

ERNST VAN DEN HEMEL

RESEARCHER NL-LAB, HUMANITIES CLUSTER KNAW

CV

+ CONTACT

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I obtained my PhD from the University of Amsterdam in 2011 with a dissertation on the literary and political dimensions in the work of Johannes Calvin. Since then, I have taught at the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam University College, and Utrecht University. I have been a research fellow at Université Paris 8, UC Berkeley, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the Centre for the Humanities at Utrecht University. Since 2016, I have worked at the Meertens Institute, and since 2019, I have been part of the interdisciplinary research group NL-Lab, which investigates Dutch culture and identity in the present and the past. Since 2022, I have been the president of the Dutch Society for the Study of Religion.

My research focuses on (national) identity and religion, particularly examining the role of emotions and media usage. For instance, in "Passie voor de Passie: De Matthäus, The Passion en andere passiespelen in ontkerkelijkt Nederland" (Ten Have 2020), I analyzed the remarkable popularity of various passion plays in the Netherlands. Within the project "Populisme, Sociale Media en Religie", I explore how the religious past is being reinterpreted by 'populist' movements in their online discourse. Previous projects I have been involved in include HERILIGION: The heritagization of religion and sacralization of heritage in contemporary Europe (HERA), RELSEC, Religion, Secularism and Political Belonging (CHCI / Mellon Foundation), and The Future of the Religious Past (NWO). In 2023, I received an ERC Consolidator Grant for research on Religious Theme Parks.

This project, entitled MAKEBELIEF: The Religious Politics of Theme Parks in the 21st Century (Grant ID: 101089113), investigates how in the 21st century, immersive media are mobilized to 'imagineer' religion. The project provides a comparative analysis of religion and theme parks in China, Turkey, the Netherlands, and the United States.

+ EMPLOYMENT (CURRENT)

OCTOBER 2019 - PRESENT Senior researcher NL-Lab, Humanities Cluster, KNAW (tenured)

DECEMBER 2023- JANUARY 2029 Principal investigator ERC Consolidator Grant MAKEBELIEF: The Religious Politics of Theme Parks in the 21st Century (Grant ID: 101089113).

JANUARY 2023 - JANUARY 2024 Principal investigator (icw Markus Balkenhol) INREACH: Visual Anthropological Exploration of Religion and Heritage

SEPTEMBER 2020- PRESENT Co-principal investigator BETTERMODO: Better informing citizens about current debates: Moderating and summarizing Online Discussions.

SPRING 2023- PRESENT Graduate Course: Using Tools to Study Social Media and Religion. NOSTER (Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion)

+ EMPLOYMENT (PAST)

APRIL 2015 – PRESENT Lecturer Religious Studies, department Religious Studies, Utrecht University. MA&BA level.

OCTOBER 2018 – AUGUST 2023 P.I. 'Populisme, Religie, Social Media', KNAW Startimpuls NWA.

SEPTEMBER 2016 - Postdoctoral Researcher in the HERA Project 'HERILIGION The heritagization of religion and the sacralization of heritage in contemporary Europe', at the Meertens Institute, KNAW
OCTOBER 2019

SEPTEMBER 2015 - Policy Implementation of Foresight Committee Theology and Religious Studies
OCTOBER 2016

APRIL 2014 - Secretary and Postdoctoral Researcher Foresight Committee Theology and Religious Studies, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
SEPTEMBER 2015

SEPTEMBER 2015 Coordinator Annual Intensive Text Reading Seminar, NOSTER, Graduate & postgraduate
JANUARY 2016 level.

APRIL 2015 Coordinator and senior-researcher 'Postsecular Nationalism', funded by seed money
APRIL 2016 Cultures, Citizenship and Human Rights (i.c.w. dr. Eva Midden)

AUGUST 2014 Coordinator and senior researcher 'Religion, Secularism and Political Belonging', Mellon-
DECEMBER 2016 funded CHCI consortium. Utrecht University.

AUGUST 2013 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Center for the Humanities, Utrecht University
AUGUST 2014

AUGUST 2011 Lecturer humanities track, Liberal Arts and Sciences Programme, Amsterdam University
DECEMBER 2016 College.

SEPTEMBER 2007 Lecturer Cultural Analysis / Literary Studies, Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis
AUGUST 2011 (ASCA), University of Amsterdam.

