

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

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Is Secularisation on the Reverse Gear?

ANNUAL DISCERN LECTURE 2009

The Institute for Research on the Signs of the Times (DISCERN) is organising its annual lecture on Tuesday 13th October, 2009 at 7:00p.m. This event will be held at the Phoenicia Hotel, Floriana. This year's lecture will be addressing the question: 'Is Secularisation on the Reverse Gear?' The main speaker will be Professor David Martin, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London.



Professor David Martin is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics (1962-1989); and a prolific contributor to public as well as sociological debate about religion. The author of more than 20 books, he has established creative lines of thinking both within the sociology of religion and at the interface between sociology and theology. Early books include *Pacifism* (Routledge 1965), *The Sociology of English Religion* (SCM 1967), and *The Religious and the Secular* (Routledge 1969), but Martin became best known for his magisterial *A General Theory of Secularization* (Blackwell 1978), in which he questioned the inevitability of secularization in modern societies. Later work, notably *Tongues of Fire* (Blackwell 1990), elaborates the Latin American case within the "secularization" framework. *Forbidden Revolutions* (SPCK 1996) continues the commitment to comparative sociology, and *Reflections on Sociology and Theology* (Oxford University Press 1996) collects a series of essays on the title theme. Most recently (July 2005) Professor Martin has up-dated the secularisation debate in his book *On Secularization - towards a revised general theory*.

Organizationally Prof.Martin has promoted the sociology of religion both in Britain, through the British Sociological Association's Sociology of Religion Study Group, and internationally as President of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion.