

## CRITICAL POTENTIALS OF SECULARIST PRACTICE

In recent years, secularist activism has been generating considerable interest in terms of historical research. Whereas freethought organizations, their protagonists, and their discussions were intensively investigated, there is up to now scarce discussion on concrete attempts to melt secular positions into a certain lifestyle.

Therefore, this international conference focusses on the practical level: What did these secularists actually do? What meant living a secular(ist) life? Furthermore, we evaluate the narratives that were used to legitimize these practices. A central point of reference will be their relation to religion, be it in a positive, affirmative way, be it negatively rejective. The conference will trace these constellations in an international and comparative framework, thereby making apparent differences and similarities of the secularist approaches in the run of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Our aim is to cast light on the development and critical potentials of the religious and cultural setting that molded the normality of modern secular lifestyles.

Participation in the conference is free of charge.  
Registrations can be made by 15 May via email to:  
[secularist.practice@uni-leipzig.de](mailto:secularist.practice@uni-leipzig.de). Places are limited.

Convenor: Katharina Neef  
Organisation: Inge Fiedler  
Venue: Leipzig University  
HCAS „Multiple Secularities“  
Nikolaistraße 8–10 (Strohsack-Passage),  
room 5.55

Joint Conference of the Institute for the Study of Religion and  
the Humanities Centre for Advanced Studies „Multiple  
Secularities– Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities“.

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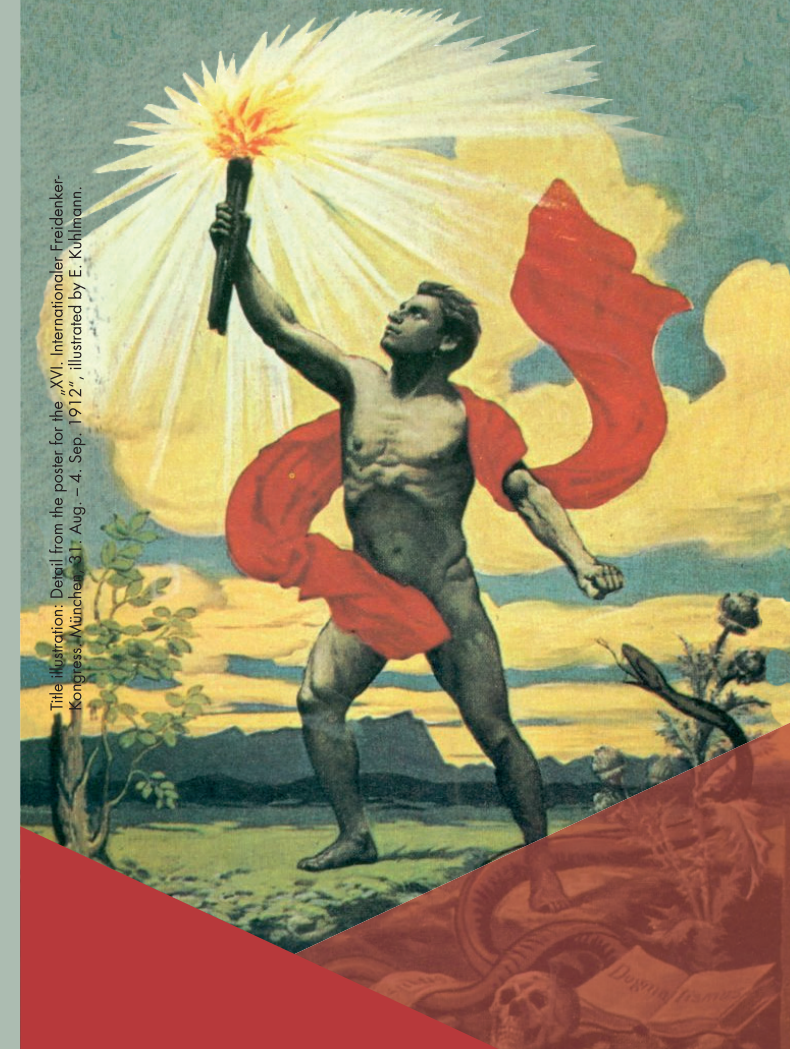
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- 1 Nikolaistraße 8–10 (Strohsack-Passage), Room 5.55
- 2 Andria (Nikolaistraße 22)
- 3 Volkshaus (Karl-Liebnecht-Straße 30)
- 4 LuLu Lottenstein (Karl-Liebnecht-Straße 63)
- 5 Hotel Markgraf Leipzig (Körnerstraße 36)



