

Protect the State. Protect the Religion.
An Analytical Approach to the Political Use of Religion
in Denmark and The United States of America.

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1. Introduction

Is Denmark secular? Is the United States.? The short answer to both questions is no. Both countries have rich religious histories that have shaped each country into what it is today, and religion is still present. Religion in Denmark and the U.S. is on different terms and is received and accepted socially, politically and privately in different manners in each country. As this introduction is written, the Christian holidays, Store Bededag, Kristi Himmelfart and Pinsen have recently passed in Denmark. It is straightforward, if Denmark were a secular country, there would not be religious, national holidays. As the case is in the U.S. But the lack of religious holidays does not make the U.S. secular either – more parameters have to be met, and they are not entirely done so by either country.

In 1967, Peter L. Berger said that modernisation would result in a decline of religion. He said that modern society would become secular by default and that religion would not survive in a modern context. In 1999, Berger said that the world was as furiously religious as ever and even more so in some places. Almost twenty years after his latter statement, it seems to be true that there has been a religious increase and not decline in many places around the world. Religion is a topic often debated around the world today because of the increase of fundamental understandings of religions such as Islam and Christianity. Nations such as America welcome mainstream understandings of religions, while nations such as Denmark are more reluctant to accept public religion, which is why Denmark is frequently perceived as a secular country and America as a very religious country.

Secularisation theorists traditionally looked at European countries, when defending their theories about the decline of religion in modern countries, which supported Berger's first statement. Today in 2018, one can look at countries such as Denmark, Sweden or England and believe that Berger was right in his first statement. However, as secularisation theory eventually also did, if one looks at religion in America, religion is seemingly everywhere, which supports Berger's latter statement.

The focus of this thesis is on Denmark and America because both nations are peculiar concerning religion. One seems very secular and the other very religious. Phil Zuckerman even claimed Denmark as a country without God, and countless people have called America God's own country. This master's thesis is not trying to question secularisation theory or claim either country explicitly as secular or religious. What it is going to do, is look at religion and secularisation in both

countries and how politicians in official speeches and statements indirectly and directly express the nation's religiosity/secularity. This thesis will also look at the differences between the two countries regarding religion/secularisation and attempt to give possible reasons for these differences based on history, culture, politics and constitutional stipulations.

This master's thesis argues that the most significant difference between Denmark and the United States of America concerning religion and secularisation is on the societal level and in how politicians publicly use religion. This thesis also argues that a legal separation of state and religion has resulted in high religiosity in the U.S, while a legal connection between state and religion has resulted in low religiosity in Denmark.

To be able to investigate, support and prove this hypothesis, this thesis will give a systematic explanation of different thoughts and understandings of secularisation theory along with a few alternatives to secularisation theory. This thesis will give a description of the religious landscape in Denmark and the U.S. to be able to understand why religion is the way it is in both countries today. To further this understanding, the description will draw on statistics and history. It will include a section on the term Civil Religion and how civil religion is present in both countries. Following this, the analysis will concentrate on political speeches by different politicians from each country. The analysis will give an understanding of how religion is used politically in both countries along with giving an understanding of how far it is acceptable to go religiously in public by a politician. The analysis will look at the language used in the speeches to identify religious words or phrases and if religious texts, such as the Bible, are quoted or referenced. The analysis will also focus on how the rhetoric surrounding religion is in the speeches. I.e., if the speaker speaks positively, negatively or neutrally about religion. The rhetoric will help detect notions of the speaker's personal religious affiliation. The terms ethos, pathos and logos will be used, when they are relevant, to determine the effect of the use of religion. Following the analysis, this master's thesis will discuss possible explanations for the differences found. The discussion will, by looking at the differences discovered between Denmark and the U.S., discuss what secularisation theorists and sociologists have said about secularisation and the causes of secularisation. This will lead to a discussion of what the crucial factor(s) for the differences might be. Lastly, this thesis will conclude on the findings and determine if the hypothesis of this thesis can be supported or not.

2. Theory

Secularisation is the decline of religion, at least in its most straightforward definition, which is the general definition that will be used in this thesis. Reasons for secularisation and if modern society is secular, are more complicated to define and answer. Secularisation theory stems from the 1950s and 1960s and spurred from the Enlightenment. At this time sociologists such as Peter L. Berger said that modernisation would lead to the decline of religion in society and the individual. Berger later recanted this statement and said that that was utterly false and not how modern society turned out to be. (Berger "Desecularization" 2-3). Even before Berger, Max Weber and Emilé Durkheim had both said that society would be less religious. Before exploring today's societies in the United States and Denmark concerning religion and secularisation, and if Berger was right in the first or latter place, this section will explore and explain secularisation theory. Firstly, there will be an account of different views of secularisation theory. Secondly, two alternatives to secularisation theory will follow. Lastly, there will be an account of how this thesis views secularisation theory and the different understandings of it.

2.1 Max Weber

Max Weber talked about *the disenchantment of God* and the World in his work (Lehmann 113). *The disenchantment of God* can loosely be understood as what the secularisation theorists began to talk about fifty years later. When said *disenchantment of the world* he talked about a global process, which he believed started already in antique Judaism and was supported by Greek science and culminated by Puritans that began the modern world (in Weber's opinion). Rationalisation, through the removal of all magical explanations of the world, is the result of disenchantment of the World (114-115). Weber's term has become fundamental in modern sociology, modernisation processes and rationalisation (116). Weber did not just think that the World would become disenchanted, he believed that it already was disenchanted when he was doing his work in the 1910s, fifty years before secularisation theory (118).

2.2. Peter Berger

Peter Berger defines secularisation as:

"[...] the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols." (Berger, "Sacred Canopy" 107).

Along with his definition, Berger says that the term secularisation refers to processes of importance within the modern Western World (Berger "Sacred Canopy 106). Berger predominantly looks at secularisation within modern Western society; thereby he predominantly looks at Christianity and how secularisation revealed itself by the withdrawal from Christian churches. Berger infers that secularisation is more than a social-structural process when he mentions culture and symbols. Berger believes that secularisation affects every aspect of culture, which is most importantly visible in the rise of science as a secular view of the world (107). Berger also argues for the secularisation of the individual (he calls it secularisation of consciousness); that the west has produced many people with no concern for religion at all (108). Even though Berger believes that modernisation is a cause of secularisation, he does admit that secularisation is not the same all over the west and that secularisation has different effects on different populations. Berger has, for example, found that secularisation affects men more than women, the city more than countryside and Protestants more than Catholics. (108). Berger also claims that: "[...] the same secularizing forces have now become worldwide in the course of westernization and modernization." (108). Thereby Berger applies what he sees in the Western World to the entire world. Berger claims:

[...] it is industrial society in itself that is secularizing [...]. (109)

Also:

[...] [the] crisis of religion on the level of [common sense] knowledge is not due to any mysterious metamorphoses of consciousness, but rather be explained in terms of empirically available developments in the social structures and the social psychology of modern societies" (156).

From this, it could be understood that Berger says that with the industrial society comes secularisation; that secularisation is unavoidable in modern industrialised society and that the so-called crisis of religion has everything to do with the way modern societies are structured. He argues that there is a tendency for the modern industrialised society to go hand in hand with political secularisation – meaning the separation of state and religion, which consequently means that the state no longer enforces religious institutions (130). Berger believes that the outcome of secularisation is "[...] a wide spread collapse of the plausibility of traditional religious definitions of reality." (127). Which means that the secular person is uncertain about religious matters because

secularisation has opened up for multiple religious answers. Pluralism is a by-product of secularisation of the individual. In a pluralistic situation, religion has to be marketed and can no longer be compulsory. Which means that the religion has to know what the consumer wants to be able to market itself correctly. Marketing itself means that the religion possibly has to accommodate or change to be able to keep or get consumers to choose them and keeping the traditions unchanged becomes more difficult (145). Thereby religions have two choices: accommodate and change or refuse and stay traditional. Both choices have consequences for the religion's future (153). However, Berger sees a global tendency of choosing the first option (146). Berger argues that secularisation creates pluralism and that pluralism creates secularisation (155). Moreover, he believes (at this time in 1967) that secularisation will shape the future of religion everywhere because of the evolution of modern society (171).

In 1999, Peter Berger edited and contributed to the book *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. In this book, he disagrees with his own statements regarding secularisation theory, which he wrote in *The Sacred Canopy* from 1967. According to Berger, the relation between modern society and religion is complicated (Berger "Desecularization" 3). The fundamental idea of Berger's secularisation theory from the 1960s is that modernisation necessarily leads to secularisation in society and the individual, as explained above. In his book from 1999, his main argument is that this fundamental idea has simply turned out to be wrong. Berger says: "My point is that the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false. The world today [...] is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever." (2). Berger however, agrees with modernisation having had some secularising effects in some places, but modernisation has also provoked what he calls "powerful movements of counter-secularisation" (3).

