

Vol. 32, No. 2

December 2016

FEATURE STORY:

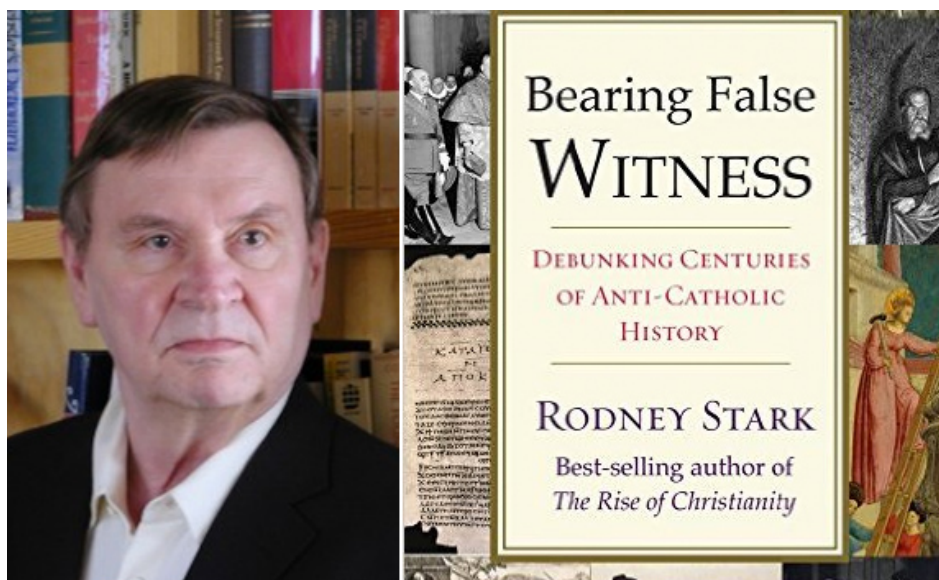
Rodney Stark on anti-Catholic myths

For a change, RW turns to historical trends in religion, namely the phenomenon of anti-Catholicism as documented by Baylor ISR's co-director Rodney Stark in his new book Bearing False Witness (Templeton Press, \$19.57). The book covers topics ranging from myths about Catholic origins and the "lost" Gospels to Catholicism's attitudes concerning slavery, science, and capitalism. We briefly interviewed Stark about his book in early December.

RW: *There have been other books on anti-Catholicism, but Catholics have usually written them; as a non-Catholic, what interested you enough about this subject to write a book on it?*

Stark: I kept running into these dreadful lies, and they not only prompt anti-Catholicism, they badly distort history. I became concerned that so many of them are taken for granted by educated people.

RW: *The book sets out to debunk stereotypes and other popular myths about Catholicism throughout history, such as about the church's role in the Inquisition and the Crusades. What myth did you uncover that was the most surprising to you during your research?*



Stark: Until I was faced with overwhelming data, it was inconceivable to me that the Inquisition was other than a dreadful, murderous institution. That it was, in fact, a force for moderation was inconceivable to me. But, the fact that the witch-hunts that swept through the rest of Europe were prevented in Italy and Spain by the Inquisition is undeniable. And that was only one of its good deeds.

RW: *The role of the church in World War II and its complicity or at least passivity in the face of persecution of Jewish people has been the subject of several popular books, but you argue that the church was unfairly attacked on this front; can you explain that?*

Stark: The overwhelming testimony by major Jewish figures is that the church opposed Hitler and managed to save a lot of Italian Jews. The lie about Hitler's pope began in Moscow.

RW: *Why do you think these myths have been so entrenched throughout history?*

Stark: Because during the great religious wars, Protestant England and Holland put out a lot of anti-Catholic propaganda—I include a picture published in Holland in 1598 of a Spanish don feeding Indian children to his dogs. Unfortunately, this propaganda lived on, sustained by Protestant anti-Catholicism. Remember that English Catholics could not enroll in either Oxford or Cambridge until 1871. And, English historians shaped American history.

RW: *Anti-Catholicism has been called the last acceptable prejudice; do you think it continues today?*

Stark: Far less. But, the widespread credence given to Hitler's pope charges, to the Crusades as Western colonialism instead of what they were, wars against Muslim colonialism, and to the rest of the false history I address causes good people to think there are good reasons to be anti-Catholic.

RW: *In your conclusion, you note that anti-Catholicism has decreased significantly among Protestants, including Baptists, and cooperation and even a sense of unity has grown. What do you think that says about Protestants? Are theology and distinctive Protestant traditions just less important to them?*

Stark: One need not place any less importance on Protestant doctrines to disdain anti-Catholicism. Religious tolerance is a virtue, not a sign of irreligion.

