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### Announcement and Call for Papers for “Modern State and Religious ‘Dissent,’” A Conference to Be Held at Ural Federal University, Ekaterinburg, Russia, September 25-26, 2017

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### **The Modern State and Religious “Dissent”**

Place and time: Ekaterinburg, Russia, 25-26 September 2017

Venue: Ural Federal University, Ekaterinburg, Russia

#### **Call for papers**

During its long history, the modern state has domesticated both mainstream and marginal religious identities through a variety of approaches: for instance, policies of religious toleration (J. Locke), the ‘privatization of religious differences’ (B. Barry), and the ‘politics of recognition’ (A. E. Galeotti). Today, however, it is encountering new challenges.

Religious dissent has a long history on the Eurasian continent. The events of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as the Reformation, the subsequent religious wars in Europe, and the Old Believer schism in Russia, influenced the development of modern states. However, religious dissidents had an impact not only on the political sphere. They created their own idioms, literature, art, and philosophy, which expressed their self-understanding and views on the world, society, and other religions. The study of the radicalisation and de-radicalisation of religious movements can shed light on a variety of historical processes as well as the contemporary post-secular situation.

Political upheavals in the Middle East and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist paradigm opened the door for all sorts of “reinventions of tradition”. Religious affiliation became important for constructing new national identities, and religious voices came back to the public sphere. After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, novel interpretations of religion were suggested, such as the notion that the secular age is transforming into a post-secular one. In post-secular society, however, religions often appear in conservative and sometimes fundamentalist forms.

In recent decades, Europe has been facing the challenge of Islamic religious fundamentalism that emerged in Muslim communities inside and outside the EU. Terrorist attacks in Belgium, France, and Denmark were perpetrated by members of fundamentalist Islamic groups; the suicide terrorists claimed that they were religiously motivated and that their actions were targeting the very model of contemporary European society. Religion is politicised in the modernisation paradigm and reduced to yet *another ideology* to be exploited by radical groups in their struggle for economic and political dominance. Academic and media debates on religion’s significance do not give us an evidence-based understanding of the role religion can play in post-secular society.

This international forum will be convened to discuss the origins and contemporary predicaments of the religious sphere, its relation to the political sphere, and possible institutional arrangements capable of recognizing new developments in the post-secular age. Scholars from diverse fields such as history, sociology, philosophy, political theory and media are welcome to present their research on religion and religious dissent in its various forms.

Presentations on the following topics are welcome:

- relations between the state and religious minorities in the early modern, modern and contemporary periods;
- policies towards various confessions in multi-confessional societies: history and modernity;
- resistance of religious minorities to the state: history, language, art;
- radicalisation and de-radicalisation of religious movements;
- religious fanaticism: theory, history and current debates;
- politicisation of religion in the contemporary world: *pro et contra*;
- mainstream religions and religious dissent in the public sphere;
- interpretive and normative resources of contemporary political theory in making sense of religion in the post-secular world;
- reflection of religious dissent and fanaticism in mass media.

We look forward to receiving your abstracts (no longer than 250 words). Please include your full name, institutional affiliation, contact details (including email address), and academic status. The deadline for abstract submission is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Please submit your abstract via email to [urfu.conference2017@gmail.com](mailto:urfu.conference2017@gmail.com)

Limited financial subsidies for travel expenses will be made available on the basis of a competition: please state in your email if you are interested in being considered.

Best wishes,

The Organisational Committee