Secularisation on the societal level is different from secularisation on the individual level. Some religious institutions might have been affected by secularisation, but that does not mean that the religion is not present in the lives of the individual (3). There are different opinions on modernity and secularisation: some see modernity/secularisation as something religions should adapt to, others see modernity/secularisation as the enemy, and others again see modernity/secularisation as a good thing that can rid religions of the backward, superstitious ways of thinking. Berger gives two options of rejecting modernity. The first he calls a religious revolution, which involves taking over society with a monopoly religion and making it obligatory

for all citizens. This option would be hard to implement in most countries today. Berger calls the second option religious subcultures. Here religious subcultures are established to lessen or keep out influences from the outside society. Religious subcultures are more manageable to implement into society. An example of a successful religious subculture is the Amish subculture in Pennsylvania. (3-4).

Generally, it is conservative and traditionalist movements that are rising and those religious institutions, which have made an effort to adapt to modernity that are declining in the world (6). For example, looking at the U.S., mainstream Protestantism is declining, and Evangelicalism is rising or Islamic fundamentalism's rise in the Middle East. When all of this is said, Berger also says that his original secularisation theory seems to be true concerning Western Europe, where church attendance, personal religion, and religious behaviour seems to be declining; however, there is still a general Christian nature in Europe (9-10). Berger also mentions a secularised subculture among highly educated people within the humanities and social sciences, why these people tend to be more secularised than others, Berger has no explanation for (10). Lastly, Berger says that he does not believe that the World will be less religious than it is now in the future (12).

A critique point of Berger's arguments, in *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, is that he mentions fundamentalism frequently as an example against his original secularisation theory because fundamentalist groups are working against secularisation. However, because something is working against something else, it does not mean that the first something is not there. Meaning just because there are movements in the World, which actively works against secularisation, it does not mean that secularisation is not there, just as working against religion does not make religion instantly disappear.

2.3. Three Levels of Secularisation

According to the sociologist Karel Dobbelaere, secularisation is a product of functional differentiation. In the past, there had been no differentiation between different systems in society. Religion was mixed with and involved in the economic-, political-, judicial- and scientific systems among others. Today, all these systems are autonomous and are entirely religion-free in most instances and especially in secular more countries. Every system has its own rules, which only apply to that exact system, and religious arguments have no relevance in, e.g., politics. Religion is also an autonomous system with its own rules (Andersen and Lüchau 76-77).

These systems are comparable to Niklas Luhmann's system theory. According to Luhmann's theory, the modern society is a functional differentiated system that consists of many subsystems, for instance, politics, education, law, and religion. Every system is organised based on a code that says there are two alternatives in each system. For instance, in the law system, the two alternatives are legal or illegal. Every system has a unique function in society. For example, the education system provides schools and education for the citizens, while the political system makes decisions and rules for the society. For this to work, every system has to be autonomous and work independently without relying on any of the other systems and one system cannot control another system. None of the systems are more important than the others; they are all equally important because of their functions. Therefore, there is no hierarchy between the systems and the modern society is without top or centre. (Hagen 382-384). Concerning secularisation, this means that religion has its own system and code. It also means that some systems can be more or less secular than other systems. System theory can be relevant for secularisation when people think that some systems need to be completely secular, for instance, the political system, while other systems do not have to be secular to the same extent.

Dobbelaere argues that secularisation is different on different levels. He operates with three levels: secularisation of society, secularisation of organisations and secularisation of the individual (Furseth and Repstad 136).

On the societal level, secularisation manifests itself by religious values losing their capability to legitimate society and generally loses their value to citizens and society as a whole (Andersen and Lüchau 77). The thought is that different sectors of society gradually break free from religious control, which results in a secular society. The sciences develop thoughts and strategies, and god loses the place god once had. Universities open departments for the law, medicine, and sciences, where religion and God play absolutely no role. The big institutions, which society is built around, work because of their own logic. There is no place for God and the divine in economy, politics or the law. (Furseth and Repstad 139). Societal secularisation makes religion private and up to the individual. However, in return, religious people tend to react strongly if society, the government, private people or institutions try to intervene or influence their personal and private religion (140).

On the organisation level, the church or other religious institution is forced to accommodate to the differentiating society and only involve itself in religious matters (77). One could say that

religion becomes less religious over time in some instances (Furseth and Repstad 156). For example, myths, traditions, and rituals that once were applicable in religion are now no longer in use. The argument is that when a religion changes by adapting to society, it becomes less powerful and, in this argument, less religious. Peter Berger also argues this point. Berger says that the western secularisation is also a result of the religions themselves. For example, how the Reformation in Europe removed divine powers and beings from everyday life, and Protestantism claimed many of the Catholic beliefs as superstition and sacrilege and got rid of the Catholic miracles, mystic, and magic (156).

The lack of church attendance and decline in church memberships show secularisation on the individual level. The individual does not consider religion outside the church; it is not of value in work, school or family situations (Andersen and. Lúchau 77). Various theorists state that secularisation is first and foremost about religion and society and not the individual. However, secularisation of the individual can occur when the socialising institutions do not teach religion in an indoctrinating way – i.e., the institutions do not do things with a particular religious background, manner or intention (Furseth and Repstad 159). Secularisation of the individual can be hard to define and challenging to say a lot about for several reasons. Firstly, secularisation of the individual depends on what the individual sees as religion and what the theorists/sociologist defines as religion. Secondly, many people see religion as a private matter and are therefore reluctant to share thoughts and beliefs. Thirdly, many people are what one could call cultural religious. The question is, if being cultural religious means that they are religious in the classic sense of religion. The term cultural religion will be discussed at a later point.

2.4. Larry Shiner's Six Types of Secularisation

Larry Shiner has defined six different uses/types of the term secularisation. As this theory section defined secularisation, Shiner's first type of secularisation is *the decline of religion*. Shiner defines it: "The previously accepted symbols, doctrines and institutions lose their prestige and influence. The culmination of secularization would be a religionless society." (Shiner 209). This type can be achieved or be present in society by removing all religious symbols in public and replacing them with something else. Surveying different aspect of human religious actions, e.g., church attendance, church weddings, and baptisms, often document this type of secularisation. The problem is that there are seldom statistics about symbols, doctrines, and institutions, which is what Shiner says are declining in this type of secularisation.

The second type of secularisation is *conformity with this world*, which is defined by the religious group, institution or society becoming less interested in the supernatural and turns its interest to *this world*. The result would be a group, institution or society completely absorbed with the worldly and would become exactly like every other group, society or institution without religion (211).

Shiner's third type is *disengagement of society from religion*. Shiner defines it:

Society separates itself from the religious understanding which has previously informed it in order to constitute itself an autonomous reality and consequently to limit religion to the sphere of private life. The culmination of this kind of secularization would be a religion of a purely inward character, influencing neither institutions nor corporate action, and a society in which religion made no appearance outside the sphere of the religious group. (Shiner 212)

In *disengagement of society from religion*, the society entirely leaves religion behind and becomes autonomous. The result is that religion only exists privately. Religion cannot be found at a place of work or a doctor's office. In this type of secularisation, religion cannot be used in politics as a political argument, and every part of society gets its own norms. The fourth type of secularisation according to Shiner is *the transposition of religious beliefs and institutions*. Knowledge, behaviour, and institutions that once were built on divine power are in this type of secularisation transformed into purely human creations. I.e., the religious group or society (or individual) goes from doing everything by divine power, such as the Christian God or Islam's Allah, to believing that man creates everything, and that the responsibility lies with man as well. The result is a society that has taken over all the functions that once was handled by religion. E.g., responsibilities the church once had are now a matter for the state. (214). Shiner's fifth definition of secularisation is *desacralisation of the world*. Shiner defines it:

The world is gradually deprived of its sacral character as man and nature becomes the object of rational-causal explanation and manipulation. The culmination of secularization would be a completely "rational" world

society in which the phenomenon of the supernatural or even of “mystery” would play no part. (Shiner 215-216)

Desacralisation of the world is in agreement with what Max Weber said about religion and modernity; that the world loses its religious character and becomes rational. A society with this type of secularisation has absolutely no supernatural elements.

The sixth and final type of secularisation is *movement from a sacred to a secular society*. Shiner defines this type as "a general concept of social change" (Shiner 216). The result of this type is "[...] a society in which all decisions are based on rational and utilitarian considerations and there is complete acceptance of change." (216).

In critique of Shiner's six types of secularisation, they are all, to an extent, applicable to many countries' religious/secular situation because they are so inclusive. I.e., that, e.g., Denmark and the U.S. fit into approximately every type to a certain extent – of course, some more than others – which makes both Denmark and the U.S. seem secular. Shiner's types cannot be used to define an entire country as either secular or religious. Instead, they can be used to determine if specific differentiated functional systems in society are secular or not.

2.5. Woodhead and Davie

As with Dobbelaere, Linda Woodhead and Grace Davie see secularisation in three different aspects. Woodhead and Davie define secularisation:

As the process whereby (a) religious institutions decline; (b) religion declines in importance for society; and (c) religion declines in importance to individuals. (Woodhead and Davie 524).