ARTICLES:

Faith factor draws Muslim students to Catholic colleges

Muslim students are increasingly finding a home at American Catholic colleges, valuing these institutions' greater openness to matters of faith, writes Kristin Whitney Daniels in the *National Catholic Reporter* (November 4). "Although making up a relatively small percentage of students at all schools, Muslim student enrollment at Catholic colleges has increased significantly since 2010, according to the annual reports on enrolling freshman from UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute." In 2010, students who identified as Muslim only represented 0.6 percent of the entering freshman class at Catholic colleges. By 2015, the number had more than doubled to 1.4 percent of first year students identifying themselves as Muslim. Some Catholic colleges have

shown even higher percentages, such as Manhattan College in New York, the University of Dayton, Loyola University in Chicago, and, most dramatically, Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois, where 20 percent of students identify as Muslim. Last year, the college hired its first Muslim faith advisor.

The reasons behind the enrollment of Muslims in Catholic colleges vary, but the article finds that they tend to report less conflict and judgement in this environment than in secular settings. Students interviewed report a shared sense of community and principles in these colleges. Such a school as Manhattan College is based in the Lasallian order, part of whose mission is to welcome all faiths. The emphasis on student service to the community in these colleges also appeals to Muslims, Daniels adds.



Many of these schools have active Muslim Student Associations (MSA) and allow for Muslim prayer spaces. Aside from serving as support organizations, the Muslim Student Associations seek to educate non-Muslims about Islam. Some groups try to bring Muslims and Catholics together, as when the University of Dayton MSA hosted a discussion on Jesus and Islam.

(*National Catholic Reporter*, <https://www.ncronline.org/>)

Influx of Chinese students buoys up struggling Catholic schools

The sharp growth of Chinese students in American high schools is also serving as a “lifeline to many Catholic schools around the country,” writes Anthony J. Zavagnin in *America* magazine (October 31). The number of Chinese high school students in the U.S. increased from fewer than 1,000 in 2005 to more than 23,000 by 2013 as such international students see secondary institutions as a pipeline to the American educational system. Of these students, just under 28 percent attend Catholic schools. Since these students are willing to pay high amounts (more than five times what local children pay), these schools can charge a premium for their education. Local families also host these Chinese students for the year and receive a stipend for opening their homes to them, providing more support for the Catholic school community. “As a consequence, students from China, whose



government limits both religious and academic freedoms, are in the position to help keep the doors open for many struggling Catholic schools in the United States,” Zavagnin writes.

But instructing the Chinese students can be a major challenge for faculty members of Catholic schools, who often have little experience teaching students who are not proficient in the English language. “It is also unclear how Catholic schools can welcome Chinese students in a way that is most in keeping with their mission.” Zavagnin writes that while financial benefit may be a primary concern, these schools also share a concern for evangelizing these students who “are taking part in theology classes, encountering issues of social justice and attending liturgies....”

(*America*, <http://www.americamagazine.org/>)

Sci Fi-based religion evolving, with help from Harry Potter

Founded in 1962 by two students in Missouri, the Church of All Worlds (CAW) was the real life version of a science fiction novel by Robert A. Heinlein, *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961). It remains active more than 50 years later, with branches in four countries and an online and print presence, writes Carole M. Cusak (University of Sydney) in a thematic issue of the journal *Religion* (October) on “Religion and Fiction.” Fandoms or interest groups of like-minded people around inspiring fictional narratives are not rare; they may even result in the birth of fiction-based (or invented) religion. Cusak observes that disenchantment with both science and religion as meta-narratives may open a space for constructed alternative value systems. According to Cusak, since the mid-20th century, “explicitly fictional narrative has been increasingly employed to embody and affirm ultimate concerns in personally satisfying ways by a small number of people” as themes and behaviors appropriated in personal repertoires but rarely institutionalized. With the dominance of secular fiction over sacred texts, popular culture becomes a source. She adds that regarding fiction-based religions, fantasy and science fiction are main resources.



Congruent with the counterculture, the novel *Stranger in a Strange Land* was the initial inspiration for the CAW, but the church subsequently grafted elements from modern paganism onto the original system and adopted an environmental theology in 1970, including worship of the Earth as the goddess Gaia. Since 2000, the group has undergone a renaissance and made much material available. It has continued to incorporate additional elements, starting a magical education system clearly inspired by Harry Potter novels in 2004, but it continues to preserve key elements

