Course Description
Is the liaison between religion and politics a dangerous one? It is surely one that has a growing attraction to many around the world. Religion has resurfaced as a visible player in politics, public life, and international relations, surprising pundits and scholars alike. Modernization did not entail secularization, privatization of religion, and its slow death. God is not dead and religion hasn’t been relegated to an anonymous life in the private sphere. Secularism—the idea that religion and politics, church and state should be kept apart—has come under pressure. The question is – what is the world like after secularism?

Europe has a particularly difficult time dealing with this question. This is in part due to Europe’s secularist tradition. Old European Christian churches have re-mobilized and the introduction of Islam through immigration has caught many Europeans off-guard. This has given rise to a number of tensions, ranging from the so-called ‘veil affairs’ in France and England from late 1980s and early 1990s, to the discussion of the role of Christianity in writing up a draft for the new European constitution. Presently, strong religious voices have reappeared, most vocally perhaps through the actions of militant islamists, which in turn has been met by the populist call to set nationalist values and old virtues ahead of the universal and humanist principles.
The purpose of this course is to examine how religion and secularism is understood in present-day Europe. The course combines a sociological explanatory approach with case study driven issues in political theory. In short, the course will introduce you to:

I. Both a historical and contemporary understanding of how religion has resurfaced as a viable political power in Europe, and how historians, sociologist, theologians and political scientists have sought to explain this fact.

II. The main trends in the current politico-religious landscape of Europe in comparison to the US, e.g. through the notions of ‘believing without belonging’ and ‘belonging without believing’.

III. Secularism in the tension between freedom of religion and freedom from religion with a focus on the role of religion in schools.

Throughout, we will compare the findings to the ways this clash is dealt with in the US.

Instructor: Niels Valdemar Vinding, PhD.

Niels Valdemar Vinding is an assistant professor at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies at University of Copenhagen. His PhD was on Muslim Positions in the Religio-Organisational Fields of Denmark, Germany and England from 2013. He holds a BA in Theology and a MA in Islamic Studies. His current research is on “Imams of the West”, exploring Islamic authority and Muslim leadership in Europe, North America and Australia. It is funded from 2014 to 2017 by the Carlsberg Foundation.

Learning Objectives
In this course, you will learn five things:

First and foremost, this course will provide you with substantial knowledge, comparative material and critical analytical tools to gain deeper insights into - and educate your judgment on - the principled issues at stake in the various liaisons between religion and politics.

Secondly, you will be introduced to the main trends and current affairs in the politico-religious landscape of Europe. This will include comparisons with the landscape in other parts of the world, in particular the US.

Thirdly, the course will introduce you to sociological theories of secularization and de-secularization (the historical processes and their underlying causes).

Fourthly, you will learn about the debates in theology and political theory on the viability and continued justification of secularism versus the alternatives of religiously based world views.

Finally, you will be forced to consider if secularism as a political ideal should abandoned in the face of the challenges it has faced of late.
Course Content:
The Five Course Modules
The course will consist of five modules, a module corresponding to each of the three themes introduced in Section 1. In the first module, you will be introduced to key examples of the historical and contemporary manifestations of religion and politics in Europe as well as to an outline of some basic conceptual distinctions; especially the distinction between ‘secularization’ (the historical process and its underlying causes) and ‘secularism’ (the political philosophical ideal), but also the difference between the church-state and religion-politics distinctions. Basically in this module we dive head on into history, and try to get our bearings and we reemerge into the present in the next module.

From a European perspective religion plays a surprisingly large role on the political stage both in the Middle East and in the US. The question is if Europe is an exceptional case. Is the widespread perception of Europe as a secular continent fact or myth? The second module takes a look at how religion and politics have changed so as to challenge the old secularist tradition. Some of the headlines are believing without belonging and belonging without believing. In sum, modules one and two will give you an introduction to the state of affairs, the historical processes and some of their underlying causes that the sociological term secularization is typically invoked to give expression to.

In the third module, we reflect on what happens when Islam enters the European stage. Who are the Muslims? How should we understand what is going on? What is new, and what merely looks new? In particular, we discuss religious extremism and fundamentalism, and try to make sense of freedom and security in the face of these threats.

In the fourth module, we will take a close look at Populism and the Islamic challenges to Europe in recent years. Coming out of 2016 with Brexit and Trump elected and looking towards a 2017 with both French and German national elections, this topic is absolutely relevant for a Religion and Politics class. After introducing the concepts and ideas involved, we dive into the national debates of France, Britain and Germany. Through these cases, we will discuss how Populism and the Islamic challenges are the defining issues and we explore, in the minds of the populists, ‘what went wrong, who is to blame and what can be done to fix the situation?’ Religion is part of all three questions, and draws on related issue like the limits for free speech, the legitimacy of the secular private/public distinction and the relation between religion and national identity.