SEPTEMBER 2010 Lecturer Religious Studies / History, department of Religious Studies / History / European
AUGUST 2013 Studies, University of Amsterdam

+ EDUCATION

2022 Training ERC CoG Interview, YellowResearch

2018 Leergang Persoonlijk Leiderschap voor Academics, KNAW

2017 Training Grant Writing, Mennen Training and Consultancy, KNAW

2014 Basiskwalificatie Onderwijs (BKO)

2011 PhD in the History of Christianity, University of Amsterdam (part of the interdisciplinary research project 'The Future of The Religious Past'). Supervisor: prof. dr. M.B. Pranger. (July 5th 2011)

2006 Research MA in Cultural Analysis, University of Amsterdam, icw University Paris 8 & École Normale Supérieure (cum laude). Title of MA-thesis: 'John Calvin's *Institutes*: Law and Event'. Supervisors: prof. dr. M.B. Pranger & prof. dr. A. Badiou.

2004 BA Literary Studies & Philosophy, University of Amsterdam (cum laude)

+ PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS *Managing Sacralities: Competing and Converging Claims of Religious Heritage* (co-edited with Irene Stengs, and Oscar Saleminck), Berghahn 2022

The Secular Sacred. Emotions of Belonging and the Perils of Nation and Religion, (co-edited with Markus Balkenhol & Irene Stengs), Palgrave, 2020.

Passie voor de Passie. De Matthäus, The Passion en andere passiespelen in ontkerkelijkt Nederland. Uitgeverij ten Have 2020.

Words: Religious Language Matters, Fordham University Press, New York: 2016. Peer-reviewed edited volume. (co-edited with dr. Asja Szafraniec).

Alain Badiou Inesthetiek: Filosofie, Kunst Politiek, Jan van Eyck Academy & Octavo, Maastricht & Amsterdam: 2012. (co-authored with dr. Joost de Bloois)

Tracing Circles: Literary Dimensions in John Calvin's Institutes (dissertation), University of Amsterdam: 2011.

Calvinisme en Politiek: Tussen Verzet en Berusting, Uitgeverij Boom, Amsterdam: 2009.

SPECIAL ISSUE
PEER-REVIEWED
JOURNAL

Section Editor for the *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Cultural Heritage and Conflict*, section: Religious Heritage & Conflict. Icw Jan Willem van Henten. 2024, forthcoming. Religion, Borders, Social Imaginaries. JRAT: Journal for Religion and Transformation in Society, volume 5 issue 2. Edited with prof. dr. Laurens ten Kate.

ARTICLES, PEER-
REVIEWED
(30)

'Magnifying Heritagized Religion in Miniature Parks: The Mosques and Churches of Madurodam & Miniatürk' in Secular Studies, 2024 (forthcoming).

'Pre-enacting the Passion: Restaging Religious Heritage, Producing Unruly Audiences' co-authored with Irene Stengs. In: The Future of Religious Heritage: Entangled Temporalities of the Sacred and the Secular. ed. Ferdinand de Jong, José Mapril. Routledge, 2023.

'Introduction: Management of Religion, Sacralization of Heritage'. Co-authored with Oscar Saleminck and Irene Stengs. in: *Managing Sacralities: Competing and Converging Claims of Religious Heritage* (co-edited with Irene Stengs, and Oscar Saleminck), Berghahn 2022

'To Applaud or Not To Applaud? Bach's Saint Matthew Passion in the Netherlands and the Management of Sacrality' in: *Managing Sacralities: Competing and Converging Claims of Religious Heritage* (co-edited with Irene Stengs, and Oscar Saleminck), Berghahn 2022.