Woodhead and Davie define secularism as an ideology that actively contests religion. Believers of this ideology, secularists, think that religion should be destroyed because religion is a dangerous illusion and should be removed from both public and private spheres. (525). Political secularism does not go as far but confines secularism within politics; that politics and religion should be separated entirely (525). There is a definite difference in the definitions of secularisation/secular and secularism/secularist. For theoretical purposes, it is important not to get

the two confused. One takes an objective and scientific approach to religion and the decline of it, while the other takes a subjective approach. Some secularisation theories, which say that modernisation by default results in decline of religion, show religion as anti-modern and anti-progressive, which could be seen as a negative description of religion. (525). These theories are often called hard secularisation theories today, and have become suspected, by other theorists, to be the product of secularism and not interest in the change or decline of religion. For instance, the theory by Steve Bruce, who still argues that religion and modernity are incompatible, and he sees Europe, especially Britain, as the norm (526-527). Steve Bruce's thoughts on secularisation theory and Peter Berger will later be explored.

Secularisation theory has mainly focused on Europe as the norm; however, in later years theorists have become aware of the possibility that Europe might be the exception instead of the norm. As Peter Berger said "[the world] is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever." (2). In the beginning, secularisation theory looked at what was happening in Europe and concluded that the rest of the world would follow the European tendencies as they inevitably modernise. This, as is now known, did not happen in many countries. When secularisation theory looked at, e.g., the United States of America, it became apparent that there are several versions of modernisation and that Europe is no longer the norm regarding religion.

Linda Woodhead sees several connections between personal secularisation and social secularisation. However, she puts emphasis on social secularisation not automatically leading to personal secularisation. One of the connections Woodhead describes is when a state hostility towards religion, and the fallout is a loss of personal religious commitment (Woodhead 343) (this also results in some of the most secular countries in the world – though it is a forced secularisation). Another and a straightforward connection between social and personal secularisation is the loss of religious influence on education. Religious influence in schools was a straightforward way to maintain personal religion and people's commitment to religion because religion was a significant part of education. Traditions and knowledge are not passed on to new generations when religious influence in education is lost (344). The internet also plays a role in personal secularisation because now the consumer can choose their information, be it religious or not. (344). It is important to note that it can be tough to measure personal religion and personal secularisation. Surveys about church membership and attendance are often used to measure secularisation. The reliability of the statistics that come out of such measurements can be questioned because they say nothing about private

religion or if there is personal religion or secularisation. Church memberships do not say anything about a country's secularisation of the individual, which will be made clear when looking closer at religion in Denmark.

2.6. Steve Bruce

As mentioned, Steve Bruce agrees with Peter Berger's initial theory about secularisation/religion in the modern world and disagrees with Berger's later statements and recantation. Bruce does not believe that Berger should have recanted because Bruce thinks that Berger's secularisation theory fits with the modern world. Bruce even questions why Berger abandoned his own theory. Bruce argues that the balance within Berger had shifted between the two statements. Berger is a sociologist and a Lutheran Christian, and Bruce points to Berger being more Christian in his later statements and less sociologist. In other words, Bruce believes that Berger's personal religion is the reason (or part of the reason) for the recantation (Bruce 87). Bruce also sees it as problematic that Berger has published his articles for popular journals (some of a religious nature) instead of more academic journals or books, which has affected the argumentation and language in Berger's writing and reasoning for his recantation. Again, arguing the possibility of Berger having become more religious. (89). Bruce's secularisation theory can be defined as a 'hard' secularisation theory.

One of the reasons for Berger to recant was the growth of conservative religion in the United States of America. Bruce's argument against this is that the increase of the population in the U.S. means an increase in religion as well. Bruce also argues that one should compare secularisation based on urbanisation and modernity when the comparing countries are equally urban and modern. Bruce's point is that the U.S. did not reach the same degree of urbanisation and modernity at the same time as some European countries did; therefore the U.S. is not as secular as some European countries. Bruce believes that the U.S. will become just as secular in time. (89). Bruce is not satisfied with Berger's agreement and understanding of Grace Davie's thesis, which says a decline in religious participation (e.g., church-going) does not necessarily have to be understood as a decline in religious interest as well (Bruce 91). Davie found, during her work that people gather in groups privately instead of gathering at churches. Therefore, the numbers are declining regarding religious institutions, but the religious interest has moved to a different location. Bruce seems to be questioning the trust, one can have in people, when they self-characterise as religious based on their

criteria of religion and being religious instead of the mainstream definitions of religion and being religious. (91).

Berger's main argument for his recantation is: "[the world] is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever." (Berger, "Desecularization" 2). Bruce agrees with Berger, or at least with the first half of the statement. Bruce argues: "that religion, when combined with ethnicity, remains a far more potent force than social class. One only has to consider [...] the rise of Islamic fundamentalism to recognize that religion is very important." (Bruce 19). Bruce is more reluctant concerning places being more religious than previously. Bruce argues that people or places are reforming regarding religion, which does not mean that the people or places are more religious but that they are religiously different. Bruce also says that some places can seem more religious because secularist repression has come to its end and religion is, therefore, more visible. However, he also strongly argues that there has been no religious comeback in countries such as Britain or Denmark. (92).

Bruce understands Berger's secularisation thesis as such:

[...] the secularization thesis is not a claim that the passage of time undermines religion. Rather, it is a number of related claims about the impact of certain social changes in certain circumstances. (Bruce 92).
 [...] we must regard the secularization thesis as being an account of the past of Western Europe (and its settler society offshoots) that is only generalizable to other settings *to the extent that the specific elements are reproduced in those settings*. (Bruce 94)

Bruce believes that modernity by default causes secularisation if – and only if – the right circumstances are present. His theory is only applicable to a first world country. So, his reasoning for the U.S. not disproving Berger's original thoughts is that the right circumstances are not yet present in the U.S., and countries such as England, Denmark and Sweden prove that modernity causes a decline in religion in agreement with the 1960s' Berger. All of this makes Bruce's secularisation theory extremely limited and not very applicable.

2.7. Rational Choice Theory (RCT)

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) is an alternative perspective on the decline of religion. The theory began in the USA in the 1980s (Woodhead and David 531). RCT theorists claim that they can explain the prominence of religion in the U.S. and the decline of religion in Europe. In Europe, there has in many countries mainly been a monopoly on religion; mostly a form of Christianity, which has resulted in little choice. In other words, in countries such as Denmark, where there is a national church, which is not separated from the state by law, the population has little choice between religions. Therefore, a large part of the population does not participate in religious activities (e.g., attending church) or chooses no religion at all. In the United States of America, state and religion are separated by law, which means that there is a large market for different religions, which potentially means that every American can find a religion that suits them. Thereby, there is a more significant religious involvement in the U.S. and less decline of religion. Woodhead and Davie explain that basis of RCT:

The theory postulated that individuals have a natural need for religion, and will make religious choices in a 'rational' way, so as to maximize their gains and minimize their losses, where there is an abundant supply of religious choices [e.g. The U.S.] – a rich religious marketplace – individuals will be more able to make satisfying choices which meet their needs, than where there is little choice [e.g. Denmark]. (Woodhead and Davie 532).

Rational Choice Theory is a religious market theory comparable to economic market theories. RCT sees religion as a commodity, where consumers choose which religion they want and to what extent they want it, or if they want religion at all. As the economy, religion changes over time and people can choose a different religion and people's involvement, and extent of participation in a particular religion also changes over time. The religious market is a consumer's market because the consumer's freedom to choose puts constraints on the "creators of religion". So, as in the business world, it is about having what the consumers want. A religion can grow if it at least is as attractive a commodity as another religion – if it is not, it loses consumers. (Iannaccone 158). In some cases, this forces religious institutions, such as a church, to renew itself to make itself more attractive to members and non-the less prospective members.

Somewhere between religious market theory and a pure monopoly, where a particular religion is the only choice there is, is what Innaccone calls *public religion*. In countries with *public religion* there is a state-run religion, which is financed fully or partly through public taxes and structured by the government. Along with the state-run religion, other private religious options are available and tolerated by the state. Though there can be requirements to be met by a private religion for it to be evaluated and licensed as an official religion. The citizens in *public religion* nations are free to choose either the state-run religion, private religions, or no religion at all, without ramifications of any kind (Innaccone 160). It is hypothesised that members of public state-run religions know less about their religion than the members of private religious options; that the wages are higher for the state-run clergy than the private clergy; that the public religious institutions, in simple terms, become lazy in lack of competition and the quality of their product becomes subpar; that the government influences public religion to benefit politicians, which in turn reduces public participation in religion; that public religion narrows the religious options in a nation; that public religion can be indoctrinating both religiously and politically; and lastly that in a situation where the state abandons the public religion, many citizens will not choose differently, because people have a tendency to choose what generations before them have chosen. (Innaccone 161-163).