The fifth module concludes the class with a final case assignment where you are invited to give your assessment of the future of politics and religion in Europe. This is inspired by the 2015 novel by Michel Houellebecq, which guesses at the Islamification of France in 2022. During the week of the publication, 12 were killed in the horrible shooting at the satiric magazine Charlie Hebdo, very much calling into question the future of politics and religion in Europe.
Course Requirements
Here is an overview and more detailed information of the course assignments

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Counting</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Engagement:</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. News Clip</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Module II – “Secular Europe?” Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Friday 24 February before midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Module IV – “Populism and the Islamic Challenge” Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Friday 7 April before midnight.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Module IV – “Future of Religion and Politics in Europe” Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Friday 5 May before midnight</td>
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1. Engagement
Counts 15%

Engagement and contribution to the class is critical for both individual and class success. To prepare for each class, you are required to read all assigned material and thoughtfully consider preparation questions. When there is a Canvas exercise, uploading material before class will be monitored. In class, strong engagement and contribution to learning can be evidenced by demonstrating thorough preparation of the assigned topic, contributing value-added knowledge and insights, actively participating in class discussion, engaging with outside speakers, and asking good questions. Especially, preparing and asking good questions is monitored and factored into the overall grade.

2. News Clip
Counts 5%

Throughout the course we will start each class by addressing current events relevant to the course. You will take turns following and reporting current events regarding religion and politics in Denmark and Europe. You are free to choose your research method: following the news media, researching the internet, and/or talking to host family members or other Danes. Here, again, the quality of debates and discussion will depend on the rest of class engaging with the report. Remember, this is not about being politically correct, or getting the answers right, or knowing what the teacher had in mind, but about fruitful interaction in class. Further information about the requirements for this assignment will be given to you during the first class. If you do not attend the first class please contact me.

3. Module I: “Relevant History?” (Individual)
Counts 20%

Diving into history is always both exciting and challenging. For a historical perspective to have any use or relevance, it must be related to the contemporary issues at hand. How do we make sure we learn from history and how do we help people not to forget.

Religion and Politics in Europe | DIS I Disciplines: Political Science, Religious Studies.
This syllabus is subject to change with as much notice as possible.
Question
On the basis of the material covered in this module, you are asked to write a paper where you answer both 1 and 2:
1. Choose an issue of the past from the material and explain the crisis, controversy or problem.
2. Discuss this issue in relation to an issue in contemporary religion and explain the similarities and differences. What are the lessons to be learned? Remember to explain ‘how’ and ‘why’ it is relevant!

The paper should be 2-3 pages (double spaced).
Deadline is Friday 3 February before midnight.

4. Module II: Secular Europe? Counts 20%
Two options.

Option 1: Religion in Denmark – An American perspective
Background
After having lived in Denmark for a couple of months your home university asks you to write a short piece on: “Religion in Denmark seen from an American point of view”. They are especially interested in hearing you views on the following questions:

Question
1. In your opinion, does the label “secular society” fit Denmark? Why or why not?
2. We hear talk about a crisis in the Danish National Church. At the same time 80% of the population is still a member of the church? How would you characterize the situation the church finds itself in today?

Make sure that you include theoretical concepts and arguments that have been covered in class. Your own observations, examples, and photos can also be used in this assignment.

This paper should be 3-4 pages (double spaced).
Deadline is Friday 24 February before midnight.

Option 2: European Religion in a Sociological Perspective
Background
Here are three claims:
- Europe is a truly secular continent.
- Europe is experiencing a New Age revival.
- The old empty churches in Europe are still playing an important role in European societies.

These are all claims about religion in Europe put forth by leading sociologists. When we scrutinize the analysis behind such statements we find conflicting assumptions about religion and its role in society and individual lives. In this assignment you are asked to pick two of the sociologists debated in class and discuss their understanding of religion in Europe.

Questions
1. Describe the concept of religion your two chosen sociologists. What kinds of examples are they using to illustrate what religion is? Do they primarily look at religion on an individual or organizational level? Do they include non-official religion?
2. Which concepts are central to your two sociologists’ analysis of religion in Europe? And how should we understand these concepts?

3. Discuss the differences and similarities between your two sociologists’ concepts of religion.

This paper should be 3-4 pages (double-spaced). Deadline is Friday 24 February before midnight.

5. Module IV: Populism and the Islamic Challenge (Individual) Counts 15%

At the center of almost all populist ideologies and expressions we find a political fiction or an idealized understanding of what the base or heartland is and who the ‘virtuous and unified populations’ is. Equally, there is an expression or understanding of who the enemy is, both the foreign evil that is endangering society and threatening is foundations, but also the elite who had stood idly by. These are the binaries of ‘us’ and ‘them’ on which a populist movement thrives.