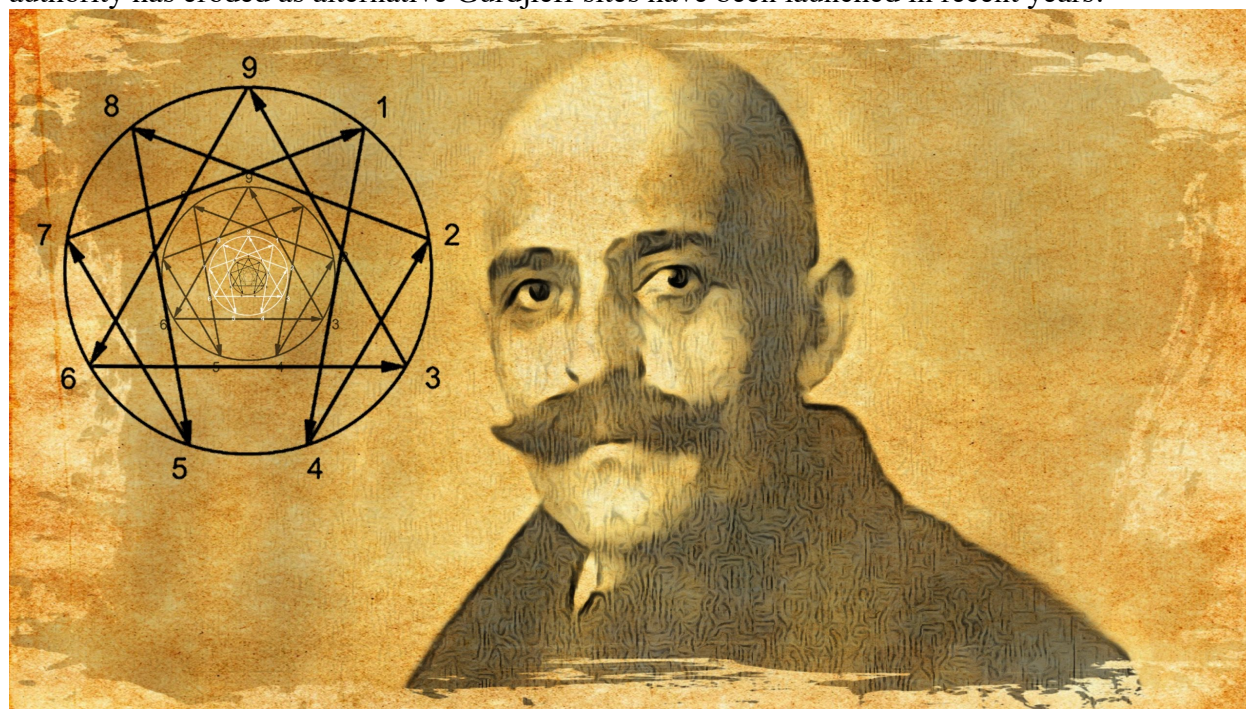
derived from Heinlein’s novel. The CAW resulted from the “the inspirational role of a fictional

text, and the prophetic role of two readers.” The initial attraction can easily be explained by its tolerant approach, its free and non-possessive approach to sexuality, and its emphasis on the environment, Cusak remarks, while the early development of rituals may have contributed to its survival by fostering social bonds.

(*Religion*, Taylor & Francis, 325 Chestnut Street, 8th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19106 - <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rrel20>)

The Work becoming less esoteric, hierarchical online

The esoteric movement based on the teachings of G.I. Gurdjieff is the latest case of a new religion moving in a more ecumenical and less hierarchical direction as the group’s teachings and writings find a place on the Internet, write David Pecotic and Carole M. Cusack in the current issue of the journal *Fieldwork in Religion* (11.1). Known as “the Work,” Gurdjieff developed a complex body of esoteric practices and teachings through his exclusive and secretive Gurdjieff Foundation, although different “teaching lineages” have promoted variants on his philosophy. As with other religions that have faced challenges as their sacred texts and teachings have become “open source” on the Internet and social media, such as the Church of Scientology, the Gurdjieff Foundation’s authority has eroded as alternative Gurdjieff sites have been launched in recent years.



Some of these sites, such as Duversity, seek to integrate the Work with mainstream psychological approaches or with the Eastern teachings of Avaita Vedanta. The most ambitious site is the Gurdjieff Internet Guide, founded by a disciple who subsequently converted to Eastern Orthodoxy, which goes a step further by developing online rituals, such as “crowd-sourced spiritual activities,” and instruction via Skype. All this innovation is challenging the long time secrecy surrounding Gurdjieff practices as well as spurring alternative teaching and communication systems outside

the Foundation. But the ongoing “graying” of the movement will likely mean a change in its teaching structure away from its intentional communities (based in the country estates owned by prominent members) to a “deregulated spiritual marketplace...of independent teachers and seekers,” concludes Pecotic and Cusack.

(*Fieldwork in Religion*, <https://journals.equinoxpub.com/index.php/FIR/issue/current>)

Aboriginal religion assumes public status and draws conflict in Canadian province

There is a growing controversy over the use of religious practices in public schools and universities in the Canadian province of British Columbia, reports the *Vancouver Sun* (November 19). The use of native Canadian or aboriginal spiritual concepts and practices, such as “smudging” (burning sage over one’s body and “spirit”), has been common in schools in the province for decades, with Buddhist-oriented mindfulness practices more recently introduced. Secular educators say they promote these rituals and practices to show respect for aboriginal people or, in the case of mindfulness, to heighten concentration and relaxation. British Columbia parents are now protesting that such practices violate Canadian religious freedom laws. “The parents argue that aboriginal smudging and mindfulness are essentially religious observances, which have been forbidden in Canadian public schools since Christianity’s Lord’s Prayer was abolished decades ago,” Douglas Todd writes.