Rational Choice theory postulates that religious a monopoly makes people less religious and religious competition makes people more religious. RCT argues that religion is a choice between ready-made religious packages that a consumer can change between at any time, but a consumer cannot be a member of several religious packages at the same time. RCT also claims that people act rationally and chooses what makes the most sense for them regarding religion at a specific time and place and changes religion when it does not suit the time, situation or place anymore. RCT is universal and can according, to RCT theorists, explain religion in any country at any time. RCT and secularisation theory share the same purpose: to find out why some nations are more religious than others. However, RCT counters secularisation theory by the factors it looks at to analyse religion and fulfil its purpose.

2.8. Individualisation theory (IT)

As RCT, Individualisation Theory (IT) is another possible explanation for religion's decline. Contrasting secularisation theory, which expects society to become irreligious, IT expects religion to become individual – i.e., that religion becomes up to the individual and a personal matter. (Andersen and Lüchau 78). For religion to become individualised loss of tradition has to happen. Loss of tradition happens when new generations are not taught religion in an indoctrinating way, and religious traditions are not passed on from generation to generation. Another factor of loss of religious tradition is the individual use of religious beliefs and actions without concern for religious authority (78-79). The result is completely personal religious freedom. There is, of course, the option to choose no religion at all as religion becomes individualised, however, IT argues that as religion becomes individualised the modern individual will more often choose religion to create meaning in life and religion would have a renewed meaning for the individual (79). The individual religion will not be like the religion in a tradition-bound society. Religious freedom and the loss of religious authority (e.g., the church or family members) will make individuals personalise religion and choose the religion they like. Religion will tend to become more spiritual, new age and eclectic. A person can, for instance, choose to believe in the Christian God, karma, reincarnation and the Jewish disbelief in the notion of Hell at the same time. All these aspects are in traditional religious beliefs impossible to believe in at the same time; however, with the loss of religious authority, no one is there to say anything against it. Everybody could essentially have their own religion, which is completely individualised to one person. There will be a tendency to choose positive aspects such as self-evolvement, forgiveness, and happiness and disregard aspects as sin, punishment, and damnation in an individualised religion (80). Secularisation theory expects religion to decline when religious authority is lost, but as explained individualisation theory expects the exact opposite to happen.

As Rational Choice Theory and secularisation theory, Individualisation Theory's purpose is to explain religion's decline in the world. IT's explanation for the decline of religion in society is that religion disappears from society but moves into the individual. A society will appear secular because religion has become individual and therefore harder to detect. RCT and secularisation theory look at society with a traditional view of religion and IT has to change its view on religion to be valid and for the individualised religions to be considered religions.

2.9. This Master's Thesis view on Secularisation Theory

After having explored what many of the theorists and sociologists say about secularisation theory, it is appropriate to determine what this thesis' view on secularisation theory is.

Every definition of secularisation is more or less the same, which is also why secularisation in this thesis is understood as the decline of religion. A country, society or system can be more or less secular, i.e., religion can have a large, small or no role at all in different situations. Secularisation is, in this thesis, understood as a process as Woodhead and Davie also describe secularisation. For a country, society, system or anything else to be secular the process has to be complete.

Following both Woodhead, Davie, and Dobbelaere, this thesis will vehemently argue that secularisation happens on different levels: the societal, institutional and individual. This thesis believes that secularisation of the individual is extremely hard to say anything representative or qualitative about. This difficulty is why secularisation of the individual in Denmark and the U.S., in general, will not be a significant focus. The belief is that church-going or other institutional religious activity cannot thoroughly explain secularisation of the individual – it is just as, if not more necessary to understand and examine what a person believes in private and if there is religious activity outside of the church. This is too extensive to investigate in this master's thesis as it would have to involve extensive surveys in Denmark and in the U.S. to be able to say anything qualitative on the matter.

In combination with different levels of secularisation, it is appropriate to consider Luhmann's differentiating functional system theory and different systems of society as more or less religious or secular; especially when the focus of the analysis will be on the political system.

Berger's first statement is understandable, but this thesis does not agree with it or Steve Bruce's theory of in modernity by default causing a decline in religion. Bruce's theory is merely too narrow and as mentioned it excludes the U.S. and therefore the theory cannot be applied in a comparison of secularisation/religion in Denmark and the U.S. Instead this thesis profoundly agrees with Berger's statement from 1999 with few expectations. The U.S. seems as religious as ever or perhaps even more so than ever, and Denmark (Western European countries) seem less religious. This will be explored and discussed to greater length.

There will be a greater focus on Rational Choice Theory and how it can explain the differences in religion/secularisation in Denmark and the U.S. and how each country's constitution seems to have had an influence on the prominence of religion in the given country.

3. The Religious Landscapes of Denmark and the United States

Religion in Denmark and the U.S. are close to opposites today. Both countries have rich religious histories, however, the countries have evolved differently concerning religion. To be able to understand religion and secularisation in both countries, and account for the differences between the two countries, it is necessary to determine how the religious landscape is in each country. This section will come across constitutional stipulations, statistics, immigration, history and societal factors to explain religion in each country.

3.1. Denmark

Denmark is often mentioned as one of the secular countries in the World and Denmark has even been called a country without God. In Denmark it is harder to find religion than in other countries, but religion is there. Denmark has a rich religious history but the country values it differently than many other nations.

3.1.1. The Constitution

The Danish Constitution is the basis for the religious landscape in Denmark. The Constitution states, in chapter one, paragraph four that there is an official church of Denmark and that the government supports this church.

§4 Den evangelisk-lutherske kirke er den danske folkekirke og understøttes som sådan af staten. (Danmarks Riges Grundlov, 1953)

The law says that the official religion of Denmark is Christianity and specifically Evangelical-Lutheran Christianity. The phrase "understøttes som sådan af staten" makes it unclear how the government supports the church, and if the government fully supports the church in all concerns. The constitution does not elaborate on this in other chapters, so it can be interpreted in different ways what this exactly means. The phrasing can make it sound like the government does not have to support the church in all aspects.

The Constitution says, in chapter two, paragraph six that the monarch of Denmark has to be a member of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Denmark (§6 "Kongen skal høre til den Evangelisk-Lutherske kirke." (Danmarks Riges Grundlov, 1953)).

Chapter seven of the Constitution goes further into religion in Denmark.

§66 Folkekirkens forfatning ordnes ved lov.

§ 67 Borgerne har ret til at forene sig i samfund for at dyrke Gud på den måde, der stemmer med deres overbevisning, dog at intet læres eller foretages, som strider mod sædeligheden eller den offentlige orden.

§ 68 Ingen er pligtig at yde personlige bidrag til nogen anden gudsyndelse end den, som er hans egen.

§ 69 De fra folkekirken afvigende trossamfunds forhold ordnes nærmere ved lov.

§ 70 Ingen kan på grund af sin trosbekendelse eller afstamning berøves adgang til den fulde nydelse af borgerlige og politiske rettigheder eller unddrage sig opfyldelsen af nogen almindelig borgerpligt.

(Danmarks Riges Grundlov, 1953)

These paragraphs make it clear that, even though, it in paragraph four, was said that the Evangelical- Lutheran church is the National Church of Denmark, it does not mean that every Danish citizen has to support this church financially. If one's personal beliefs do not adhere to the National Church's beliefs, one is not obligated to support the church in any way or form. The lack of support for the church cannot lessen one's political rights and one's rights as a citizen of Denmark. However, it cannot be used to avoid one's civic duties either. As well as it cannot be used as means for detaining a person, as it is stated in chapter eight paragraph seventy-one section one:

§ 71 *Stk. 1.* Den personlige frihed er ukrænkelig. Ingen dansk borger kan på grund af sin politiske eller religiøse overbevisning eller sin afstamning underkastes nogen form for frihedsberøvelse.

(Danmarks Riges Grundlov, 1953)

A member of the National Church has to pay taxes to the church as a membership fee. The taxes are calculated based on individual income. On average, a member of the church pays 0,83% of their taxable income to the church. However, there is a wide range; in 2017, the church tax was 0,41 % in the municipality of Gentofte, but 1,30% in municipality of Læsø. The percentage depends on the number of members and churches in a municipality. So, in a municipality with few members and many churches the tax is high, and in a municipality with many members and few churches the tax is low.

Based on the Danish Constitution's fourth paragraph, the Danish government financially supports the National Church. The exact amount of money given to the church is decided each year in the Finance Bill. Some argue that the financial support from the government is in disagreement with §68 of the Constitution; because the government supports the church financially, the citizens do the same indirectly and involuntarily. To this, the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs says that the money that the government gives to the church cannot be seen as a personal contribution from the country's taxpayers, neither can all the other things that the government supports financially. In 2015 the church of Denmark received 8,321 billion DKKR; the majority came from local tax and the government contributed 750 million DKKR.