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This illustration: Detail from the poster for the „XVI. Internationaler Freidenker-Kongress“ München 31. Aug. – 4. Sep. 1912“, illustrated by E. Kuhlmann.

27– 29 May 2019

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OF SECULARIST PRACTICE**

## MONDAY, 27 MAY 2019

### Introduction

13:00–13:15 **Christoph Kleine** (Leipzig)  
Welcome and Opening

13:15–13:45 **Katharina Neef** (Leipzig/Chemnitz)  
Critical Potentials of Secularist Practice

### Section 1: Imagining Community – Creating Community

Chair: **Stefan Arvidsson** (Vaxjö)

14:00–15:30 **Dirk Schuster** (Potsdam)  
On the Scientification of Atheism in the GDR

**Anja Kirsch** (Basel)  
19<sup>th</sup> Century Versions of the Perfect Society:  
Pietist and Owenite Communitarian  
Experiments in New Harmony

15:30–16:00 Coffee Break

16:00–17:30 **Anton Jansson** (Lund)  
“The Purpose of Man”: Freethought and  
Life Reform in Sweden around 1900

**Johannes Gleixner** (Prague)  
Standardizing Secular Practices Without  
Creating Secularism: New Czechoslovakia  
and its Religious Policies 1918–1921

17:30–18:00 Coffee Break

### Keynote

18:00–19:30 **Horst Junginger** (Leipzig)  
The Study and Critique of Religion

20:00 Dinner  
(LuLu Lottenstein, Karl-Liebknecht-Straße 63)

## TUESDAY, 28 MAY 2019

### Section 2: Secularist Practices

Chair: **Uta Karstein** (Leipzig)

09:00–10:30 **Daniel Laqua** (Newcastle)  
The Invention of a Musical Tradition  
among Freethinkers’ Organizations

**Thomas Schmidt-Lux** (Leipzig)  
A Modern Architecture to Praise Secularity

10:30–11:00 Coffee Break

### Section 3: Rites de passage: Performing biographical stages in the secularist milieu

Chair: **Bernadett Bigalke** (Leipzig)

11:00–12:30 **Antoine Mandret-Degeilh** (Toulouse/Paris)  
The Positivist Settings of Civil Baptisms in  
France

**Jenny Vorpahl** (Potsdam)  
Giving Nice Wedding Traditions a New  
Meaning. Civil Marriage in the GDR

12:30–14:00 Lunch Break

14:00–16:00 **Carolin Kosuch** (Rome/Göttingen)  
Cremation. Burning Corpses, a Lasting  
Protest Against Christian Culture

**Héléna Tóth** (Bamberg)  
Secular Burial Ceremonies

**Christoph de Spiegeleer** (Brussels)  
Challenging the Societal Death System.  
The Development of a Secularist Funerary  
Culture in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Belgium

16:00–16:30 Coffee Break

16:30–17:30 Discussion

19:00 Dinner  
(Volkshaus, Karl-Liebknecht-Straße 30)

## WEDNESDAY, 29 MAY 2019

### Section 4: Education and Socialization

Chair: **Sabrina Weiß** (Leipzig)

09:00–11:00 **Christophe Verbruggen** (Gent)  
Secularity and Religion in the Transnational  
Discourse of the Social Reformers

**Stefan Schröder** (Bayreuth)  
Humanism as School Subject and  
Humanist Private Schools in Germany

**Katharina Neef**  
Religious School Education and Secularist  
Agency to Separate Church and School

11:00–11:30 Coffee Break

11:30–12:30 Closing Discussion

12:30 Lunch  
(Andria, Nikolaistraße 22)