'Postsecular Meaning Making? Why Contestations of Heritagized Church Buildings Matter' in *Handbook of Religion and Heritage in Contemporary Europe*, editor: Todd Weir, Bloomsbury 2023

'Calculating Argument Diversity in Online Threads'. / Waterschoot, Cedric; van den Bosch, Antal; van den Hemel, Ernst. 3rd Conference on Language, Data and Knowledge (LDK 2021). redactie / Dagmar Gromann; Gilles Sérasset; Thierry Declerck; John P. McCrae; Jorge Gracia; Julia Bosque-Gil; Fernando Bobillo; Barbara Heinisch. Vol. 93 Dagstuhl, Germany : OASICS Schloss Dagstuhl – Leibniz-Zentrum für Informatik, Dagstuhl Publishing, Germany, 2021. blz. 39:1-39:9 (Open Access Series in Informatics (OASICs)

'Distributing thickness of skin: Of Calloused Minorities and Fragile Majorities' in: Patterns of Prejudice, 2021

"Christian Atheism" on Twitter: Dutch Populism and/as Culturalized Religion.' in: *Religion, Secularism and Political Belonging*, editor: Leerom Medovoi, Duke University Press, 2021.

'Keyword: Nationalism', in: *Religion, Secularism and Political Belonging*, editor: Leerom Medovoi, Duke University Press, 2021. Co-authored with Markus Balkenhol

'Who leads *Leitkultur*? How populist claims about 'Christian Identity' impact Christian-Democracy in Western Europe' in JRAT Journal of Religion and Transformation in Society, vol. 5 issue 2.

'Social Imaginaries and Borders: Introduction' JRAT Journal of Religion and Transformation in Society. (co-authored with Laurens ten Kate), 2019, vol. 5 issue 2.

The boomerang-effect of culturalized religion: nativist affect versus non-consensus-based collaboration' in: *The Secular Sacred. Emotions of Belonging and the Perils of Nation and Religion*, (co-edited with Markus Balkenhol & Irene Stengs), Palgrave, 2019

'The Secular Sacred. Emotions of Belonging and the Perils of Nation and Religion: Introduction' with Markus Balkenhol & Irene Stengs, in: *The Secular Sacred. Emotions of Belonging and the Perils of Nation and Religion*, co-authored with Markus Balkenhol & Irene Stengs, Palgrave, 2019 (forthcoming)

'Odd Bedfellows, New Alliances: The Politics of Religion, Cultural Heritage and Identity in the Netherlands', in *Trajecta: Religion, Culture and Society in the Low Countries*, 2019

'Social media and affective publics: Populist passion for religious roots' in: *European Memory in Populism: (Mis)Representations of Self and Other*, editors: Chiara de Cesari and Ayhan Kaya, Routledge, 2019

'Zwarte Pieten, Moskeeën en Zoenende Mannen: Katholiek Activisme van Cultuur onder Vuur en de Culturalisering van Religie' Co-authored with Markus Balkenhol. *Religie en Samenleving*, nr 1, 2019.

'Undocumented Citizenship' in: *Posthuman Glossary*, editors: Rosi Braidotti, Maria Hlavajova, Bloomsbury, 2018.

'Postsecular Nationalism: the Dutch Turn to the right & Cultural-Religious Reframing of Secularity' in: *Social Imaginaries in a Globalizing World*, editors: Hans Alma & Guido Vanheeswijck, De Gruyter 2018.

'The Dutch War on Easter: Secular Passion for Religious Culture & National Rituals' in: *Yearbook of Ritual and Liturgical Studies*, volume 33, 2017.

'Geestelijke Verzorging als anthropologisch laboratorium van nationaal belang', in: *Religie en Samenleving*, 12, nr. 2/3, 2017, p.91-95, 2017.

'Hoezo Christelijke Waarden?' Postseculier nationalisme & uitdagingen voor beleid en overheid' in: *Tijdschrift voor Religie, Recht en Beleid*, issue 2, 2017.

'Reading Calvin's language: Nice Work if You Can Get It'. *Words: Situating Religion in Language*, editors: Asja Szafraniec, Ernst van den Hemel. Fordham University Press, 2016.

'So, Any More Deathless Questions? Religious Language and Ordinary Language Philosophy: History and Present'. *Words: Situation Religion in Language*, editors: Asja Szafraniec, Ernst van den Hemel. Fordham University Press, 2016.

'Ontworteling als rite de passage van Nederland: ironie, secularisme, nationalisme en literatuur' in: *Ontworteld: De Schrijver als Nomade*, red: Johan Goud, Uitgeverij Klement, 2015.

'(Pro)claiming Tradition: The "Judeo-Christian" Roots of Dutch Society and the Rise of Conservative Nationalism', in: *The Postsecular Condition*, ed. Rosi Braidotti et. al., Palgrave MacMillan, 2014, p.14-33.