For this paper, choose a European populist movement, organization, author or politician and identify and critically and discuss the construction of the ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Doing this critically means identifying the narratives that builds the movement and exploring the assumptions and the propaganda it entails. What kind of popular myths are constructed, what is deliberately neglected and how does the movement benefit? These and other such questions should be discussed in the paper.

Remember, to be critical in academic contexts means substantiating the arguments. Find evidence, be critical of news sources and narratives in general, consider both strengths and weaknesses in your argument. Much of the context of ‘populism’ is contested both by the post-factual political arguments, but also news media who are politically positioned.

This paper should be 3-4 pages (double-spaced). Deadline is Friday 7 April before midnight.


In January 2015, a divisive new novel appeared in France. It imagines a fictional France, seven years from now, where a Muslim party rules the government, women leave the workforce and teachers are forced to convert to Islam. The book – titled ‘Submission’ – was not intended as a provocation, its author, Michel Houellebecq, recently told a literary journal. “I condense an evolution that is, in my opinion, realistic,” he maintained. The future envisioned by the author is the latest controversy in a debate roiling Europe about the role of Islam and immigrants in society. (Exert from http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/attack-on-france-a-turning-point-in-divisive-religion-debate/article22357156/)

This assignment will conclude the course and will ask you to give an overall assessment of the future of religion in Europe. Taking the long history, the recent challenges of the 20th and the 21st Century and the ongoing news and developments of the spring of 2015 into account, you are asked to give a qualified and well-argued assessment of the future of religion and politics in Europe.

Several of the authors presented during the course have ventured partial guesses on the future of religion and politics in Europe. Grace Davie, Jose Casanova, William T. Cavanaugh – and even yours truly – have in
their respective conclusions speculated about developments in the closer or longer perspectives of the future. However, the predominant lesson from many of the cases of the reappearance of religion, the headscarf affair, the cartoons controversy and so on, demonstrate that the future is notoriously difficult to predict.

Throughout the 22nd class we will discuss some of these arguments and we will recapture how authors from the materials have seen these perspectives. In class, you will get the chance to exercise the different points of view of the different positions.

You are then asked to write a researched OpEd for *The New York Times* of 5-6 pages (double-spaced) to be submitted at the end of exam week. In this OpEd, you will present the your arguments either in favor or in opposition to a position similar to that of Michel Houllebecq as presented in his ‘Submission.’ Important in this paper is that you argue your cases. What is the substantial evidence? How do you interpret recent events? Where do you see the trends? What are the logics and forces at work, and where are these taking things? Are you pessimistic or optimistic, and why?

**Deadline is Friday 5 May** before midnight

**Note:** All papers can either be handed in in hard copy at the end of class or sent by email (to LBM993@hum.ku.dk) before the deadline. If you email your paper you need a confirmation email from me within 36 hours to be sure I received it.

**Course Policies**

**Attendance:**
You are expected to attend all DIS classes when scheduled. If you miss multiple classes the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Director of Student Affairs will be notified and they will follow-up with you to make sure that all is well. Absences will jeopardize your grade and your standing at DIS. Allowances will be made in cases of illness, but in the case of multiple absences you will need to provide a doctor’s note.

**Academic Honesty:**
DIS expects that students abide by the highest standards of intellectual honesty in all academic work. DIS assumes that all students do their own work and credit all work or thought taken from others. Academic dishonesty will result in a final course grade of “F” and can result in dismissal. The students’ home universities will be notified. DIS reserves the right to request that written student assignments be turned in electronic form for submission to plagiarism detection software. See the Academic Handbook for more information, or ask your instructor if you have questions.

**Course Policies to be addressed in Class:**
Late papers, students who arrive late to class, use of laptops and/ or phones in class, and classroom etiquette.

**Schedule of Classes, Readings to be Done for Each Class, and Assignment Due Dates:**
Schedule is subject to change if necessary with as much notice as possible.

*This syllabus is subject to change with as much notice as possible.*
Disability and resource statement:
Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Academic Support (acadsupp@dis.dk) to coordinate this. In order to receive accommodations, students should inform the instructor of approved DIS accommodations within the first two weeks of classes.

Expectations
On Notes:
Notes are always nice to have and are always important to do. However, I would recommend that you take only the necessary notes in class, and following the class reflect and recapture the period by writing your thoughts down. Ask yourself; what were the main points? What was difficult? What did I understand and what did I not understand? What should I read more on? What questions do I have for the next class? You could use the online tools for this kind of notes and reflection. This is in my opinion the best way to make the learning your own rather than mindlessly writing down everything I say.

On Reading and Reading Groups:
I expect you to read between classes, and I expect you to look up terms and phrases you are not familiar with, and I expect you to prepare questions for class. I recommend that you form small reading groups and work together on the texts and the questions in between classes. This is a great way to facilitate your own learning – maybe you can talk about the difficult issues and help each other along? I suggest you meet at least once per lesson, that is, twice a week. DIS has excellent facilities for this.

