

Werkgroep

# Godsdienst- sociologie & Onderzoekersnetwerk Religie en Civil Society

## Registration

Please register by  
contacting

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Your registration will be  
confirmed.

## CIVIL SOCIETY & TRANSCENDENCE

### About the (in)dispensability of religion in society

*Conference of the Study Group Sociology of Religion  
and the Network Religion and Civil Society*

*Wednesday 22 June 2011, 13.30 hrs*

*Vrije Universiteit, Bellevue building, room 1H50*

In Western societies, the place of religion is controversial. Through individualization and secularization, it seems that religious inspiration is increasingly a matter for the individual. The question is whether religious motives can contribute in a positive way to social cohesion or social trust. Indeed: the question is whether transcendence (an awareness of the “higher”) does not still play an important role.

Adam B. Seligman, philosopher of religion at Boston University, has thought extensively about this theme. He has written about the foundations of the concept of civil society, about trust as a condition for social cohesion and about the indispensable role of ritual and transcendence in pluralistic societies. The Study Group Sociology of Religion and the Network Religion and Civil Society have invited him to speak about his work in the Netherlands.

In the second part of this meeting, Gabriël van den Brink will give a talk. He is a cultural sociologist, professor of Public Administration at the University of Tilburg and lector Community Safety at the Police Academy of the Netherlands. Van den Brink led the research project ‘De lage landen en het hogere’, and will discuss the role that transcendent inspiration and “higher” ideals continue to play in the Netherlands today.

## Programme

13.30 Opening

13.40 Adam B. Seligman: On Transcendence and Society

14.20 Discussion

15.00 Break

15.20 Gabriël van den Brink: Transcending the Low Countries

16.00 Discussion

16.40 Closing and reception

N.B. Talks and discussions will be conducted in English.

## Organisatie

Research network religion and civil society: [www.hdc.vu.nl/rcs](http://www.hdc.vu.nl/rcs)

Study group sociology of religion: [godsdienssociologie.religionresearch.org](http://godsdienssociologie.religionresearch.org) &  
[netwerk.godsdienssociologie](http://netwerk.godsdienssociologie) at LinkedIn.

You are most welcome to attend this meeting (free of charge).