The use of these practices and ceremonies seem to be more than educational efforts. Members of the Nuuchah-nulth Tribal Council led a ceremony at an elementary school last year in which they told participants that “everything is one; all is connected,” and that “everything has a spirit and energy.” Another parent argues that expecting his children and other students at their elementary school to take part each day in scheduled mindfulness practice is a form of “legislated meditation.” Todd adds that both cases “echo similar movements in higher education.... Even though most academics officially uphold worldviews that are rigorously secular, if not anti-religious, many are finding ways to welcome aboriginal spirituality and Buddhist-style meditation into universities.” He reports that “Metro Vancouver academics now routinely open their conferences, for instance, by thanking First Nations bands for the privilege to meet on their ‘unceded territory.’ An aboriginal prayer usually follows.”



CURRENT RESEARCH

● **Results from exit polling suggests that Donald Trump did as well if not better than his Republican predecessors Mitt Romney and George W. Bush among evangelicals, as well as picking up a clear majority among Catholics, reports *First Things* magazine (November 9).** Political scientist Darren Guerra writes that Trump drew a high 81 percent of self-identified “born-again” voters—three points higher than Romney and Bush. But Trump’s 81 percent support from those identifying as born again contrasts sharply with the 36-percent plurality that he drew among Republicans in the primaries before the Indiana contest. While fewer church-going Americans voted for Trump than Romney—seven percent less—Trump did better among regular attenders than among those who seldom or never attend church. In contrast to Romney, Trump also carried a majority of Catholics. The Supreme Court and the associated issues of religious liberty and pro-life concerns served as a flashpoint for many Trump supporters. For those to whom the composition of the Supreme Court mattered little, Trump lost by 10 percentage points. Guerra concludes that it took a long time for evangelical voters to warm up to Trump, and many clearly voted for him out of opposition to Hillary Clinton; thus, such “contingent support...could evaporate if Trump does not deliver as promised.” (*First Things*, <http://www.firstthings.com>)



● **The literal interpretation of the Bible and a conservative theology are important factors leading to church growth in Canada, according to a new study.** The debate about strict and conservative teachings and practices leading to church growth continues, but the new study focuses more on theology—a factor that some scholars have questioned having a strong effect. The study, conducted by David Haskell and published in the *Review of Religious Research* (December), drew from surveys of 2,225 churchgoers as well as interviews with 29 clergy and 195 congregants. It



compares the beliefs and practices of churches and clergy in mainline bodies whose attendance was growing compared with those that were declining. On all measures, the growing churches “held more firmly to the traditional beliefs of Christianity” and were more committed to Bible study and prayer. The study found that 93 percent of clergy and 83 percent of worshippers from growing churches agreed with the belief that Jesus rose from the dead compared with 67 percent of the worshippers and 56 percent of the clergy from declining churches. Fifty percent of clergy from declining churches agreed that it was “very important to encourage non-Christians to become Christian,”

compared with 100 percent of clergy from growing churches. As previous studies have shown, services at growing churches featured contemporary worship with drums and guitars, while declining churches favored traditional worship styles with organ and choir.

(*Review of Religious Research*, <http://www.springer.com/social+sciences/journal/13644>)

● **A study of Canadian and American evangelical schools finds more commonalities than differences between them, though the former are more liberal on social issues and more engaged in the surrounding culture.**

The study, conducted by Sam Reimer and David Sikkink and presented at the late October meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, used Internet panel surveys of graduates from these schools as well as analysis of

