


K A S K I. ONDERZOEK EN ADVIES OVER RELIGIE EN SAMENLEVING

Spiritual Care and Health Professions: Context and Practice  
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## Spirituality in today's secular society

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### Spirituality vs Religion

- Here mainly: organised religion or institutionalised religion.
- Spirituality is often seen as being opposed to religion. But you can also look at spirituality as being a part of religion.
- What we call spirituality in common language nowadays, in our context, maybe can better be labelled as 'new religiosity'.
- This has consequences for this lecture.

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### Research questions:

- What is the position of religion (and not only of spirituality) in our contemporary secular society?
- What does this mean for you as future caregivers?
- What can serve as points of departure for your future practices?

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### The secular - secularized - secularity

- The term 'secular' originates from the French *séculaire*, and the Latin *saecularis* = belonging to the *saeculum*: century, time, earthly life, world. Secularization is then the French *sécularisation* = to become worldly
- Charles Taylor distinguished three commonly used meanings of the word 'secular' in his book *The Secular Age* (pgs 2-3):
  1. 'in terms of *public space* it means that they have been allegedly *emptied of God*, or of any reference to ultimate reality'
  2. 'secularity consists in the *falling off of religious belief and practice*, in people turning away from God, and no longer going to Church',

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3. 'This would focus on the *conditions of belief*. The shift on secularity in this sense consists, among other things, of a move from a society where *belief in God* is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be *one option among others*, and frequently not the easiest to embrace. (...) Belief in God is no longer axiomatic. There are alternatives. (...) Secularity in this sense is a matter of the whole context of understanding in which our moral, spiritual or religious experience and search takes place.'

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### The religious atlas of the Netherlands

Source: de Jong, Gert, Grevel, Sylvia *Als religieus erfgoed (H)erkend*. Kaski rapport 609, 2011

	Members 2010		(Development since) 1990
Roman-Catholic Church	4,267,000		- 23%
Protestant Church	1,789,000		- 49%
Total Christianity		6,861,000	(9,622,000)

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### Roman-Catholics

Core Roman - Catholics	Church attendance at least once a month	10%	
Marginal Roman-Catholics	Conscious but less than once a month church attendance	54%	
Nominal Roman-Catholics	Only in name R.C. (baptised)	36%	Total: 100%

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### Genealogy of Dutch Protestantism

The diagram illustrates the historical lineage of Dutch Protestantism. It starts with the 'Gereformeerde Kerk' (Reformed Church) in the 16th century, which later splits into the 'Nederlands Hervormde Kerk' (Dutch Reformed Church) and the 'Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland' (Reformed Church in the Netherlands). Other branches shown include the 'Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken' (Christian Reformed Churches), 'Evangelische Gemeenten' (Evangelical Churches), and 'Lutherse Gemeenten' (Lutheran Churches). The diagram shows how these branches have evolved and sometimes merged over time, leading to the current structure of Dutch Protestantism.

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### Protestantism

Source: de Jong, Gert, Grevel, *Sylvia Als religieus erfgoed (h)erkend*. Kaski rapport 609, 2011

Orthodox-Reformed	236,400	+ 7%
Pietistic-Reformed	210,400	+ 15%
Liberals	35,000	strongly shrinking
Evangelical and Pentecostal	192,000	growing
Rest Christian	131,000	minor growth

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### Developments in belief, church attendance and church membership

source: de Jong, Gert *Spiritualiteit van der tijdgenoten en voorvaders*. Kaski rapport 604 a,b 2010

The line graph tracks three metrics from 1966 to 2006: church membership (represented by triangles), church attendance (represented by squares), and belief (represented by diamonds). All three metrics show a general downward trend over the period. Church membership starts at approximately 70% in 1966 and drops to about 60% by 2006. Church attendance starts at about 55% and falls to around 35%. Belief starts at about 65% and declines to approximately 45%. The legend indicates: '—▲—' for 'kerlid' (belief), '—■—' for 'kerkgang (regelmatig en soms)' (church attendance), and '—◆—' for 'gelovigheid (beslist en eigenlijk wel)' (faith).

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### Protestants

source: de Jong, Gert, Kregting, *Joris 'Stromingen en hun sympathisanten binnen de Protestantse Kerk'*, in: *Religie & Samenleving*, Jrg. 6, nr. 2 (september 2011)

- The Protestant Church in the Netherlands, also known as the PKN, is a pluriform church, (stemming from a long and complicated history), meaning that multiple religious branches, such as orthodox and evangelical but also liberal and traditional, are united in this church. Some of these branches are more or less institutionalized.
- The *Gereformeerde Bond* (an orthodox branch of the PKN) is the largest institutionalized branch, with over 8.000 official members. Like all branches, the *Gereformeerde Bond*, has more sympathizers, (people that contribute to or feel affinity with the statements of that branch) than official members.

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### Protestants

- The orthodox branch has the highest participation levels (church attendance) in combination with a relatively young population.
- Church attendance: in total 19% of all Protestants go to church every Sunday. This is almost 400.000 people. And the more orthodox they are on the Protestant scale, the more they go to church. In churches where the majority is originally from the Gereformeerde Bond the percentage is 40%.