On Questions and Comments:
If you have questions between classes, you are of course welcome to write me. However, if the question is of general relevance to the rest of the class or is a question that others might be able to answer, I suggest you post it to the forum. I will of course answer, but everyone is invited to post their responses. This is part of learning.

Using the Online Tools and Course Webpage:
In addition to posting your questions online to the benefit of the whole class, I suggest that you familiarize yourselves with the online tools and the webpage. Try writing a blog post, use the self-reflective journal tool for your notes, or start a discussion on a relevant topic. You can arrange the calendar of your reading group on the course page too.

Field Studies:
All students are expected to attend and actively participate in all field studies.

- Wednesday, 15 February 8.30-12.30
- Wednesday, 5 April 13.00-17.00
**Course Schedule – Short**

**Module I: Setting the scene: Contemporary, historical and geographical contexts**

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Fri 20 Jan</td>
<td>Welcome to Religion and Politics in Europe</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Tues 24 Jan</td>
<td>Of the utmost relevance: Global politics and the Resurrection of Religion</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Fri 27 Jan</td>
<td>Lost at Sea: Religion and Politics on board the Arbeia 1630</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Tues 31 Jan</td>
<td>“A fire strong enough to consume the house:” Wars of Religion!</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Fri 3 Feb</td>
<td>State, Church and Religion in Denmark</td>
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*Module I paper deadline is Friday 3 February before midnight.*

**Core Course Week**

**Module II: Religion and Secularism in Europe**

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<td>6.</td>
<td>Tues 14 Feb</td>
<td>Religion and Secularism, part 1: Rethinking Secularism</td>
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<td>Wed 15 Feb</td>
<td>Visit to Christiansborg Palace and Church (8:30-12:30)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Fri 17 Feb</td>
<td>Religion and Secularism, part 2: Is Europe an Exceptional Case?</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Tues 21 Feb</td>
<td>Challenged secular cases. Example 1: Secularism of Denmark</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Fri 24 Feb</td>
<td>Challenged secular cases: Example 2: New Age in Europe – Fact or Myth?</td>
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*Module II paper deadline is Friday 24 February before midnight.*

**Long Study Tour 1 /Travel Break**

**Module III: Introducing Islam into Religion and Politics in Europe**

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<td>10.</td>
<td>Tues 7 Mar</td>
<td>Islam and the Models of Church and State Relations in Europe.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Fri 10 Mar</td>
<td>Islam and Politics in Denmark, Guest Lecture TBC</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Tues 14 Mar</td>
<td>The Fundamentalist, a Documentary</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Fri 17 Mar</td>
<td>Neo-fundamentalism in Europe</td>
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*No Module III paper.*

**Long Study Tour 2 /Travel Break**

**Module IV: Populism and the Islamic Challenge**

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<td>14.</td>
<td>Tues 28 Mar</td>
<td>The Islamic Challenge</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Fri 31 Mar</td>
<td>Political Climate Change – From multiculturalism to anti-Islamism</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Tues 4 Apr</td>
<td>Religion and Populism – part 1</td>
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<td>Wed 5 Apr</td>
<td>Visit to a Copenhagen Mosque (8:30-12:30)</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Fri 7 Apr</td>
<td>Religion and Populism – part 2</td>
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*Module IV paper deadline is Friday 7 April before midnight.*

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<td>18.</td>
<td>Tues 11 Apr</td>
<td>Populism and the Islamic Challenge in France</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Tues 18 Apr</td>
<td>Populism and the Islamic Challenge in the United Kingdom</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Fri 21 Apr</td>
<td>Populism and the Islamic Challenge in Germany</td>
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**Module V: Conclusions and perspectives**

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<td>21.</td>
<td>Tues 25 Apr</td>
<td>Return to the Global Perspective</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Fri 28 Apr</td>
<td>Future of Religion and Politics exercise</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Tues 2 May</td>
<td>Recap and concluding remarks</td>
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*Module V paper deadline is Friday 5 May before midnight.*

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*Religion and Politics in Europe* | DIS I Disciplines: Political Science. Religious Studies. This syllabus is subject to change with as much notice as possible.
Course Schedule – Long

Module 1. Setting the scene: Contemporary, historical and geographical contexts

1. Fri 20 Jan
   Welcome to Religion and Politics in Europe
   We will open this course with a broad discussion about the two key concepts religion and politics. In particular, we will explore some nuances of the language used when talking about religion and politics; how do we qualify our use of religion, politics and secular? What is descriptive and what is normative language?
   This class will also introduce you to the course more generally and to the first module, on the various ways religion seems to have been resuscitated on the global scene. We will also make time to start getting to know each other.
   We will talk about mutual expectations, requirements and the run of the course.
   Text: Syllabus for this course.