3.1.2. Statistics on the National Church of Denmark

According to Statistics Denmark, there are 4,353,507 members of the Danish National Church and 5,781,190 citizens in Denmark as of January 1st, 2018. This statistic means that 75.3% of the Danish population are members of the National Church. That leaves only 1,428,683 or 24.7% that are not members of the National Church and they either belong to a different church, religion or no religion at all. Looking at these numbers, Denmark does not seem secular at all. However, there is a small decline in memberships in the National Church. In 2017, 75.9% were members of the National Church, and in 2016 it was 76.9%. According to the Danish Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs, which has statistics on the National Church memberships going back to 1990, there has been a small decline every year since 1990. From 1990 to 2018 there has been a decline from 89.3% to 75.3%, which is a 14% decline in membership over 28 years. The most significant decline percentage was between 2016 and 2017 with a 1% decline. The Danish Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs explains the decline in memberships with members dying and not getting as many new members. Almost 90% of the people who die are members of the church. While only 62% of new-born babies get baptised in the church (and thereby becoming members) and therefore the church is

losing members and not getting the same number of new members, and there is a decline in memberships.

Peter Lüchau agrees with the Danish Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs on this, (Lüchau 324), however, Lüchau also looks at the combination of citizens in Denmark to explain the decline in memberships in relation to the population. The combination of citizens in Denmark has changed over the last decades, with a more substantial part of the citizens being immigrants or descendants of immigrants. The National Church of Denmark is confined within Denmark and is not, for instance, like the Roman Catholic Church all over the world. Therefore, the immigrants and their descendants cannot be expected to become members or have their children baptised within the church (313). Which means that it is the ethnic Danish citizens that are leaving the church since the immigrants cannot leave something they are not a part of in the first place.

The statistics show that activity in the church has fluctuated between 2006 and 2017. In 2006, 54,707 were baptised in the National Church; in 2017 that number had declined to 40,877. There had been a steady decline in baptism in the National Church until 2015 where the number was at its lowest with 39,930; however, it climbed to 41,880 in 2016 and then declined again in 2017. In 2006, there were 13,158 weddings performed by a pastor of the church in the National Church. The number was 9,214 in 2017. The number of weddings has fluctuated between 2006 and 2017 but was at its lowest with 8,529 in 2013. In 2006, the Danish Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs registered 53,224 deaths in Denmark and 27,253 funerals in the National Church performed by a pastor of the church and 4,801 funerals without clerical assistance. In 2017 the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs registered 53,414 deaths and 22,173 funerals performed by a pastor of the National Church in a National Church and the number of funerals without clerical assistance climbed to 7,831. Between 2006 and 2017, the number of funerals conducted by a pastor of the church in a National Church has steadily declined with few exceptions and the non-clerical funerals have steadily increased in the same years. (Danmarks Statistik).

Lüchau explains the decline in church activity with individualised religiosity. The church members still use the church for weddings, baptisms and so on as the statistics show. However, Danes no longer feel obligated to have these ceremonies in the church because the National Church is no longer seen as an authority (316). While most church activities have declined in the last years, the Christmas church services are always well visited. Again, this has to do with individualised religion according to Lüchau. People, who attend a typical Sunday service, attend because of the

Christian message a religious authority gives, while at Christmas people attend service as a family tradition. The focus is on family and not the Christian message the priest is giving (315). A Danish man, who was interviewed for the book *I Hjertet af Danmark*, said: "Vi var der til julegudstjeneste, for vi skulle sådan hygge os. Det var hyggen vi gik efter." (Gundelach et al. 144) about his attendance at a Christmas service with his grandchildren.

3.1.3. The Danish National Church

The Danish name for the National Church, Folkekirke, is an implied distancing to the notion of a state church. There is a democracy within the National Church; there is not one leader of all of the National Churches in Denmark, and many things are decided locally, but it is still institutionally controlled by the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs (Nielsen 68). A cornerstone of the National Church is the connection to the state, which is possibly also the surviving factor. The National Church is often considered commodious because it successfully accommodates two minority Christian denominations – Indre Mission and Grundtvigianere. These two denominations are part of the National Church even though they have a different interpretation of Evangelical Lutheran Christianity. There is, for instance, a substantial difference in how Indre Mission and the National Church believe a Christian should live. Along with these two strongly religious branches, there are members of the National Church, who can be considered cultural Christians – i.e., less active members, who might attend a wedding or a baptism of a friend or family member or get married in a church themselves or baptise their children, but they cannot be found in the church on any given Sunday. A cultural Christian is a member of the church because their parents decided to baptise them, and they see their membership as a traditional and cultural Danish thing to have. Cultural religion is an aspect of Danish civil religion, which will be discussed at later in this thesis.

Marie Vejrup Nielsen believes that there is tension within the National Church concerning what Meredith McGuire calls official and unofficial religion. Official religion is characterised by being institutional, organisational with standardised worldview, rituals, and doctrines (69). Unofficial religion is unorganised, inconsistent and is non-the less not recognised as a religion by official religion (69). According to Vejrup Nilsen, the pattern in the memberships of the National Church is that of unofficial religion. Many people are members of the National Church without sharing some of the fundamental beliefs of the church and they instead choose their own combination of beliefs. Vejrup Nielsen claims this as unofficial religion within the official religion

(70). At the same time as members are choosing their combinations, they have a certain expectation to what the priests of the National Church should believe. The priest is seen as the representation of the National Church and with that comes a particular set of beliefs. The members want the priest to believe fully and literally in the Bible and the supernatural; even though the members themselves do not necessarily believe in it (70). There is a conflict between, what the priest believes in, what the priest thinks a priest is and what the members of the church think a priest should believe in and be. An example of this conflict is the Grosbøll conflict from 2003.

The Grosbøll conflict was a case where a Danish priest, Grosbøll, was quoted in *Weekendavisen*; Grosbøll said that he did not believe in God as the creator and upholder of everything, nor the supernatural aspects described in the New Testament. Moreover, Grosbøll criticised believers of this when he said that child's faith should not be converted into adulthood (Stengaard). The reactions from many different people and institutions in the media were what created this case. The church supported Grosbøll throughout the situation, and it did not question his ability to be a priest. The questions came mainly from random members of the National Church, who could not understand how a priest, without belief in God, could be allowed to be a priest and represent Christianity and the National Church. The reality is that Grosbøll's beliefs are a reflection of what theology is at universities in Denmark (Nielsen 73) and fundamentally also what a large part of the members of the National Church believes. This case made it clear that it should be theology that should be the ruler in cases like this, and not what the members believe a priest should be (73). The reactions to Grosbøll's statements are an example of, how the Danes have strong opinions on how the National Church should be represented represented when something or someone represents it differently, but otherwise, they do not show great interest.

3.1.4. Christianity in Denmark

Historically, Christianity has been enforced in a "top-down" or from above manner in Denmark. In a top-down enforcement, religion is forced upon the citizens by leaders of society – in Denmark's case originally by the King and by the law (the Constitution). In a top-down enforcement of religion it is hard to say how profoundly rooted religion becomes in the individual (Zuckerman 170). It is possible that several Danes were, at this time, devoted Christians in the public eye, because it was expected, but were not religious privately, while others were devoted Christians both in public and in the home.

Vast influxes of immigrants have only occurred in recent decades. Before substantial immigration to Denmark, Denmark was a very homogeneous country, and Christianity had become deeply rooted in the country's history and culture. Sociologists have often connected immigration with a strong sense of or need for religion and therefore an increase in religiosity (170). In Denmark, immigration has meant that the country and its citizens have in the later decades been exposed to different religions than the Evangelical Lutheran Christianity.

The state of Christianity, in Denmark today, is shaped by Danes finding unity and a sense of belonging just by being Danish. For instance, meeting a Dane out in the World gives an instant connection with that person. There has been no need to find unity or a sense of belonging by turning to religion and meeting people at a church. Zuckerman interviewed the Danish bishop Jan Lindhart, who said:

The Danes don't have to go to church on Sundays because they can go do their Danishness every day of the week. (171)

Jan Lindhart depicts the notion of belonging without religion well, and how religion is not a part of being Danish is clear in this quote. One can wonder how many Danes would use the word Christian or religious in a characterisation of being Danish. Imaginable, eating types of food, appearance, and the word *hygge* would appear well before any mention of religion. According to Peter Lüchau, the Danes are members of the National Church to have the opportunity to partake in religious ceremonies; to be able to protect the church as a cultural heritage; to give people the opportunity to practice Christianity; to continue a family tradition; or because they themselves are Christians. In sixth place is a national motive for the Danes being members of the National Church. (Lüchau 317).

The relationship between the National Church and the state has shaped religion in Denmark. As mentioned previously, the state and the tax-paying members of the church support the National Church financially, which makes aggressive marketing of the church to get more members irrelevant. However, there has still been attempts to get more people into the church by offering child-friendly sermons, spaghetti sermons, and even yoga and rock concerts in churches around the country. These new types of sermons might have been an attempt to create a different image of the National Church, because some people see the church as old-fashioned and even dull. Old-fashioned and dull are rarely positive adjectives to describe something and especially not for an institution that wants to stay relevant in society. If the attempt worked or not is hard to say; the

public and people within the church have reacted both positively and negatively. An argument is that by doing this the church is accommodating to society and thereby losing tradition and it could also be argued that it is taking steps towards secularity by inviting these new aspects into the church.