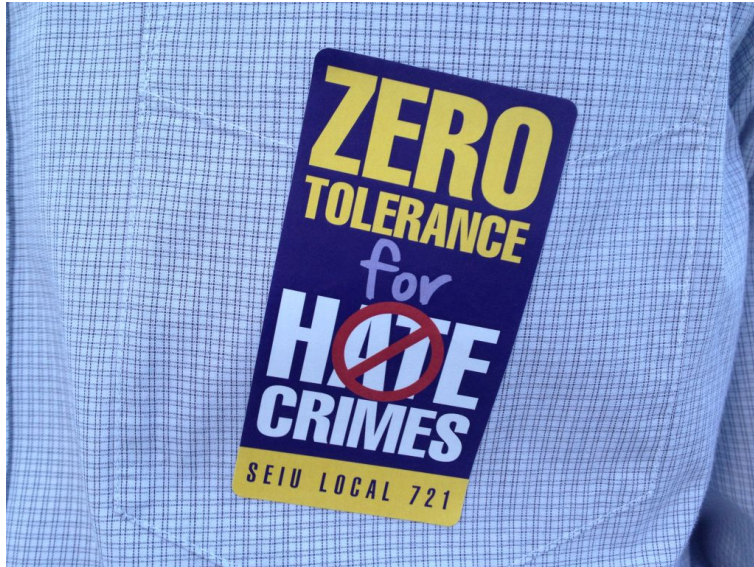


qualitative interviews with high school students, principals, and teachers in 18 evangelical schools in Canada and the U.S. The researchers found that the similarities outweighed the differences between the students. Most principals and teachers agreed that engagement with culture and society is encouraged more than separation and isolation from secular currents. Yet more American students agreed that their parents sent them to Christian schools to protect them from non-Christian influences and are politically conservative. The Canadian schools tended to view interaction with those of other cultures and religions as enriching students' lives, while American schools were more likely to see such pluralism as a challenge that required apologetics or evangelism of those of other religions.

● **Attacks against American Muslims rose last year, causing an increase of about 7 percent in hate crimes against all victims, according to FBI statistics.** The *New York Times* (November 14) reports that the most comprehensive look at threat crimes nationwide expanded on previous findings by researchers and outside monitors, who have noted an alarming rise in some types of hate crimes tied to the intense vitriol of the presidential campaign and the aftermath of terror attacks at home and abroad since 2015. Among the reported 5,818 hate crimes in 2015—a rise of nearly 340 over the year before—attacks against Muslim Americans saw the biggest surge: 257 reports of assaults, attacks on mosques, and other types hate crimes against Muslims last year, a jump of about 67 percent over the year before. It was the highest total since 2001, when the aftermath of the September 11 attacks saw more than 480 such incidents.

But an analysis in the libertarian magazine *Reason* (November 15) reports that the FBI figures that among crimes deemed “single bias incidents” (i.e., those motivated by just racial animosity, not racial and anti-gay animosity), hate crimes based on race or ethnicity were by far the most

common, accounting for nearly 57 percent all incidents. Religious bias drove a little more than a fifth of all incidents (21.26 percent), while crimes motivated by sexual-orientation bias accounted for a little under a fifth (18 percent).



For crimes motivated by just religious bias, anti-Jewish sentiment was by far the most common prejudice, accounting for 664 or the 1,244 identified incidents, or 53.4 percent. The next most targeted religion was Islam, with anti-Muslim bias behind 20.7 percent of the incidents. Non-specified religious bias or that which targeted multiple religions was the next most prevalent (11.8 percent of incidents), followed by anti-Catholic incidents (4.3 percent), anti-Eastern Orthodox incidents (3.9 percent), anti-

Protestant incidents (3 percent), anti-other Christian incidents (1.2 percent), anti-Mormon incidents (0.64 percent), and anti-Hindu or anti-Sikh incidents (0.88 percent). For comparison, in 2014, 154 incidents of religious bias were categorized anti-Islamic, while 609 were anti-Jewish, 64 were anti-Catholic, and 25 were anti-Protestant.

● **Sharing the same religion may not be enough to bring about peace in cases of groups engaged in ethnic civil war, according to a study in the journal *Religion and Politics* (online November).** Researchers Mehmet Gurses and Nicholas Rost examine all ethnic wars that began and ended between 1950 and 2006, measuring the co-religiosity between the ethnic group in power and the main opposition group and the duration of the conflict. Religious leaders and scholars have argued for the peacebuilding potential of religion, as well as the constructive role religious institutions can play in post-war reconciliation. The authors find that it is more often the case that political actors exploit religion to pursue their ambitions. Included in the 72 wars under study were instances when rebels aspired to change the regime rather than create their own state (such as in Lebanon, Iraq, Rwanda, and South Africa) and wars of secession (Sudan, Chechnya), but cases where the warring parties were from the same ethnicity were excluded.



The statistical tests conducted by the authors failed to support claims that common faith helps insure a durable peace. In other words, it seemed to be more difficult to establish a lasting peace after an ethnic conflict the closer the religious ties are between a rebel group and the government.

Gurses and Rost note, “If a common faith was a unifying, peacemaking factor, war between two groups that share the same religion should not have broken out in the first place.” While religious leaders can condemn violence and foster cross-communal cooperation, such outcomes require a vital civil society, democratic traditions, and assistance from the international community—factors not found in many war-torn societies.

(*Politics and Religion*, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/politics-and-religion>)

GENERAL ARTICLES

Unraveling the puzzle of anti-Islam without Muslims in Poland

Opposition to Islam is growing in Poland, even though there are few Muslims there. Those that are there are part of a community that has been integrated into Polish society, often for centuries, writes Katarzyna Gorak-Sosnowska in the *Journal of Muslims in Europe* (No. 5). The puzzle of intolerance toward the few Muslims in Poland has become more pronounced in recent years as negative attitudes toward Muslims typically found on the Internet are now being translated into actual actions against this religion and its adherents. Such action is seen in the growing vandalism of mosques and Islamic cemeteries and the formation of civic patrols aimed at protecting Polish women from Muslim men in discos. Sosnowska notes that there are only about 30,000 to 40,000 Muslims in Poland (out of 38 million citizens) and that most Muslims are either indigenous Tatars, who have peacefully co-existed with Christians for over 600 years, or economic immigrants from Muslim countries who arrived in the country between the 1950s and 1970s and have become fully integrated into society.

