

## SYLLABUS

### RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY

This class will revolve around the question how liberal democracies have coped, and are still trying to cope, with the power of religious faith; how church was separated from state, how secular politics have been affected by religious institutions, and how the Western world is dealing with the challenge of Islam.

In the course of this class, we will examine the differences between various parts of Europe and the United States, the ways in which non-Western cultures, specifically in East Asia, have dealt with matters of church and state, and, finally, with the current tensions with Muslims in Europe.

To deepen our knowledge and encourage class discussions we will use written materials as well as films. If a film showing has to be scheduled outside the class hours, students will be expected to attend. In the final evaluation of a student's work, active participation in class discussion will be valued as highly as the written work. Several students will be asked to prepare a presentation for each class. For midterm and end of term evaluations, written papers will be required.

The schedule will be as follows:

Wednesday 30 January: Introduction.

4 February: Reading from Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. Readings from Thomas Jefferson.

6 February: Discussion of the movie: *Elmer Gantry*.

11 February: Reading from Lord Acton's *Freedom in Christianity*.

13 February: Mark Lilla: chapter from *The Stillborn God*.

18 February: David Hume: *Of Superstition and Enthusiasm*. *The Empiricists*: Locke, Hume, Berkeley.

20 February: Voltaire on religion and readings from *Notes From England*. Reading from Spinoza's *Tractatus*.

25 February: Conor Cruise O'Brien on French Revolution.

27: Reading from Kevin Phillips, *American Theocracy*. Discussion of John O'Sullivan's *Manifest Destiny*.

March 3: Essays on the religious right by Gary Wills and Joan Didion.

March 5: Read Voltaire on India and China.

March 10: Simon Leys, Introduction to Confucius *Analects*.

12: Read Frits Mote, *The City in Ancient China*.

17: Readings from Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, on confrontation with the West.

19: Jonathan Spence on Taiping Rebellion.

24: Rise of scientism. May 4<sup>th</sup>. Selected readings from Spence, Levinson, Fairbanks.

April 9: Mao Zedong on the First Emperor. Maoism as a religion. Readings from Barmé, et al.

26: Christianity and rebellion. Chapter from Ian Buruma: *Bad Elements*.

April 14: Bob Wakabayashi, *Anti-foreignism and Modern Western Learning*.

April 16: Read *Kokutai no Hongi*, and chapter from Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myth*.

21: Readings from Olivier Roy, *Secularism Confronts Islam*.

23: Joan Scott, *Politics of the Veil*.

28: Readings from Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds*.

30: Readings from Ian Buruma, *Murder in Amsterdam*.

May 5: Ian Buruma, *Who is Afraid of Tariq Ramadan* (NYT)

7: Readings from Tariq Ramadan and Ayaan Hirsi Ali.

12: the debate on *Sign and Sight*.