Linda Woodhead speaks about the displacement of theology in Christianity in the World. With displacement of theology, Woodhead refers to the process where theology has lost its influence and role in society and culture; and how theology has changed within itself concerning the understanding of what Christianity is and what it means to be Christian today. Theology has changed from being an elitist power resource to becoming more and more marginalised in society (361). The rise of science, the humanities, social sciences, and non-the less when religious studies became an independent field incorporating religion with anthropology, sociology, psychology, and history have challenged theology (365). From approximately the middle of the 20th century until today, traditional theology has been challenged by political movements that have given voices to people that until that point did not have voices. Christianity and theology have changed because of, what has been happening in society – e.g., political or feminist theology. (Nielsen 65). In the heyday of theology, it was extremely prestigious to study theology or have a theological degree. The institutional space theology has in society shows that theology is being marginalised. Using Denmark as an example the displacement is evident. In Denmark, it is only possible to study theology at two universities, The University of Copenhagen and The University of Aarhus (361). To become a priest in the National Church it is necessary to have a master's degree in theology. Following a five-year university degree from either of the two universities, where the focus is on classical languages (e.g., Latin and Greek), biblical texts and the history of Christianity, a seventeen-week course at a pastoral school is necessary. At the pastoral school the introduction to the practical work as a priest is given (Nielsen 66). Comparing the five years at a university and the seventeen weeks course, it is clear that theoretical, theological knowledge is valued more than practical skills. The changes that have happened within the National Church concerning new offers of yoga, spaghetti services, and rock concerts show that there has been a shift from power from above to power from below following Woodhead's theory. The power shift is related to the marginalising of theology. When Woodhead speaks about power from above, she refers to power from the elite within the church, i.e., priests, bishops, church leaders – people with a theological background. Moreover, when Woodhead speaks about power from below, she refers to the

everyday person – the ordinary Christian. With power from above the focus is on traditional Evangelical Lutheran Christianity in the National Church, and with power from below the focus shifts to less traditional and more spiritual and charismatic Christianity, where evolving spiritually as a person is a greater focus than a strict form of Christianity (67). Theology has taken a step back when yoga and rock concerts were invited into the church space and the power shifted from above to from below.

Peter Lüchau describes the power shift well:

Folkekirken er et stykke hen ad vejen en tom ramme, som danskerne selv fylder med deres individualiserede religiøsitet af selvskabte traditioner. Folkekirken har et ”budskab” (for den enkelte), som den enkelte selv medbringer. Det er snarere ritualer, som kirken og kirkegængerne deler, men igen er tolkningen af ritualets indhold og betydning individuel. Hvad folkekirken selv mener at have af budskaber og tolkninger af sine ritualer, bliver dermed gjort mindre vigtige for flertallet af danskernes forhold til folkekirken. (Lüchau 315).

If the National Church was a reliable authority and theology was less marginalised in society, high religious individuality would not be a possibility within the National Church. According to Lüchau, the Danes' relationship with the National Church is characterised by choices within and dialog with the National Church (316). Members individualise religion within the church by choosing what they like and ignoring the rituals and theology that they do not like; they do not have to disregard the entire church, but in the end, they in some way have to find acceptance for priests like Grosbøll and other disagreements there might be.

Accommodating to the consumer is an example of power from below changing the National Church. As has been mentioned previously, the church now offers different types of sermons and other activities in the church, and new types of priests have emerged, for example street priests, night church priests and pilgrims priests (75). The church has also modified aspects of the traditions; for instance by establishing a unique baptism service. Baptisms are traditionally a part of the typical Sunday morning service, but by doing a unique service just for baptisms, the church is

accommodating to the cultural members of the church (76). These new activities in the church are not offered based on theology but based on modern society and are offered to get more people to use the church actively.

3.1.5. Phil Zuckerman – Denmark: a society without God

The American Sociologist Phil Zuckerman has claimed Denmark as a society without God. In his book, *Society without God: What the Least Religious Nations Can Tell Us about Religion*, Zuckerman describes and analyses the religion he met during his time living in Denmark. The cornerstone of his book is interviews with Danes about their personal religion or lack of personal religion. One of Zuckerman's main points and what surprised him is that Denmark, as the secular country he sees it as, is "an impressive model of health" and is "not bastions of depravity and anarchy" (17). Perhaps Zuckerman expected something else to be the reality in a society that seems to be secular; maybe that there would be more chaos in society because of the lack of religion. Zuckerman does not say that secularity goes hand in hand with a healthy society or that secularisation is always positive. Nor does he claim that religion is always dangerous or bad. He does not claim the opposite either – that secularity is always dangerous and religion always good. Zuckerman comes from a country (the U.S.) where religion is positive in many instances because it is often religious institutions that run community centres, day-cares, youth programs, and so on (17). Whereas in Denmark these things are often state-funded and run.

Zuckerman defines different degrees of personal secularisation and personal religiosity based on his experiences in Denmark. The first degree he calls Reluctance/Resistance, which is what he most often came across. He found people reluctant/resistant to talk to him about religion, and if they spoke about religion it would be sparse (98). Zuckerman argues that religion has become a non-topic in Denmark. He believes this will result in secularisation (99). Which can make sense: if no one openly speaks about religion, personal or otherwise, the topic of religion most likely will disappear from society. However, this does not mean that there will be personal/individual secularisation. Zuckerman gives two other reasons for the reluctance/resistance he met in Denmark. The first is the language barrier between his English and his subjects' Danish (suggesting if he spoke Danish himself people might be more open to speaking with him about religion). The second is religion as a private matter in Danish culture, so even if a person is deeply religious and able to

express it in English that person might not want to talk to Zuckerman about it (99). Zuckerman interviewed a pastor who said:

In Denmark, the word "God" is one of the most embarrassing words you can say. You would rather go naked through the city than talk about God. (100).

Another person said:

Danes are very open. You can talk about sexuality and you can talk about a lot of problems. But when it comes to what you believe, we just never talk about it. Even with very good friends, it's very seldom you share those things. That's a bit funny, I think, but I think it is – it is very private. (101).

These two statements exemplify religion as a private matter well, and also why it can be tough to say anything representative about personal/individual religion or secularity in Denmark.

After Zuckerman spent a year investigating the Danes' relationship with religion, he began to question if religion is a private matter to Danes or a non-issue. Most often he was met by a disinterest in his interviews about religion (102).

Zuckerman's second degree of secularisation is called Benign Indifference. Approximately half of Zuckerman's subjects were benign indifferent towards religion. People in this category are non-religious, but not anti-religious, they have a slightly positive stance towards religion, they think that churches are beautiful, that the Bible has sweet stories about moral, that Jesus did not walk on water or heal the dead, but he was probably a nice guy, and that people can believe in God if they want to (104-105). A person he interviewed expressed: "I'm not repulsed by religion as such. It just doesn't have any meaning to me." (105). Zuckerman says: "This benign indifference is a fascinating incarnation of secularity, and is arguably only possible – let alone conceivable – in a society where religion is truly marginal and relatively powerless.". The result of benign indifference towards religion is religion becoming insignificant in society or as Zuckerman puts it "merely quaint" (106). One could say that religion does not play a significant role in the Danish public society. Taking a

walk around the city centre of Aalborg one can pass by several churches, mostly National Churches, but few other Christian churches. The church buildings are architecturally different from the other buildings in the city, but the thoughts people have about the buildings are not always different from their thought about other buildings. Some people are used to passing by the church and therefore do not think more of it, other people see a church but do not think about what the building's purpose is. Also, of course, some see a religious building as a representation of faith in general or their own faith. Just like the Christian cross is used in many different situations, without people thinking about what the underlying meaning is. The cross is for instance on the first page of a Danish passport. The use of the cross and the historical churches all around Denmark not only represent Christianity but Danish history, and many who are benign indifferent towards religion would put more enfaces on history than religion.

Zuckerman's last degree of secularity is Utter Obliviousness, which he did not stumble upon often, but once in a while, a person would say that he/she did not know if he/she believed in God or not and that he/she had not thought about it before (106-107). Which presumably would also only be possible in a society that is at least some degree of secular, and where religion is insignificant in society; because if people were met by religion more actively in society, they would be forced to find out what their thoughts on religion are. Zuckerman compares this to religion in the U.S, and he argues that everybody would be able to talk to him about religion in some way and know what his or her thoughts are on the matter. Zuckerman also argues that the non-religious secular people in the U.S. can tend to, unlike the benign indifferent or reluctance/resistant Danes, to be anti-religion (105).

