

Abstract

In order to fill a gap in the literature and illustrate what a public debate on religion might look like in a country as unchurched as the Czech Republic, this thesis conducted thematic content analysis on two parliamentary debates related to church property restitution. Transcripts of the debates in The Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic on the 2012 Church Property Restitution Bill and the 2017-2019 Proposal to Tax Church Property Restitutions were used to answer theoretically and empirically informed questions pertaining to secularisation. The finding was that it was not religion necessarily, but rather matters of finances, legality, and procedure that figured quite prominently in the debate. Despite this, closer analysis revealed some relevant reflection on religion, most notable on in what sort of relation should churches and religious communities be with the state. The main takeaway from the research is that Members of Parliament acknowledged low individual level religiosity and did not promote something resembling the concept of vicarious religion. Their speeches were on the whole interpreted to be more in line with advocating secularisation, rather than desecularisation.