2. Tues 24 Jan
   Of the utmost relevance: Global politics and the Resurrection of Religion
   This is our present and contemporary context. Since the 19th century most sociologists have believed that religion would gradually fade in importance and cease to be significant with the advent of modernity. During the last decade where religion has experienced a resurrection across the world, this secularization thesis has come under fire. In this class we will look at the broader historical context for this development.
   Purpose: This will give you an up-to-date idea of central politico-religious developments and conflicts around the world, and increase your awareness of the many different and complex ways religion bears on public affairs. You should also be able to identify three different developments that religion has undergone since the postwar era.
   Canvas: On the evening before class, upload a short reflection (max 10 lines) on asking good questions to the texts you have been reading for class. Firstly, note a question or something you have been wondering. Secondly, *look it up* and post a short summary on the answer.
   Questions could be, but certainly not limited to: Which religions are in play in the re-
3. Fri 27 Jan  

**Lost at Sea: Religion and Politics on board the Arbella 1630**

This is our historical and contextual start. John Winthrop and a band of Calvinist puritans are sailing to the English colonies in America to start again. The religion and politics of the newly reformed England is unbearable for those pure of heart. Continental Europe was in the midst the thirty years war and the English distrusted all dissenters. On board the Arbella in the middle of the Atlantic, Winthrop gives a sermon (“A Model of Christian Charity”) on the brotherly love – that is Charity, proper – and how this love should be the basis of a model society to shine as an example to the world.

**Purpose:**
We dive right into history! This is the first of three classes that give a historical back-log to the present day conflicts and struggles about religion and politics. With Winthrop’s sermon we are given a unique look into the European religious environment of the day – and Winthrop’s rejection of this. Being in the middle of the Atlantic, and therefore midway between Europe and America, we will discuss an American basis for the criticism of European configuration of religion and politics. What kind of polity is John Winthrop imagining? How were things back in Europe?

**Text:**
Winthrop, John 1630: “A Model of Christian Charity.” *(On Canvas)*

Also: Dr. Andrew Wood’s “Summary of John Winthrop’s “Model of Christian Charity,”

Online: [http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/s149/149syllabus5summary.html](http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/s149/149syllabus5summary.html)

(Optional, but recommended)

**Canvas:**
On the evening before class, upload a short reflection (max 10 lines) on reading Winthrop’s “A Model of Christian Charity” and give three examples of words, concepts, or ideas. Consider, for example, what is Charity, and how does it work in the text? What are God’s directions to humankind? Why is this text so relevant in this class? Is there anywhere in the world today, where God’s directions are the sole basis of a new society or state?

4. Tues 31 Jan  

**“A fire strong enough to consume the house:” Wars of Religion!**

John Winthrop and the Puritans indeed had reason to escape Europe. After years of reformation during the 16th Century, a fire of war had begun roaring through Europe, and nothing or no-one were safe. In the eyes of history, religion was to blame, leaving a stigma on religion as being inherently insidious. However, is this necessarily so? We will look at how historio-sociologically at the European wars of religion and will discover a new player on the stage of history being born: the Modern State!

**Purpose:**
In this second of the three historically focused classes we follow William T. Cavanaugh as he tries to burst the myth of religious violence. Is there anything inherent in religion that would qualify as violent beyond what can be said of any human social institution or cultural expression? Is Cavanaugh right? Isn’t he just an apologet-
ic of religion, when he asks; ‘Aren’t people as likely to kill for the state as for religion? Also, we compare with present day Europe, where we in early January saw French satirists murdered by presumed Al-Qaeda terrorists and hand grenades and arson on Mosques. Are we facing a new full out war on religion? This last question we shall return to later in the course.

Text: 
Also: There is an excellent talk by Cavanaugh about the “Myth of Religious Violence,” Victoria University, Australia, 30 July 2012: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb1ZH5fJk (Optional)

Canvas: On the evening before class, upload a short reflection (max 10 lines) on Cavanaugh’s explanations of the wars of religion: Why were they fought? Who stood to benefit? What was the results? What was the relationship between Church and Sovereign before and after?

5.  Fri 3 Feb  State, Church and Religion in Denmark

Having so far cheated you all of a decent historical overview of the historical developments and their significance for the present, this third of three historical classes will focus on the development of the Lutheran states, in particular of course, Denmark. What had Luther imagined about the relationship between state and religion, and what actually came about? Why and how is this significant for today’s Denmark (and Europe)?

Purpose: A rough outline is presented of the historical developments between state and religion, and at this point students are expected to be able to relate the outline of these developments and discuss them as we approach the next module. Also, we will discuss the nature of the historical relationship between state and church, and will discuss how an analytical notion of ‘power’ has explanatory relevance to religion and politics.


Canvas: On the evening before class, upload your choice of the five (5) most relevant or important dates and events in the State, Church and Religion relations in Denmark.