Sosnowska writes that since 9/11, there has been growing anti-Muslim discourse on the Internet; the acceptance of images of the “global Muslim” propagated in the media, related to reports of terrorism and jihad, may be unrelated to one having actually met a Muslim (only 12 percent of Poles have). She also discounts that Poland may be catching anti-Islam from other European countries that have seen the growth of the far right since the demographics are different: in other parts of Europe, older people harbor more the most likely to display such attitudes. Also, unlike far-right anti-Islam in the rest of Europe, right wing authoritarian attitudes in Poland don’t predict anti-Muslim views, and it is the Polish left wing that is more anti-Islam (though only by a few percentage points). While Sosnowska adds that recent survey data don’t provide definitive explanations, she cites greater rates of Eastern European



intolerance toward the anti-Muslim sentiments, while younger Poles are minorities in general and the growth of a transplanted discourse on Islam feeding negative stereotypes as making the most sense in explaining the Polish puzzle.

(*Journal of Muslims in Europe*, <http://www.brill.com/journal-muslims-europe>)

Finding religion in Estonia's alternative health milieu

Estonia has been considered one of the most secular countries in the world, but the growth of alternative health teachings and practices may show strong yet overlooked religious and spiritual concerns, writes Marko Uibo in the journal *Implicit Religion* (19.2). Although Estonians have registered high rates of non-affiliation and belief in religion's irrelevance (up to 86 percent), previous surveys have shown significant levels of paranormal views and belief in a life force. Uibo turns to the alternative health milieu and especially the best-selling books of Luule Viilma, a physician and spiritual teacher, to reveal Estonian spiritual interest. More than 10 years after her death, Viilma's books are still widely sold, with the first volume of her *Teaching for Survival* offered free to newspaper subscribers. While she was alive, Viilma claimed she channeled spiritual and healing forces, drawing on Eastern, Western, and New Age sources.

Viilma's writings tap into the Estonian sentiment (held by 74 percent, according to a recent survey) that sufferings are lessons on the path of spiritual development. Her teaching that immorality may be tied to disease is also reflected in the Estonian belief (held by as many as 88 percent of Estonians) that good and bad deeds done by a person come back during his/her lifetime. Viilma's books address classical questions of religion, but because Estonians are often strongly against institutional religion, the "truths that have a religious dimension are just more disguised.... The Estonian example suggests that despite the country's apparent lack of religiosity, religious and spiritual beliefs are still present. While remaining latent in everyday situations, they become activated when people have specific reasons to turn to spiritual and religious sources," Uibo writes.



(*Implicit Religion*, <https://journals.equinoxpub.com/index.php/IR>)

European Islamic charities turn to business models

Several large Muslim charities in Europe are increasingly taking their cues from corporate life, viewing Islam in instrumental and marketing terms, writes William Barylo in the *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (36:3). Muslims have set up numerous charitable initiatives in Europe on causes and issues such as halal food certification, finance, education, or Islamic businesses. Many of these charities started as “safe spaces” that valued religious approaches as alternatives to bureaucratic models. In studying 11 Islamic charities in France, Poland, and the UK, Barylo focuses on the young volunteers for these organizations, who often come from the corporate world and are seeking closer social bonds and affirmation of their religious identity. Yet the growth of these organizations often leads to bureaucratic behavior. “Aware of the donation power of Muslim households, many charities design activities through marketing methods directly inspired by neo-liberalism, increasing ‘consumer choice’ and monetizing each possible detail with tailored user fees.”

The researcher finds that the charities he studied, particularly the larger ones driven by social media, compare God to the “CEO” of humanity, select Quranic verses and Hadiths to encourage “success, enhancement, perfection,” and cite Muhammad as an “example of leadership.” The “adoption of codes and methods of competitive corporate management shows the emergence of a Muslim ‘prosperity theology’ in which material success is deemed as a sign of divine approval,” Barylo writes.

(*Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cjmm20/current>)



Decline and renewal marks Japanese religions in rural areas

The aging and depopulation of villages in Japan is affecting the “new religions” in a similar way to that of traditional Buddhist temples and shrines, according to an article in the *Journal of Religion in Japan* (5). Watanabe Masako writes that the new religions, most of which started in the 19th and

20th centuries, were thought to have avoided the problems of Buddhism in rural Japan—such as young people moving to cities and leaving the elderly behind to tend to temples—because they were largely urban. Through studying two large new religions, the Shinto-based Konkokyo and the Buddhist Rissho Koseikai, Masako finds that these groups’ temples or “churches” have seen decline as they have moved into aging and depopulated areas. For instance, although 90 percent of Rissho Koseikai Dharma’s centers are in areas unaffected by depopulation, over half of the centers’ dissemination areas are in depopulated areas, now including cities. Yet these new religions are providing a new social safety net to the elderly and other needy people even if the younger generations seem more difficult to reach.