'The Literary Comfort of Eternity: Calvin and Thoreau'. *Religion and Memory*, editors: Babette Hellemans. Fordham University Press, 2013.

'Things that Matter : the Extra Calvinisticum and Material Presence in Calvin's theory of the Eucharist'. *Things: Material Religion and the Topography of Divine Spaces*, editors: Dick Houtman, Birgit Meyer. Fordham University Press, 2012.

'De Fabel van het Medium: Over Jacques Rancière's *De toekomst van het beeld* en *De fabel van de cinema*. *Krisis*, issue 1, 2011.

'History and the Vertical Canon: John Calvin's Institutes and Samuel Beckett'. *How the West Was Won: Essays on Literary Imagination, the Canon and the Christian Middle Ages*. Brill Studies in Intellectual History, editors: Arjo Vanderjagt & Hent de Vries. 2010.

'Included but not Belonging: Badiou and Rancière on Human Rights' in: *Krisis Journal for*

Contemporary Philosophy, issue 3, 2008.

ACADEMIC REPORTS *Klaar om te Wenden. De academische bestudering van religie in Nederland: een verkenning*. Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen. 2015. (o-authored with foresight committee of theology and religious studies of the KNAW).

+ RELEVANT AFFILIATIONS /EXPERIENCE

Member of editorial board for the journal *Religie & Samenleving*

President of Dutch Association for the Study of Religion (NGG). From April 2022 onwards.

Member of European Association for the Study of Religion

Member of Association for Critical Heritage Studies

Affiliated member Digital Humanities Lab, HUC, KNAW.

Member of Editorial Board, JRAT, Journal for Religion and Transformation in Society. 2017-present

Member of SIMAGINE, Social Imaginaries in a Globalizing World (NWO Internationalization Humanities icw Laurens ten Kate, University of Humanistics) 2016-present

Co-organizer of 'Weerbare Wetenschap' (Resilient Science), series of exploratory conversations with Dutch researchers about resilient science in times of polarization

Co-organizer bi-annual conference NGG 'Religion and Heritage: Futures for Religious Pasts' (icw Birgit Meyer, Jan Willem van Henten and Irene Stengs), November 3-5 2021, Amsterdam. See www.nggheritage.nl

Project Organizer Digital Methods Initiative UvA Summer School. The Constructive Turn. August 2021.

Visiting research fellow 'Religion, Secularism, Political Belonging', Chinese University of Hong Kong, summer 2014.

Peer-reviewer academic journals, inc. *Religions*, *Ethnologia Europea*, *Journal for Religion and Transformation in Society*

Visiting research fellow Rhetoric Department, UC Berkeley. 2010.

For a detailed list of media appearances: see www.vandenhemel.net

+GRANTS AWARDED AND SUBMITTED

Total awarded grants: 2.962.000 euros

In 2023, as main applicant, I was awarded an ERC Consolidator Grant: MAKEBELIEF: The Religious Politics of Theme Parks in the 21st Century. Budget: 2.000.000 euros.

In 2022, as main co-applicant, I was awarded an NWO grant 'Science communication 'Wie is de trol? Kruip in de huid van de moderator en verbeter het trollenjageralgoritme'. Budget: 132.000 euros.

In 2022, as main co-applicant, I was awarded 50.000 euros or the project: INREACH: Toolkit for More Diverse Use of Archives. In collaboration with dr. Markus Balkenhol.

In 2020, as main co-applicant, NWO Grant Informed Citizen, 'Better informing citizens about current debates: Moderating and Summarizing Online Discussions' (2020-2025, budget of 500.000 euros). In collaboration with prof. dr. Emiel Kramer (Tilburg University), prof. dr. Antal van den Bosch (Meertens Institute, KNAW).

In 2018, as main applicant and principal investigator, I was awarded a KNAW Startimpuls NWA grant in 2018 for my project 'Populism, Social Media and Religion' (2018-2021, budget of 260.000 euros),

In 2017 I was awarded seed-money for 'Postsecular Nationalism' in the focus area Cities, Cultures, Human Rights, Utrecht University, 2015-2016. (budget of 10.000 euros). In collaboration with dr. Eva Midden.