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**Islam**

Turkish	329,000		
Moroccan	314,000		
Surinam	34,000		
Autochthonous and Western foreing	52,000		
Rest	178,000		
Total ISLAM		907,000	Almost dubbled (since 1990)

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**Judaism**

Progressief Joods Verbond	5,265		
Nederlands-Israellitisch Kerkgenootschap	10,004		
Portugees-Israellitisch Kerkgenootschap	1,053		
Total Judaism		18,000	No records from 1990

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**Hinduism**

Sanatan Dharm	120,000		
Arya Samai	30,000		
Total		150,000	

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**Buddhism**

All categories together	170,000		
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**Europe: European Values Study**

- Many Europeans are proud of it. Some think it is too bad. However, both agree: Europe is a secularized continent. Europeans do not go to church anymore, they do not believe in God anymore, and they do not seem to be religious at all. Are these assumptions true? It depends. Unmistakable, some of them are not. One thing is for sure: the old continent is not as secularized at it seems.

**Importance of God**

- About half of all the Europeans pray or meditate at least once a week. Three out of four Europeans say they are religious persons. Of course, there is a big gap between the more secularized north-western European countries and the more traditional south-eastern ones. However, even in a country like Holland, famous for its liberal tradition, one in four of all the inhabitants attend church. Nevertheless, one assumption is true: most European churches attract fewer believers every year. Especially in the western part of the continent, the old religious institutions are deteriorating.

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**Religious services**

A map of Europe with various countries shaded in different colors (yellow, orange, red, blue, green) to represent different levels of religious service attendance. A legend in the top left corner provides a key for the colors.

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**Visit religious services**

- However, people who consider themselves as atheists are a small minority, except in France, where almost 15 percent say they are atheist. It is obvious that a vast majority of all the Europeans nominate themselves as religious persons. There are even more people who consider themselves as religious as there are people who attend church. It is a kind of 'believing without belonging'. People pick and choose religious beliefs, doctrines and practices and they are mixing and matching them, as they would select food in a cafeteria. Sociologists talk about this trend as a 'cafeteria religion', or as 'church-free spirituality'. Europeans remain religious, their approach is eclectic, and they borrow ideas from several traditions. Meanwhile many institutionalized churches, especially in the West, are running empty.

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**Believing in God**

**Believing**  
Percentage of people who say they are (not) a religious person (independently whether or not they go to church)

A stacked bar chart showing the percentage of people who believe in God across various countries. The y-axis represents the percentage from 0 to 100. The x-axis lists countries. The legend indicates: A religious person (dark blue), Not a religious person (light blue), and A non-religious person (grey).

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**The spirituality of people in their 30s-40s**

source: secondary analyses of *God in Nederland*

- What do people in their 30's and 40's believe?
- How can we describe their spirituality?

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**Believing in God: people in their 30s-40s in NI.**

A pie chart showing the distribution of religious beliefs among people in their 30s-40s in the Netherlands. The chart is divided into four segments: kerkelijk gelovig (41%), niet kerkelijk sterk gelovig (32%), niet kerkelijk enigszins gelovig (14%), and a fourth category (13%).

Religious Belief	Percentage	Count
kerkelijk gelovig	41%	2.000.000
niet kerkelijk sterk gelovig	32%	1.600.000
niet kerkelijk enigszins gelovig	14%	700.000
Other	13%	645.000

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**Key words**

- Eclecticism: choose that which suits best
- Active: participation is high
- Holistic: humans, world and nature are interconnected
- Seeking: religiosity changes during life

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**30ers - dilemma**

- Choice stress
- Need for spirituality
- Seeking meaning:
  - Authenticity
  - Autonomy
  - Happiness
  - Psychological well-being

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**Four categories youth**  
Source: Van Dijk-Groeneboer Handboek jongeren en religie 2010

		Involvement with religion?	
		Active	Non-active
Institutional		<b>Fortissimos:</b> <i>hard core orthodox, charismatic movements, neo-evangelical</i>	<b>Legatos:</b> <i>institutionally connected at life events</i>
Non-institutional		<b>Spirituosos:</b> <i>bricolage, shopping, Taizé-visitors</i>	<b>Tranquillos:</b> <i>non-religious, sometimes even anti-religious</i>

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**In sum:**

- Situation in The Netherlands
  - Especially Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church in the Netherlands
  - Other religions
- Situation in Europe
- Especially focused on two groups:
  - People in the 30s and 40s
  - Young people (15-25)
- We have seen many things changes within religion.
  - Secularization (in a threefold meaning)
  - Changing of religion itself
  - Finding places of the sacred

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**Characteristics of 'new religiosity':**

- Emphasis on authenticity;
- Emphasis on emotion and perception;
- Rituals and sacred spaces are (still) important, but not only to be located in church buildings. They are also positioned in the cultural and leisure domain because it is about interruptions within/from ordinary life;
- Rituals are 'open' and a source for appropriation;
- People look for wholeness, fullness but also challenge and transformation;
- Ambiguity is standard: distance and commitment, doubt and search are part and parcel of new religiosity;

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- Practical usage and a connection with personal life is important;
- Multifomed and occasional – as a result weakly organized
- Event, changing communities, related to life styles (scenes);
- Relatedness with belief and traditions is ambigious; sometimes it is restrictive, sometimes deepening and connecting.

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**Questions or need for material**

If you have any questions you can always contact me at:

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