as coexistent distinct epistemologies that certainly should not be mixed. However, on a personal level, some psychological conflict was evidenced in the interviewees' speech especially in the confrontation of science and institutionalized religion. Psychosocial difficulties to discuss religious subjects at the university were also reported, especially in the current Brazilian context with the increase of religious intolerance and the depreciation of science by certain religious groups, what makes the perception of the relationship between science and religion affected by group conflicts.

Presenter:

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Title: An investigation of the study on religious behavior in childhood in Brazil

Keywords: children; religious behavior; research; literature review; Brazil

Abstract:

Despite the diversity of topics, religions, theories and methodologies in psychology of religion, research targeting children tends to represent the smallest portion of the literature. Knowledge of the state of the art in this area is necessary and, therefore, we aimed to identify, present and characterize Brazilian research on religious behavior in childhood, in psychology and related areas, and discuss the challenges and future possibilities for research. Up to date, no literature review was conducted on this question in Brazil. Through a survey of productions in Index Psi, PePSIC, SciELO, LILACS, Scopus and the CAPES theses and dissertations database 21 studies were found (published or in progress). They involve different methods, theories and themes concerned with development, children's position in the group, social issues, clinical, psychological processes and assessment. A prevalence of studies with Christian children was identified, and we highlight the necessity of properly considering the language, the ways children express themselves, the appropriate approach and methodology for investigating children's religious behavior. Also, a literature review like this could be done worldwide.

Presenter:

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Title: Relationship between belief in miracles and religion-spiritual coping in the context of a fetal malformation

Keywords: Religious-spiritual coping, Miracle, Fetal malformation.

Abstract:

The belief in miracles is religious -spiritual coping (RSC), a way in which people use religion and spirituality to deal with stressful situations, like serious diseases. Normally, scientists and healthcare professionals consider the wish for miracles bad for the mental health in patients and caregivers, because it means a refusal of reality, this is called Negative RSC (NRSC). In the Pargament, Koenig and Perez (2000) RSC scale, they classify the belief in miracles as a NRSC. In my research with 99 pregnancies, where there was a fetal malformation diagnosis, we noticed 89% of the mothers praying for a miracle and 92% of them had a Positive RSC (PRSC). In order to understand these results better, a correlation was established between the item "praying for a miracle", present in the scale, and the PRSC and NRSC subscale factors. The research shows that "praying for a miracle" had a stronger correlation with seven positive factors and only half of the NRSC factors. Therefore, we conclude that the belief in miracles is highly prevalent and very important for the patients and caregivers. It has a positive aspect, not just negative, and both must be better understood by science and not denied or neglected.

Presenter:

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Title: Religious attitudes and belief in miracles

Keywords: religiosity, meaning making, religious attitudes, belief in miracles

Abstract:

The study explores the connection between religious attitudes and the belief in miracles. Participants included 412 adults, most of them of Eastern Orthodox faith, who evaluated miraculous testimonials in which there were described experiences involving supernatural agents and rated the extent to which they believed these testimonials to be credible and true after reading either a meaning threat text (manipulation situation) or a neutral one (control situation). Results explored the impact of threatened meaning situation on the credibility of the testimonials, replicating thus another previous research from the literature and adding additional explanations on these aspects.

Presenter:

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Title: Religiosity, health and coping among South African Muslims during the COVID-19 pandemic

Keywords: religiosity, COVID-19, Muslims, health, psychological wellbeing, coping

Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted on individual mental health with elevated levels of stress, depression and anxiety amongst others being reported worldwide. However, some individuals were not as impacted, suggesting that protective factors like religiosity and coping styles may have influenced individual physical and mental health. Thus, this study explored the relationship between level of religiosity, coping, religious coping and physical and mental health, in a sample of South African Muslim individuals during 2021 COVID-19 lockdown. 277 participants completed a survey measuring level of religiosity, coping styles, religious coping styles and physical and mental health. Results indicated that higher levels of religiosity were associated with better mental health. Individuals who rated themselves as more religious were also more likely to use religion to cope positively and less likely to use substance-use and self-blame coping styles. These results are discussed within the Islamic Psychology paradigm where religiosity is core to promoting health.

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The image features a vibrant purple background with large, flowing white abstract shapes that resemble stylized leaves or organic forms. A single, thin, dark purple vertical line runs down the center of the page, extending from the top edge to just above the text.

Design by
Marco Bijdevaate

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink, consisting of the letters 'MJB' followed by 'Bijdevaate' in a cursive script.

MJBijdevaate