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**RELIGION AND POLITICAL LIFE/  
THEOLOGICAL STUDIES  
CORE COURSE**

**RELT60141 SYLLABUS AUTUMN 2010**

**Meeting Times:** Wed 10.00-12.00 pm, Seminar, Samuel Alexander WG22

**Instructors:** Dr. Michael Hoelzl (Lecturer in philosophy of religion), Samuel Alexander WG22, [michael.hoelzl@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:michael.hoelzl@manchester.ac.uk); Dr. Peter Scott (Senior Lecturer in Christian Social Thought & Director of the Lincoln Theological Institute), Samuel Alexander WG16, [peter.scott@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:peter.scott@manchester.ac.uk)

**Readings:** All of the readings for the course have been compiled in a course reader provided here. The assigned readings should be read in advance and you should be prepared to discuss the readings in each seminar. As well, we recommend that you purchase two recent books, *Religion and Political Thought* and *The New Visibility of Religion*. Both of these texts are edited by the Centre for Religion and Political Culture staff members Dr. Michael Hoelzl and Professor Graham Ward and have been published by Continuum Press. They provide a host of key sources for this course and further bibliographical suggestions to aid your research.

**Course Requirements:** 1 x 6000 word essay (100%)

**Online Resource:** <http://religionandpoliticalculture.com/relt60141>

**Course Content:** At one time there was a radical division between religion and public life, but today there is enormous interest in the role of religion in the public sphere. The relationship between religion and politics is receiving much attention in the social sciences. This course aims to furnish students with a critical understanding of key concepts and themes in the field of religion and political life. Students will explore various approaches to studying the various relationships between religion and political life (e.g. theoretical, historical, anthropological, ethnographic, theological and sociological methods). Students will acquire knowledge of the historical and continuing involvement of religion in various forms of political culture, and the ability to analyze critically religious traditions or aspects thereof from the standpoint of their

involvement with political life. The course will also provide the necessary foundations for further research in the field of religion and political life.

**Course Aims:**

1. To understand the history of contemporary issues in religion and politics
2. To examine the political aspects of various religious traditions
3. To gain awareness of potential conflict and cooperation between religions and political cultures
4. To appreciate the theoretical return of religion in continental philosophy, theology and political theory today

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Have a basic understanding of key political ideas and theories
2. Have developed a critical understanding of the research area of religion and politics
3. Have undertaken independent research
4. Have developed your academic writing skills

**Further Online Resources:**

Sociological data of Religion in Europe

<http://eurel.u-strasbg.fr/EN/>

Religion and the public sphere in the US

<http://pewforum.org/>

Religion and international politics

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/>

Cultural and spiritual dimension of Europe

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/links/article\\_3336\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/links/article_3336_en.htm)

## Programme

<b>Week 1</b> <b>PMS</b>	Welcome and Introduction to the Course Approaching the study of culture and society
<b>Religion and Political Life in Europe &amp; USA</b>	
<b>Week 2</b> <b>MH</b>	Overview: Religion and Political thought Hoelzl, Michael and Ward, Graham. <i>Religion and Political Thought</i> . London: Continuum, 2006, pp. 1-20.
<b>Week 3</b> <b>MH</b>	Thomas Hobbes: Authority and Association Hoelzl, Michael and Ward, Graham. <i>Religion and Political Thought</i> . London: Continuum, 2006, pp. 102-118. Michael Oakshott, <i>Hobbes on Civil Association</i> , foreword by Paul Franco (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000) pp. 97-99.
<b>Week 4</b> <b>MH</b>	Alexis de Tocqueville: Civil Religion and Democratic Culture Hoelzl, Michael and Ward, Graham. <i>Religion and Political Thought</i> . London: Continuum, 2006, pp. 149-160. Bellah, R. "Civil Religion in America." Available at <a href="http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm">http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm</a>
<b>Week 5</b> <b>MH</b>	Revising Secularisation Theory Hoelzl, Michael and Ward, Graham. <i>The New Visibility of Religion</i> . London: Continuum, 2008, pp. 15-29, 45-58
<b>Week 6</b>	Reading Week
<b>Theology and Civil Society</b>	
<b>Week 7</b> <b>PMS</b>	<i>Theology and civil society</i> Karl Marx, 'On the Jewish Question', <i>Early Writings</i> (Penguin, 1975), pp. 211-241.
<b>Week 8</b> <b>PMS</b>	<i>Engaging the secular theologically</i> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, <i>Letters and Papers from Prison</i> (Fortress, 2010), pp. 473-482; John Milbank, <i>Theology &amp; Social Theory</i> (Blackwell, 2006 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition), pp. 1-3.
<b>Week 9</b> <b>PMS</b>	<i>A theology of society?</i> Oliver O'Donovan, <i>The desire of the nations</i> (Cambridge University Press, 1996), chapter 7.
<b>Current Debates</b>	
<b>Week 10</b> <b>PMS</b>	<i>Civil society as moral resource</i> C. R. Baker, E. L. Graham & P. M. Scott, 'When remoralising fails?', in P. M. Scott et. al. (eds), <i>Remoralizing Britain?</i> (Continuum, 2009), pp. 223-245.
<b>Week 11</b> <b>PMS</b>	<i>Will the real political theology please stand up?</i> P. M. Scott, 'Politics and the new visibility of theology', in Graham Ward and Michael Hoelzl (eds), <i>The new visibility of religion: studies in cultural hermeneutics</i> (Continuum, 2008), 231-249.
<b>Week 12</b> <b>MH</b>	Essay presentation