Module I paper deadline is Friday 3 February before midnight.

Core Course Week
Module 2: Religion and Secularism in Europe

6. Tues 14 Feb  Religion and Secularism, part 1: Rethinking Secularism

Which features characterize the religions that are re-emerging today? Are there certain traits that set late-modern religion apart from traditional religion and historical religion? In this class we take as a starting point the problematic identified by the Economist’s Special Report on religion and public life, and we continue with the the explanations of how secularization did not deliver on the presumption to make religions irrelevant. A number of prominent thinkers and sociologists have in After Secularization 2006 – The Hedgehog Review – Special Issue given their attempts at explanations.

Purpose: After this class you should be able to identify some of the core features of today’s highly individualized religion, and to begin to discuss the ideas of modernity and secularism in relation to this religion.


Canvas: On the evening before class, upload a short researcher biography (max 10 lines) on one of the authors of the After Secularization 2006 – The Hedgehog Review – Special Issue. Find an author that none of your classmates have written about.

Wed 15 Feb  Visit to Christiansborg Palace and Church (8:30-12:30)

7. Fri 17 Feb  Religion and Secularism, part 2: Is Europe an Exceptional Case?

Keeping American configurations of religion and secularism in mind, we ask with Grace Davie, is Europe an exceptional case, a different case? And further; if yes, how so?


Canvas: On the evening before class, upload reflections (max 10 lines) about the field study. What did you like, what did you learn, what questions are you left with?
8. Tues 21 Feb  **Challenged secular cases. Example 1: Secularism of Denmark**
How would you describe religion in Denmark? What characterizes the kind of religiousness you typically find here in Denmark? After having been emerged into Danish society for more than a month it is time to take a closer and more systematic look at the religious landscape in Denmark. In particular, we will discuss the Brorson Church Asylum Case, where around 60 Iraqi asylum seekers had taken refuge in a church. This cases poses critical questions to the secular, and asks if we are seeing a reconfiguration of sacred public space?

**Purpose:**
After this class you should be able to describe some of the religious changes and developments that have occurred in Denmark during the last 35 years and give examples of how things are still changing.

**Text:**

**Canvas:**
On the evening before class, upload a short reflection (max 10 lines) on what Lisbet Christoffersen might mean with “the post-secular”? This is one of the operative concepts of this class, so please try to explain it in your own words.

9. Fri 24 Feb  **Challenged secular cases: Example 2: New Age in Europe – Fact or Myth?**
Are the reports about New Age growth in Europe exaggerated or will this new and highly individualistic religiosity compensate for the decline in European Christendom? This question is central to the current debate about secularization in Europe and by focusing on the work of Paul Heelas we will be able to see how two leading sociologists reach two contradictory predictions of the future of New Age religion in Europe. In this class we will also compare New Age religion to other more traditional forms of religion.

**Purpose:**
After this class you should be able to distinguish between classical theism and New Age spirituality. To show how an orthodox model of secularization can be defended at a time where most seem to find evidence of an increasing de-secularization.

**Text:**
Canvas: On the evening before class, upload examples of “New Age”-religions, or new religions, or religions that are somehow an expression of a new kind of spirituality tied to the 20th or 21st century.

Module II paper deadline is Friday 24 February before midnight.

Long Study Tour 1 / Travel Break

Module 3: Introducing Islam into Religion and Politics in Europe

10. Tues 7 Mar Islam and the Models of Church and State Relations in Europe.
So far our discussions have focused on majority religion, in particular the Lutheran Majority Church in Denmark. In broad terms, dissidents left with the Arbella. The state had won, and after long development, European constitutions had allowed for religious freedom only because states in Europe felt confident in their secular ambitions. However, with the entrance of Islam into Europe after Second World War things start to change. Islam as a religious actor in Europe coincides with the challenge to secularism and the governing models of understanding things are increasingly contested.

Purpose: After this class students should be able to discuss how models are both normative and descriptive, and how great care should be taken when simplifying the complexities of church, religion and state in Europe.


Canvas: Read carefully the text of today, and upload any comments – good, bad, suggestions, ideas – as if you were a reviewer for a newspaper or academic journal.

11. Fri 10 Mar Islam and Politics in Denmark, Guest Lecture TBC
Today, we dive into the specifics of politics with relations to Islam and Muslims in Denmark. The history of Islam in Denmark, which frames and fuels the political discourse in Denmark, is comparable to the history of Islam in many other European countries. With the specific theme of Islam in religion and politics in Europe, we have opened our returning thematic for the rest of the course.

Purpose: After this class students should have a feel for Danish politics and Islam, and should be able to give an elementary overview of Islam in Denmark. This class introduces some of the themes to be revisited when we focus on the Danish Cartoon Crisis later in the course.

