Conference Entry Form

Name *  
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Job Title *  
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Company or Organization’s Name and country *  
The Art Academy of Latvia, Latvia

Short bio
The author of the proposed article “Latvian national religion (Dievturība) impact in Latvian painting art of the twentieth century during the interwar” is Agita Gritane. She is a doctoral student and her doctoral thesis is a monographic research about one of the most controversial Latvian artist Jekabs Bine (1895–1955). Agita Gritane is deeply interested in researching what was an artist’s contribution and role in the making of the Latvian identity? How changes of political powers during the first half of the 20th century affected an artist who strongly believed in Latvia's identity. Currently Agita Gritane works at the Art Academy of Latvia as educational assistant. She has a master degree in Law of social sciences and Master of Arts Degree in the Humanities. After successful work in the legal research area, she changed her direction and started to study at Art Academy of Latvia. During her master studies she spent one semester at University of Barcelona. Parallel to her studies at the Academy she worked at local art galleries to gain practical experience. Agita Gritane also has theoretical publications in art reviews. The bachelor thesis subject was research about Latvian national religion impact in Latvian art and in master thesis author continued research about artist’s Jekabs Bine life and creative work.

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Proposal Title *  
Latvian national religion (Dievturība) impact in Latvian painting art of the twentieth century during the interwar period.

Abstract (500 words). Abstracts will be published on the webpage before the conference. *

On July 26, 1926 Religious Affairs administration registered the Latvian National religion congregation. From that date Latvian national religion movement won a formal status as a religious organization. Latvian national religion idea is based on ancient people's traditions and common principles. Different religions have a different attitude towards image as such; therefore, the author of this thesis has chosen to research the national religion reflection in the painting in order to find out the image role in Latvian national religion movement.

To be better and fully understood firstly author would like to describe research of the art and the content of the concept national religion theoretical aspects. This includes national religion legal, religious and idea concepts, as well as their relationship with the art and the picture as such. The author of this work wishes to draw attention that the research based mainly on the literature sources of this historical period, which represent a historical perspective, experience and knowledge. From the modern point of view often in the context of separate questions the additions, exchange views and knowledge has taken a place. However, to interpret and analyze the works of art it is necessary to identify existing beliefs and assumptions. Along with the historical presentation of the national religion theory, the today's national religion idea also researched and represented.

One of the main tasks of research addressed to individual artists who have moved to express national religion ideas in their painting. Not all of the artists were enthusiastically supporting idea of national religion; however, in its creativity and art works they include and displayed this idea.

The author devotes great importance to analyses mutual context of national religion movement as religion and painting both idea and variety. The artists and idea of national religion discovered very differently not only in the art content, but there are also significant differences in the formal style search terms. Each of the represented artists has developed their own religious image appearance. All artists used to represent ancient characters images with Latvian marks, ornaments and symbols, but variation of the combinations are different and they do not constitute a single system. Here, it should be noted that in Latvian folk songs and
national legends, the religious characters are attributed to several meanings, and different tasks and areas of activity. Accordingly each character can be described with different signs and symbols. Diversity can be noticed in characters color and also of the use of the symbols. Given this variety, we can talk about the iconic image created by individual artist, but not common image of national religion iconography.

One of the most important artists who not only represented national religion in his art, but also was one of the founders and the most active leaders of the Latvian national religion movement was Jekabs Bine (1895–1955). It became the artist's strong conviction and educational source. In painting “Dievs, Māra, Laima” artist plainly wanted to display and create Latvian religious pantheon in iconographic way.

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