

Seminar Series: Populism and Religion Autumn 2022 — three seminars online

Neighbourly Love in European Migration Debates: The Politics of Using the Bible

Karin Neutel

September 20, 16h15–18h00 [CET]

Zoom: <https://lu-se.zoom.us/j/62152616728>

Meeting ID: 621 5261 6728

Recent political discussions about migration and Islam have seen a resurgence of claims about Europe's Christian identity and values. While many assume these claims to be theologically empty, and to constitute a 'hijacking' of religion, this paper will demonstrate how they are often accompanied by biblical references, particularly on the themes of the neighbour and neighbourly love. These references raise questions, not only about the continuing political relevance of the Bible, but also about the task of Biblical Scholars to engage with the Bible's relevance in today's political climate.

Karin Neutel is Associate Professor in New Testament Studies at Umeå University. Her research focuses on contemporary uses of the Bible in social and political contexts, with a focus on debates about migration and about male circumcision. She has a doctorate from the University of Groningen, Netherlands, and has worked as a researcher at the VU University – Amsterdam, the Max Weber College at Erfurt University, and the University of Oslo.

Democratic Citizenship and Community-based Participatory Research

Annalisa Caputo

October 13, 16h15–18h00 [CET]

Zoom: <https://lu-se.zoom.us/j/62152616728>

Meeting ID: 621 5261 6728

Our research project aims to investigate the idea of 'democratic citizenship'. First, what is meant by 'democratic citizenship'? What is democratic citizenship education? What does it mean to educate for democratic citizenship? In democratic citizenship education, are citizens seen only as 'objects', that is to say, only as 'learners'? And from our perspective, are citizens only considered 'objects' for academic research? If not, how can citizens really be seen as producers of knowledge? Are all of us producers of knowledge? Is it possible also to include subjects normally considered marginal, for instance, children, people with intellectual disabilities, prisoners and foreigners? If so, how? And if not, is the implication that democratic citizenship is not for everyone?

Annalisa Caputo is Associate Professor in Philosophical Hermeneutics at the University of Bari (Italy), with qualification as Full Professor in Theoretical Philosophy. Since 2004 she has been in charge of a course in *Languages of Philosophy* at the University of Bari, and since 2016 in charge of a course in *Teaching Philosophy*. She is also Visiting Professor of Philosophical Anthropology at the School of Theology of Apulia. Caputo is founder and Editor in Chief of *Logoi.ph—Journal of Philosophy*. She is principal investigator of the interdisciplinary research project *An ABC of Democratic Citizenship. Community-Based Participatory Research through Sciences & Humanities*.

Religion and Populism in Latin America: The Populist Potential of Christianity

Ole Jakob Løland

November 15, 16h15–18h00 [CET]

Zoom: <https://lu-se.zoom.us/j/62152616728>

Meeting ID: 621 5261 6728

With its high levels of economic inequality and its recent history of political scandals, Latin America can be regarded as a heartland of populism. Being the global region with the highest percentage of Christians, Latin America serves as a highly relevant case for the populist potential of contemporary Christianities. Three recent figures stand out as illustrative examples: First, some aspects of Pope Francis' theology arguably contain typical elements of Latin American populism. Second, the populist discourse of Venezuela's former president Hugo Chávez exemplifies how Christian metaphors and legacies can sustain an inclusionary populism of the left. Third, Christianity has been deployed for more exclusionary purposes in the right-wing populism of Brazil's president since 2018, Jair Bolsonaro.

Ole Jakob Løland is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of South-Eastern Norway. He has published on biblical reception, political theology and Latin American Christianity. Over the last four years, he has undertaken an investigation of the first Latin American Pope, the Argentinean Jorge Mario Bergoglio, better known as Pope Francis, also in relation to populism. His most recent book, co-authored with colleagues, is *Global Christianity. Current Trends and Developments* (2022).

About the Seminar Series

The seminar series on populism and religion focuses on theoretical, philosophical and theological dimensions of populism. Certain conceptions of politics – including political community, political processes and political decision-making – characterize typical formulations of populist thought. A fundamental conviction of this seminar series is that we must investigate these very conceptions if we want to engage in dialogue that goes beyond plain-sense descriptions or explanations of certain facts, and which deeply addresses questions about how society is – and ought to be – organized. Descriptive language and references to facts cannot by themselves account for all the questions posed by society, let alone provide the answers.

We welcome to our seminars a range of intellectually interested parties, including senior and junior scholars, doctoral students, and beginners. In order to reach the broadest possible audience, the default language of our seminars is English, but occasional seminars may be hosted in Danish, French, German, Norwegian, or Swedish.