Canvas: On the evening before class, explore Danish party politics through available online sources and upload to Canvas three observations about things distinct to Denmark. It could be; number of seats in parliament, separation of power, interesting observations from the constitution, thoughts on the June 2015 election, observation about government and ministers, and so on.

12. Tues 14 Mar The Fundamentalist, a Documentary
In the next two classes we will study and discuss fundamentalism within European Islam. In this first class we will start out by watching the documentary “The Fundamentalist”. A documentary, which sets out to tell how fundamentalism, with its complex history, has become a global phenomenon. It does so by visiting Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist fundamentalists around the world. This film gives us an excellent opportunity to reflect upon both similarities and differences within global fundamentalism.

Canvas: On the evening before class, upload definitions of religious extremism from whatever sources you might find relevant. Consider before we see the documentary what is the relationship between extremism and fundamentalism?

13. Fri 17 Mar Neo-fundamentalism in Europe
As a result of immigration from Africa and the Middle East, Islam has made a big impact on the way many Europeans today conceive culture, politics, and identity. The same goes for European Muslims. Living in a modern Europe has changed the way people invoke Islam to organize their life and interpret their social reality.

Purpose: In this class, you are invited to share your thoughts on the documentary “The Fundamentalist”. You will further more learn about the development within Islam from classical fundamentalism to neo-fundamentalism and discuss radical Islam as an integral part of the modern European context.

Module IV. Populism and the Islamic Challenge

14. Tues 28 Mar  The Islamic Challenge

In 2005, Jytte Klausen published her interview study *The Islamic Challenge - Politics and Religion in Western Europe* which was one of the first books to examine the response of European Muslim leaders to the idea that there exists a 'clash of civilizations' between religious Muslims and secular Europeans. That Islamic Challenge persists still and the revitalization of right-wing populism seems up to the task, but where does that leave religion and politics in Europe? That is the question for this Module IV on populism and the Islamic challenge.


Canvas: On the evening before class, upload a short reflection (max 10 lines) on what Jytte Klausen might consider as a ‘challenge,’ relating to her title *The Islamic Challenge*.

15. Fri 31 Mar  Political Climate Change – From multiculturalism to anti-Islamism

In this class we will set out to understand why Europeans have reacted and dealt with religious issues during the past 10 years the way they have. To do so we need to look at the religious terrorism and violence that have hit Europe since the beginning of the 2000s and contributed to changing many Europeans’ perception of and feelings towards Islam and democratic values. One of the returning questions in the module is if religious freedom in Europe is in fact freedom of religion or freedom from religion?

Cases: You will be divided into five groups. Each group will in class prepare a five-minute presentation on one of these five cases:
- Charlie Hebdo and the 2015 shootings
- The 2005 London Bombings
- The ongoing discussions on the Veil in France
- The Murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004
- PEGIDA in Germany


Canvas: No exercise for Canvas but familiarize yourselves with the cases.
16. Tues 4 Apr  Religion and Populism – part 1
There is little doubt that European populism is a force to be reckoned with and that it is very much tied to religion. This connection is two-fold. Much populism is anti-Islamic or anti-Islamist, but even in positive terms, populists recognize the values and virtues connected to Christianity – in one way or the other. In this class, we explore this connection between Religion and Populism.

Study: In this class, we explore this connection between Religion and Populism. Fareed Zakarias text is a straight forward introduction to ‘Populism on the March’ from an American perspective. Marzouki & McDonnell’s introduction to their book explores the specifics of religion and populism, and in the coming classes, we will read more from their Saving the People. How Populists Hijack Religion. Each of these text gives their introduction, explanation and definition of ‘populism.’


Canvas: On the evening before class, upload a short paragraph on a populist or nationalist organization, party or group in a chosen European country. Note what – if any – link to religion there is. Note, there are many different European countries.

Wed 5 Apr  Visit to a Copenhagen Mosque (8.30-12.30)

17. Fri 7 Apr  Religion and Populism – part 2: Guest lecture with Ditte Maria Sørensen (TBC)
After having discussed the concept of populism and its relationship with religion, we dig a little deeper. Ditte Maria Sørensen is a Ph.D.-candidate with the Institute of Political Science at University of Copenhagen, where she specializes in European politics and populism. Her project is titled: Contesting Ideologies of European Democracy.


Canvas: On the evening before class, upload questions that you would like to ask Ditte Maria Sørensen.

Module IV paper deadline is Friday 7 April before midnight.
A short while ago, former French President Nicolas Sarkozy suggested that it be made illegal to wear the fully face-covering Burka in public France. In 2016, a ‘Burkini’-ban was introduced and this adds another chapter to the heated debate on the Muslim Veil in the French public schools that has been blazing for two decades now.

While interesting in and of itself, it seems indicatory of the public sentiment that is fueling French Populism and the French National Front fronted by presidential hopeful, Marine Le Pen. The class should be on topic as the election will be held on 23 April 2017.

