

RASCEE *Editorial*

This year's RASCEE issue is the first part of a thematic series of articles based on the results of a conference of the International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA), which was held in an online format in April 2021 in Olomouc, Czech Republic. The conference was titled Religion on the Periphery, and its focus was on exploring various peripheral areas of religious phenomena.

Accordingly, the current first of two issues of RASCEE presents three articles that illustrate different religious phenomena that are either excluded or perceived as nonconformist or that are not usually the focus of mainstream religious studies. Articles are devoted to phenomena such as theosophy, transgender identity in the pagan community, or religious online activism.

The first paper, by Hess and Kasperek, is more historically oriented and focuses on the activities of the first Polish Theosophical group, which was never fully institutionally recognized. It was concentrated around Kazimierz Stabrowski (1869–1929), a Polish painter and head of the Warsaw School of Fine Arts. Building on the category of rejected knowledge (anomalies or the “cultural rubbish bin”), and using the case of Stabrowski and other members of this marginalized group, the authors highlight their efforts in the struggle for the recognition of their ideas in various environments and trace the process of their exclusion.

The second paper, by Maiello and Velkoborská, explores another topic situated on the borders of religious and gender studies. This paper analyzes an insider's perspective on how Czech Pagans relate to transgender issues and their connection with the vaguely understood concept of shamanism using an emic approach. The study is centered on a transgender member of a pagan community and is based on the narrative interview and episodic narrative interview approaches.

The third paper, by Thériault and Pędziwiatr, focuses on the online activities of a Polish Dominican monk, Adam Szustak. The authors analyze a fragment of Szustak's internet production as a contemporary example of “practical theology” and conduct interviews with a small sample of his subscribers. Thériault and Pędziwiatr argue that Szustak's success is based on his specific approach to young Polish Catholics in the context of the increasing politicization of the Church and the strengthening alliance of its more conservative part with the right-wing government.

This year's RASCEE issue also includes three book reviews of current publications in the field of the scientific study of religion, which can be intellectually inspiring, not only for readers from Central and Eastern Europe.

We would like to thank our peer reviewers and all who contributed to the successful publication of the 2021 issue. We are very pleased that, despite the unfavorable and long-standing pandemic situation in the world, we have managed the first of two issues of our journal RASCEE on the topic of marginal religious phenomena. We hope that readers will find this issue interesting and that it will broaden the horizons of academic knowledge of religion.

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