

Seminar Series: Populism and Religion Spring 2023 — three seminars online

Into the Arms of the Far Right: The New Temptation of French Catholicism

Anne Guillard

January 25, 16h15–18h00, Swedish time [CET]

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

Meeting ID: 621 5261 6728

For decades, the historically dominant Catholic Church in France has strongly opposed the far right. More recently, however, there have been cracks in this Catholic bastion against far-right politics. Catholic hierarchies have gradually retreated from politics, while conservative Catholic laypeople have sought to erode traditional taboos by forming a *union of the rights*. Meanwhile, the *Rassemblement National* and the new party *Reconquête!*, launched by Eric Zemmour, increasingly refer to Christianity in their right-wing identity politics. We will investigate these recent dynamics between Catholicism and the far-right in France.

Anne Guillard conducts post-doctoral research at the European University Institute (Florence, Italy) and Oxford University (United Kingdom), funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Her research focuses on the political theory of public reason and on the religious claims to integrate these claims into public reason. She holds a double doctorate in Political Theory from Sciences Po Paris (France) and in Christian Theology from the University of Geneva (Switzerland).

“Citizens from all nations”: *Lumen Gentium* 13 as Counterpoint to Identitarian Concepts of Religion

Franz Gmainer-Pranzl

March 22 2023, 16h15–18h00, Swedish time [CET]

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

Meeting ID: 621 5261 6728

Chapter 13 of the dogmatic constitution on the church presents an interesting concept of catholicity. The community of the church is not a result of ethnic identity or cultural homogeneity, but instead of a specific kind of unity: the more it experiences plurality and diversity, the more it shares in a deep communion. This form of catholicity (not in a confessional, but in a structural sense) could be a model for societal and global relations, as well as a radical criticism of populist and identity politics.

Franz Gmainer-Pranzl studied Catholic theology and philosophy in Linz, Innsbruck (Dr. theol.), and Vienna (Dr. phil.). Since 2009 he has served as professor at Salzburg University and Director of the Centre for Intercultural Theology and Study of Religions (ZTKR). His research interests are intercultural-theological epistemology, theology in Africa, and the dialogue between intercultural theology and critical development studies. He is also the editor of *Salzburg interdisciplinary discourses*. Gmainer-Pranzl's recent publications include “Politics, Violence, Religion and irreconcilable Identities. The Role of the Catholic Church in the First Republic (1918–1938) in Austria” (2021), “Politische Theologie – ein Beitrag zur Gesellschafts- und Wissenschaftskritik” (2022), and “Religion in modernen Medien. Eine (selbst-)kritische theologische Analyse” (2022).

Populism and Its Four Poisonous Companions – A Theological Riposte

Antje Jackelén

May 9, 16h15–18h00, Swedish time [CEST]

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

Meeting ID: 621 5261 6728

In many countries throughout the world, people are drinking a dangerous cocktail of toxic ingredients all starting with the letter *P*: polarization, populism, protectionism, post-truth, and patriarchy. All these phenomena interact in multiple ways with religion, which calls for a theological analysis. The seminar will explore some of the resources that theology and spirituality can offer to counteract the effects of these poisonous P's.

Antje Jackelén served as Archbishop of the Church of Sweden from 2014 to 2022. Prior to that, she was Bishop of the Diocese of Lund (2007–2014), Director of the Zygon Center for Religion and Science (2003–2007), and taught Systematic Theology/Religion and Science at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (2001–2007). Educated in Germany and Sweden, she earned her PhD in Theology from Lund University. Jackelén has published numerous books and articles in Swedish, English, and German. She holds three honorary doctorates.

About the Seminar Series

The seminar series on populism and religion focuses on the 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 conceptions if we want to engage in dialogue that goes beyond plain-sense descriptions of, or explanations for, 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.