**Purpose:**
In this class, we will delve into the French incarnation of populism, focusing on the French National Front and the upcoming 2017 French elections. We will look at the broader political context, the main actors and the issues being raised. This should give you an overview of 15 years of intense debate about Muslims, secularism, French identity and citizenship.

**Texts:**

**Canvas:**
On the evening before class, upload short reflections (max 10 lines) on France’s relationship with religion, in general, and Islam, in particular. This can be from a historical, a political, a sociological or a religious point of view.

**19. Tues 18 Apr  Populism and the Islamic Challenge in the United Kingdom**

In this class, we discuss Britain after Brexit. The UK case in the optics of populism is very much a case of the populists being held responsible for their policy and their arguments against the elites and the foreigners. By the end 2016, no strategy has yet emerged from the government as to the transition out of the EU nor for remedying the damages of this exit.

As seen in the literature so far, religion and the symbolics and values of religion plays a significant role. However, Timothy Peace argues that Britain is an infertile breeding ground for populists wishing to use religion to advance their cause. How do Brexit and Timothy Peace’s arguments align?

**Text:**
20. Fri 21 Apr  Populism and the Islamic Challenge in Germany

In Germany, the question of populism might be particularly messy and we see a perfect storm in the making before the autumn 2017 German elections (date TBA). Not only does nationalism and populism have a very troubled past with Nazism and far right wing sentiments, but also leftist populism left significant a mark on the German history. After the fall of the Berlin wall, the unified Germany struggled with a poor, most east-German middle-class, and with the recent influx of refugees and migrants that middle class is now speaking up. Adding to that, as we explored in earlier classes, Germany is divided between Catholics and Protestants, which feeds into a Christian value base.

Text:

http://scholar.dickinson.edu/clarkeforum_lectures/12/

Canvas: On the evening before class, upload a reflection on the video and note comparisons between Germany and the USA.

Module V: Conclusions and Perspectives

21. Tues 25 Apr  Return to the global perspective

Having discussed the particular European arrangements and using the ‘Islamic Challenge’ as our returning case, we look again to the global perspective and try to position European identity in the wider perspective. We also see what conclusions begin forming.

Text:

Canvas: On the evening before class, upload any reflections, questions and comments you might have on the wider perspective of this semester’s classes. How does it all ties together? What themes and perspectives have arisen? Where are we after terror in Copenhagen and in France in 2015 and ten years after the Cartoons Crisis? Have Europe entered the post-Secular? Are we – again – seeing religion as the sole definer of similarities and differences, and even of new states (ISIS)?

22. Fri 28 Apr The Future of Religion and Politics exercise
In this module we will rehearse the final Case Assignment, to get clear on the different perspective and trends of things. Neither this module nor the assignment is about trying to predict the future, but is about trending and drawing conclusions from developments and changes in progress.


Canvas: No assignment, but prepare observations on trends and developments that are happening now, and which will have an impact on the next 10 years.

23. Tues 2 May Recap and concluding perspectives
In this class we will start out with a short test. We will talk about what was covered in the course. Which questions are still hanging in the air? And of course a big goodbye.
Course Reading Material

Course Book

http://www.iasc-culture.org/THR/hedgehog_review_2006-Spring-Summer.php

On Canvas


On Canvas (Optional readings)

This syllabus is subject to change with as much notice as possible.
Final Syllabus


Background Bibliography


Collections on Secularization, Secularism and the Religion-Politics Relation


Final Syllabus


Articles and Other on Secularization and Secularism


Final Syllabus


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This syllabus is subject to change with as much notice as possible.


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E-Resources on Secularization and Secularism (a few examples)

EUROZINE theme on Post-Secular Europe
(http://www.eurozine.com/comp/focalpoints/postseceurope.html)

Religion and Politics in Europe

This syllabus is subject to change with as much notice as possible.
Mike Huckabee’s stance on Faith and Politics

London School of Economics Forum for Secularism – conference
(http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/forumForEuropeanPhilosophy/events/forumAnnualLectureSeries&Conference/secularismConference.htm)

Reflection Group – The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe (founded by Romano Prodi)
(http://www.iwm.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=79&Itemid=286)

Religion in the 21st Century – University of Copenhagen Priority Area
(http://www.ku.dk/Priority/Religion/index.asp)

The Economist – In God’s Name – Special Report
(http://www.economist.com/specialreports/displaystory.cfm?story_id=10015255)


The PEW Forum on Religion and Public Life (http://pewforum.org/religion-politics/)

The Religion, Politics, and Globalization Program – Berkeley (http://rpgp.berkeley.edu/)

The UK National Secular Society (http://www.secularism.org.uk/)

The Westboro Baptist Church – God Hates Fags (http://www.godhatesfags.com/index.html)