After finding Denmark secular, the big question on Zuckerman's mind is why Denmark is this way. Zuckerman gives three possible explanations to answer this difficult question. Firstly, the notion of lazy monopolies – also known as Rational Choice Theory, which the theory section explains. Denmark fits rather nicely into RCT or Lazy Monopoly. There is one tax and state-funded church in Denmark, and the majority of the Danish citizens are paying members of the church. Regardless of how active the members are and how many people are attending service on Sundays, the church gets its money and the pastor his/her pay check. This combined with the National Church being close to the only religious option in Denmark (there are of course other religious options in Denmark. Among others are Pentecostal, Indre Mission, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Baptist along with Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist options) the National Church has become lazy

concerning marketing itself (112-113). As RCT says that because the options are few, many people choose nothing, or in Denmark, the majority chooses the National Church but perhaps not out of clear religious reasons, but more out of historical, cultural and traditional reasons.

The next possible explanation is the notion of Secure Societies, which Zuckerman explains:

[...] when the bulk of people in a given society experience a low degree of security, they tend to be more religious. Conversely, when the bulk of people in a given society experience a high degree of security, they tend to be less religious. [...] when a given society is riddled with poverty, disease, and disorder, we can say that the bulk of its people live relatively insecure lives – and they will tend to be more religious. And conversely, if a society has very little poverty, disease, and disorder, we can say that the bulk of its people live relatively secure lives – and they will tend to be less religious. (113).

Again, the theory of high security and low religion fits what Zuckerman found in Denmark. In the past, Denmark has been a less secure place with more disease, higher poverty and higher levels of religion, but as time has progressed, so has the security in Denmark and religion has declined. Zuckerman anecdotally exemplifies in his book that it took 31 days before he experienced any police presence (6). Religion is often connected with hard times. There are many examples of people becoming religious in times of personal crisis – being it a disease, financial hardship or other difficulties. In a society like Denmark, where healthcare and education are free and financial help in different ways, it could take a long time for a person to turn to religion to save them.

Zuckerman's third explanation of why Denmark is a very secular country, is women working outside the home. Before the 1960s the vast majority of Danish women worked in the home, and in the later decades, the majority of women have worked outside the home. Statically women have always been more religious than men, so when women started working outside the home, their focus shifted off of religion. Along with the shift of women's religious their men and children's focus shift as well. Women working outside the home cannot be the sole explanation for Denmark's secularity, but it moved Denmark in a more secular direction. (115-116). So, a factor of the Danish secularity is not having the time for religion any more or reprioritising as lives became busier.

Zuckerman sees the above three explanations combined as the most plausible reason for Denmark's secularity. (116). However, he gives three other factors that might have played a part. Firstly, Denmark has never really been oppressed or dominated by another nation or culture; therefore, there has not been a strong need for a cultural defence, which would often be in the form of religion. There has been no need for people to find comfort in religion in Denmark as there has been in other countries. Secondly, Denmark is a highly educated country, and it has been argued countlessly that highly educated people tend to be less religious. In schools, religion is taught objectively, be it Christianity, Islam or another of the World's religion, and science is thought as the answer to human existence instead of God being the creator of everything. Even though the class in public schools are called Christianity instead of Religion, and there is automatically set time aside in the seventh grade for separate Christianity classes by a priest in connection with the confirmation, religion is taught objectively. Thirdly, Denmark's most prominent political party, the Social Democrats, are in some ways anti-religious and at least anti-clerical and have tried to lessen religion's influence in society and their many supporters give them influence in society (117-120).

Overall, Zuckerman found the Danes disinterested, indifferent and with a lack of thought regarding religion and the reasons are a combination of a lazy religious monopoly, a secure society, consisting of highly educated citizens and working women.

3.2. The United States of America

One does not have to look long or hard at the United States to find religion and an immense amount of it. Religion and especially the many types of religion seem infinite in the U.S. From fundamentalist Mormons in Utah, to the Amish in Pennsylvania and the Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn, New York, to New Age spirituality in California, one could plausibly find most religions of the World somewhere in the U.S. The choices are many and Americans – "God's own people", are known for their religiosity in the rest of the World.

3.2.1. The law

The Constitution of the United States says very little about religion. In the amendments to the Constitution in the Bill of Rights' first article religion is mentioned

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech,

or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. (The Bill of Rights, 1791)

The Establishment Clause ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion") separates state and religion when it says that there can be no law favouring one religion. In 1802 Thomas Jefferson said that in a letter he wrote to the Danbury Baptists saying just that:

Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church & State. (Thomas Jefferson, 1802)

The second part to the first amendment regarding religion ("Congress shall make no law [...] or prohibiting the free exercise thereof") says that there can be no law restricting people's use of religion. This has, based on the court case Reynolds vs. The United States, later been interpreted as people's religious opinions and beliefs and not actions. In Reynolds vs. The United States, a member of the Church of Jesus Christs of Latter Day Saints¹ was convicted of polygamy. Reynolds argued that his religion required him to have more than one wife and that the accusation against him was unconstitutional and broke his first amendment rights to free exercise of religion. The Supreme Court ruled:

Congress cannot pass a law for the government of the Territories which shall prohibit the free exercise of religion. The first amendment to the Constitution expressly forbids such legislation... Congress was deprived of all legislative power over mere opinion, but was left free to reach

¹ A Mormon denomination

actions which were in violation of social duties or subversive of good order. (Reynolds vs. The United States, 1878)

At this time marriage was seen as a social duty that society was built on, and the court therefore found polygamy in violation of the law regardless of the free exercise of religion.

The first amendment also gives people the right to assemble peacefully, which means that people are allowed to assemble religiously and for instance build a church or a religious congregation; as long as it is done peacefully, and other laws are abided.

If there is ever doubt, conflict or controversy regarding what the Constitution says, it is the court system in America, especially the Supreme Court that decides how the Constitution is interpreted in a particular case. This means that one case regarding religion can have one fallout, while another case can have an utterly different fallout; it depends on who the members of the Supreme Court are, which is also why appointing members to the Supreme Court is highly political and can be controversial. (Berger et al. 102-103).

Unlike the Danish Constitution, the American Constitution is sparse regarding religion. However, one thing that is made clear, again unlike in Denmark, is that there is not a state-funded or state-supported religion in the nation. At least not on paper. The tendency in American politics shows a different picture, where not only Christianity is the most common but more specifically Protestant Christianity is the majority religion among the U.S. presidents.

3.2.2. Statistics on religion in the United States

Except for Native Americans, the American population is a combination of immigrants from all over the world, which means that there are many different religions in America. According to the Pew Research Center, Native American religions are less than one percent in America. 70.6% of Americans are Christians, with the majority of 25.4% as Evangelical Protestant and 20.8% as Catholic. 5.9% of Americans belong to non-Christian faiths. 22.8% are unaffiliated with religion in general, where few categorise as atheist or agnostic. Most people in the unaffiliated category are what the Pew Research Center calls *Nothing in particular*, wherein one can see religion as important or not important – it is close to 50/50 between the two. *Nothing in particular* is an example of Grace Davie's notion of believing without belonging, where a person believes in religion but does not belong to a specific religion.

Regarding immigration, 9% of Evangelical Protestants are first-generation immigrants, and 7% are second-generation immigrants, while 84% are third-generation immigrants. For mainline Protestantism, the statistics are approximately the same. While 87% of Hindus are first-generation immigrants, and only 9% and 4% are second and third generation immigrants. In the entire population, only 0.7% of the American population are Hindu. The statistics show that the immigration patterns have changed. The immigrants today belong to different religions than earlier, which shows that today's immigrants are from different countries than earlier.

According to the Pew Research Center, the majority of all age groups² in the United States firmly, without a doubt, believe in God, with 70% of 65+-year-olds certainly believing. In second place, in all age groups, is fairly certainly believing in God, with 22% of 18-29-year-olds, and 17% of 65+. 16% of 18-29-year-olds do not believe in God, and the rest of the age groups are at 9% and 6%. Lastly, two to three percent of all the age groups do not know if they believe in God. Following this, the majority of Americans in the age groups surveyed by the Pew Research Center, attend religious services and pray weekly, along with feeling peace and wellbeing and an overwhelming number of Americans believe in heaven and hell. In turn, most Americans rarely or never attend a type of religious class/education.

3.2.3. Religion in the United States in general

The U.S is predominantly a Christian country as established by the statistics. The United States is big and diverse, which means that religion differs within the country. The Central and Southern states are more religious than the Northern, Eastern and Western states; and there is, what might be considered a cultural elite, which is more secular than the rest. The secular elite is dominating education, media and law, by for instance making abortions and same-sex marriage legal rights and religion in public schools forbidden. These laws have aggravated the more religious (the conservative and fundamentalist religious) and have made them politically active against these laws (Berger et al. 21). Most Americans are somewhere in between the secular elite and the conservatives, with a more accepting and inclusive form of religion (22).