Another article in this issue looks at the rural coastal areas of Japan hit by an earthquake and tsunami in 2011 and how the disaster led to the revival of Buddhist festivals. Kimura Toshiaki writes that many villages and shrines were destroyed by the natural disasters, but “after a year had passed, the movement to revive these festivals arose in various places within this area.” Nongovernmental groups have supported these festivals since they straddle the line between the secular and the religious. Scholars argue that Shinto shrines and their festivals play a role in recovery in communities affected by such disasters because they constitute an important part of residents’ memories. In examining a prominent festival of the Kumano Shrine in the coastal villages held every 20 years, Toshiaki notes that it has long blended secular and religious functions, stressing its connection with everyday life. But after the earthquake and tsunami, the festival became more religious, adding prayers and rituals including an orthodox Shinto dance practice to what was a largely a fishermen’s festival. The researcher concludes that the “revivals of festivals after the Great East Japan Earthquake should not be interpreted as a revival of a united religion, but as an arena of a complex interaction of agents and social changes, where the secular and religious are intertwined.”

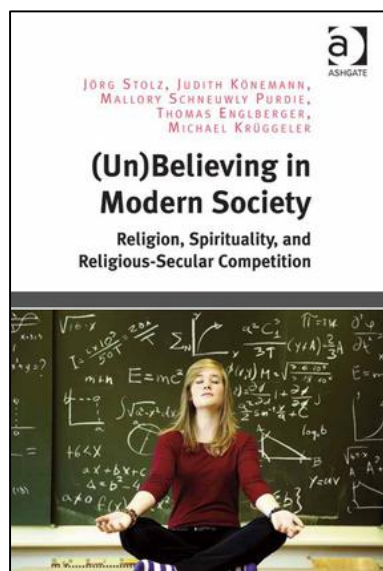
(*Journal of Religion in Japan*, <http://www.brill.com/publications/journals/journal-religion-japan>)



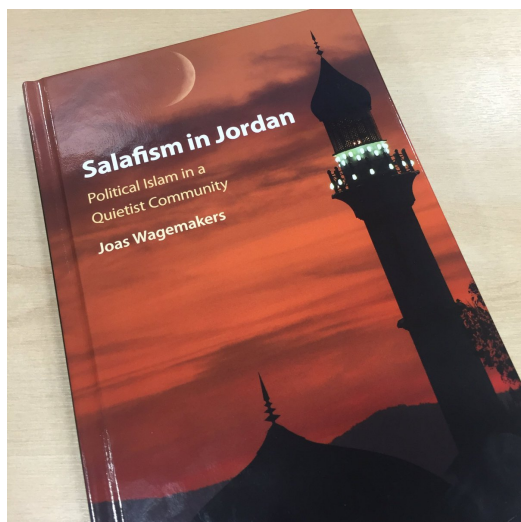
Findings & Footnotes

■ *Unbelieving in Modern Society* (Routledge, \$119.96), by Jorg Stolz, Judith Konemann, Mallory Schneuwly Purdie, Thomas Engleberger, and Michael Kruggeler, is about Swiss religion, but the authors argue that its findings can be applied to the Western religious situation in general. While many sociologists of religion use the ideas of competition and a spiritual marketplace to explain the growth of religion, Stolz and colleagues use “market theory” to explain what they see as the growing secularization of society. The book’s research team used mixed methods, drawing on surveys, interviews, and census data, allowing them to classify the Swiss into various types (and subtypes), including Institutional (active, church-going Christians), Alternative (those holding esoteric and holistic beliefs and practices), Distanced (nominally religious and often skeptical individuals with “fuzzy” beliefs), and Secular (those without any religious beliefs and practices).

The authors find that the Distanced type is most prevalent in Swiss society, with 57.4 percent, followed by Institutional (17.5 percent), Alternative (13.4 percent), and Secular (11.7 percent). The researchers argue that the latter category will eventually predominate because of the growth of secular-religious competition. With the shift to what the authors see as a “me-society” starting in the 1960s, religions have lost their institutional following. Those religions that want to retain their members and grow have to engage in competition and even marketing. But in competing with other forms of leisure pursuits (which is what the authors argue that religions have become viewed as), religious groups will eventually lose out to the greater variety of secular offerings. The book shows that some competitive groups are holding their own and even growing to some extent, such as evangelical churches (which are portrayed as being isolated from Swiss society), but the authors see a more pervasive trend of “secular drift” as non-religious options predominate in society. Although the researchers argue that their findings can be applied to other contexts, they do so only at the book’s very conclusion, without considering how the Swiss religious market may be different than other cases.



■ Quietist Salafism in Jordan has become a loyal partner with the state, and it is eager to dissociate Salafism from “radical Muslims,” but reformist (political) as well as jihadist Salafis partly draw their beliefs



from the same sources, writes Joas Wagemakers in the new book *Salafism in Jordan: Political Islam in a Quietist Community* (Cambridge University Press, \$99.99). In a first chapter that offers an excellent introduction to “global Salafi ideology,” Wagemakers observes that the tendency to reach back to the religion’s origins—emphasized today as a trademark of Salafism—is “in a sense, inherent to Sunni tradition,” even if Salafis push it to the point of meticulous imitation. This observation does not mean that all Sunnis are potential Salafis, but it helps to explain why their message has an appeal. Still, it is unlikely that Salafism would have spread to such an extent without Saudi Arabia actively promoting it around the world. While the exact number of Salafis in Jordan is unknown, it is

probably above earlier figures of 7,000 (that may rather apply to radical Salafis) but “unlikely to be in the many tens of thousands.”

From the beginning, the transnational dimension of Jordanian Salafism was clear. People went to study in Saudi Arabia or Egypt, while scholars came from Syria, the most significant one having been the famous al-Albani (1914–1999), who had been born in Albania but then emigrated with his family to Damascus as a child, spending the last part of his life in Jordan. Political Salafism came to Jordan when Palestinians were expelled from Kuwait in the 1990s; among the jihadi-Salafis among them was the influential be in the many tens of thousands.” scholar al-Maqdisi (b. 1959). Efforts to organize an “official Islam” in Jordan came relatively late but were intensified with the rise of radical Islam in the second half of the 1990s. Although their views are not really those of an open, tolerant approach to other religions advocated by the authorities, quietist (“peaceful”) Salafis seem to have become part of an alliance of the “moderate” forces of Islam. They have moved from apolitical quietism to cooperation with the state, from religious utopia to loyalism—going as far as encouraging voting at parliamentary elections in 2013. Both incentives from the state and confrontation with political Salafism have encouraged such developments. Documenting carefully the domestication of a majority of quietist Salafis by the state, Wagemakers concludes that heated debates among Salafis of different orientations have created “fissures that are unlikely to disappear anytime soon,” even if not always obvious at first sight.

On/File: A Continuing Record of Movements, Groups, People, and Events Shaping Religion

Described as a charismatic leader and entrepreneur, **Venerable Jigwang** has founded the most powerful urban Buddhist temple in South Korea while borrowing management, preaching, and proselytizing techniques from Pentecostals. The Nungin Meditation Center (Nungin Sonwon) was founded in Seoul, Korea, in the mid-1980s. Although it started with limited resources, it has now turned into one of the most powerful Buddhist groups in Korea. Besides religious activities, it offers a wide range of services through its affiliates in food, banking, education, health, and real estate, not forgetting a marriage agency and funeral services. In contrast with mountain Buddhism and retreat centers, it propagates Buddhism for the daily life and attempts to reclaim urban spaces currently dominated by other religions. Born a Roman Catholic, the founder claims to have turned to Buddhism while married and working as a journalist after traumatic experiences during the Korean political turmoil of 1980. He opened a small temple in Seoul in 1984, became famous for his skills in Chinese astrology, and offered attractive preaching related to daily life and contemporary culture. He moreover invited famous monks to preach and managed to draw Christians along with Buddhists to temple events. Promoting a Buddhist version of the prosperity gospel supported rapid growth, promising that followers would be materially rewarded to the extent they are generous to the Buddhist cause. Today, some 300,000 people belong to what has become the largest Buddhist temple in urban Korea.

Jigwang learned how to preach by carefully studying the preaching methods of Pastor David Yonggi Cho, the founder of Yoido Full Gospel Church, the largest Pentecostal congregation in Korea. Jigwang has also copied Yoido’s model of home cells, where people meet regularly in small groups. Different types of prayers and rituals can be ordered online against set fees, with payment by credit card. A patriotic component is added, with emphasis on the prospects for reunification with North Korea and the need for the movement to receive funding (through tithing) to support poor and starving North Koreans when unity arrives. As part of a quest for legitimacy (he has never been formally ordained as a monk and has never

received the status of master of meditation), Jigwang received a PhD from the Department of Religious Studies at the prestigious National University in Seoul. His preaching takes religious pluralism into account and makes frequent references to other religious traditions in contrast with most other Buddhist monks. While his preaching is critical of Christianity, Jigwang's new ways make many other monks critical of him. But his discourse on success, health, and altruism proves attractive to his audience and contrasts with more other-worldly forms of Buddhism. Membership, however, seems to have reached a ceiling, with a number of participants not staying for more than a year, and there have been some financial scandals reported. (**Source:** *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions*, October-December)