² Age groups surveyed: 18-29, 30-49, 50-64, 65+

Religion was dominant from the beginning of America³ and was embraced by the early immigrants. The process of religion in America is a reaction to what was happening in Europe; the settlers had fled from religious persecution in Europe to a new beginning in America, where there was freedom to believe. (Berger et al. 42). When immigrants arrived in America, they found solidarity, community, and identity in their religion; perhaps even stronger than they did before migrating. The immigrants and their religion(s) have shaped the U.S. into the country it has been and is today. Today, immigrants are different concerning race, ethnicity, religion, and language than the early immigrants. Today's immigrants are more often from Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America than European countries and they have thereby increased religious diversity in the States. The connection between nationality and religion is still present with the new immigrants. (45). Religion (Christianity) was established and enforced by the American people itself and not by rulers of the country (Zuckerman 170), which Zuckerman sees as a reason for the strong religiosity in America. Immigrants essentially use religion to keep their original national identity alive in the struggle of transitioning and living in a new country.

Religious freedom and freedom in general, have become a cornerstone of American values, which the constitution also reflects. Religious freedom consequently means that religion is voluntary; there is freedom to choose and choose again later. Following Rational Choice Theory (see theory section), the separation of religion/church and state in America creates a vast religious market in the U.S. with the possibility of personalising every religion. Churches or religions in general, have excellent opportunities to market the commodity that is their church or religion. The vastness of the religious market in the U.S. makes marketing the way of survival. Unlike in Denmark, it is all about having as many members as possible – members equal money in America and money equals survival. There is no financial support to get from the state, and every church, synagogue, mosque, and temple is privately owned and operates on their own premises and dime. There might be a membership fee for a specific religious institution, but it is not uncommon for members to also make sizeable donations to the church out of their own free will, and it is also very common to collect smaller donation before, during and after church services.

There are both huge and tiny churches in America. With money comes the ability to market even more, along with giving more opportunities to the members of the church. The result can be what is called a megachurch. The Hartford Institute for Religion Research defines the term

³ Not meaning the Native American, who had their own religion, but colonised America.

megachurch: "The term megachurch generally refers to any Protestant Christian⁴ congregation with a sustained average weekly attendance of 2000 persons or more in its worship services, counting all adults and children at all its worship locations." Most megachurches are Evangelical Protestant (71%), with a conservative theology and are predominantly located in Southern America (California, Texas, Georgia and Florida have most megachurches). Megachurches start out small and grow large rather fast, normally within ten years. The physical church building itself becomes something resembling a concert hall or a stadium with seating for several thousand people at a time. The church is commonly filled every Sunday for the church service; it is not unlikely for people to travel far to attend the service. The church most likely has several ministers/pastors/priests, but there will always be a senior minister/pastor/priest, who is the leader spiritually and administratively. This person is most often a man and the founder of the church or a family member of the founder. The leaders of these types of churches can be enormous authority figures in the congregation and the society it is a part of. There is a strong power from above in these situations, even though the above (the church itself) is relying a fair amount on the below (the congregation/members). The leaders have a charismatic presence and can almost be categorised as entertainers.

According to the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, the largest megachurch in America is Lakewood Church located in Houston, Texas. The church is non-denominational and has an average weekly attendance of 43,500 people. The church was founded in 1959 and is today led by the founder's grandson, Joel Osteen. A quick look at the Lakewood Church website shows that the church offers an array of different things. One can sign up for a water baptism with the senior pastor, Joel, or go to grief, divorce or youth group, or attend the Lakewood movie night. There is even an opportunity to watch the church services online, while visiting the church's online shop where several books written by pastor Joel or religious calendars are sold. One can also follow them on their blog, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, while remembering the #LakewoodChurch. Pastor Joel and his wife Victoria are the faces of the church, and the church gains ethos in pastor Joel, his marriage, and family. (Lakewoodchurch.com). Megachurches are commonly very modern; they use Christian rock music, technology, and social media, which the megachurches' members reflect. On average the congregation of a megachurch is middle-class,

⁴ The Hartford Institute of Religion Research do not consider Catholic Churches as megachurches, but there are many very large Catholic Churches that have thousands of weekly attendances, but other aspects do not adhere to megachurch characteristics.

family orientated, in their 30s and 40s and many children are attending the churches (Bird and Thumma 8).

In the U.S., religion is banned from public schools – be it Christianity or any other religion. Religion is banned in the manner of prayer, reading of scripture and other religious activities. If religion were not banned from public schools, schools would most likely choose one religion as their official religion and, following statistics, schools would likely choose Evangelical Protestantism or Catholicism. There would probably never be a public school choosing Islam or Hinduism as their official religion. A school would, for instance, implement morning prayer and reading passages from the Bible into the everyday schedule of staff and students – in some cases it would not be a choice to participate, and an alternative religion would probably not be accepted fully, if at all. With this in mind while looking at the U.S. Constitution, religion has to be banned from public schools, because the government, which public schools fall under, cannot choose one religion over the other. Not only are religious practice and indoctrinating banned from public schools, but objective religion classes that involve every religion in the World are also banned. The belief is that it is not the government's responsibility to give the population knowledge about religion. (Berger et al. 114). Banning religion in public schools means that there is a large market for private schools, where religion is welcome and can even be the premise of the education. Some churches have their own schools lead by the church itself or by a person, who is an influential member of the church. It is not uncommon for megachurches to have their own school. Home-schooling is also common in the U.S, where the parents can decide to implement religion subjectively or objectively if they wish to do so. (114). Actively religious families often choose these two alternatives to public schools because of a fear for their religion being questioned or influenced by outside sources.

The welfare system or perhaps the lack of it has influenced religion in the U.S. The state does not take care of its population as the Danish state does. In the U.S., many churches offer help in different ways. For instance, day-care, youth groups, homeless shelters, groceries for the poor and so on. If the U.S. had a better welfare system, this would not be as necessary as it is today. Phil Zuckerman sees this as an aspect of religion's influence in the American society. President George W. Bush tried to implement a faith-based initiative during his first term as president. With the faith-based initiative, Bush wanted to give governmental support to churches, so that they could provide

care for the needy. The initiative was never implemented and was met with strong critique because being a member of the given church's congregation would be a requirement to receive support (123). The initiative would also conflict with the separation of church/religion and state in America.

Religion is connected to social status in the U.S. More value and prestige are put on some versions of Christianity and on specific churches than on other religions, denominations and institutions. In America, a religious person can mention his or her personal faith and the church (or other religious institution) he or she is a member of, and it can create ethos. By merely being a member of a specific denomination, a person can show credibility (Berger et al. 133). *The American Dream, The Land of Opportunity* and other terms are common descriptions of the possibility to climb the social class ladder regardless of a person's original social class in the U.S. This has been seen to have a religious fallout: it is not uncommon for people to change churches when changing social class (135). Berger et al. give the example of an American man moving from the Baptist Church to the Methodist Church, when he became a professor, but that the Episcopalian Church would have been too ambitious (33). The example shows a social status hierarchy between the different denominations in America, which the religious are aware of themselves. In this case, the man knew that he did not have the social rank he needed for the Episcopalian Church. Religion as a status symbol is a clear example of Linda Woodhead's theory of power from above. Religion certainly has power in society when it can create a status hierarchy.

3.2.4. Religion and Politics in the United States

As mentioned, it is not allowed for the government in the U.S. to support one specific religion, but it can be questioned if this is done anyway. In American history, there has only been one president, who was not some form of a Protestant Christian. From George Washington to Donald Trump, John F. Kennedy has been the only president in the Oval Office, and a member of the Catholic Church of USA at the same time⁵. Religion and politics are supposed to be separated, and it is on paper, however, there is still space for a politician to mention religion, God and other religious references in public speeches; the analysis section of this thesis will show. Mentioning God has almost become a necessity for a politician to gain voters, but a politician's personal faith, worship, and affiliation is considered private. What has become expected/a necessity is a general

⁵ The personal religion of some of the U.S. presidents is unknown.

mentioning of religion – i.e. Christianity. For instance, saying the word *God* in a speech does not refer to a specific God or belief, but it is a word that every American can personally relate to.

(Bellah 3)

In America, the competition is always between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Each party has its own religious supporters, who have become vital for each party. It has become a conflict between the secular democrats and the conservative religious republicans. Which is not representative of what religious America looks like, with most people being somewhere between secular and conservative (Berger et al. 22). The secular supporters of the Democratic Party want and try to influence religion with politics and the conservative religious supporters of the Republican Party want and try to influence politics with religion.

4. Civil Religion

Through looking at religion in Denmark and The U.S., it has become clear that there are civil religious aspects in both nations. This section will, therefore, define the term Civil Religion followed by examples of civil religious aspects in both nations. This is important to be able to determine the religious value in the countries and determine if politicians are religious or civil religious in the analysis.

In 1967, Robert Bellah documented in his article *Civil Religion in America* that alongside Christianity there was an institutionalised civil religion in America, which is completely differentiated from the churches (1). The term civil religion did not originate with Bellah; he only revitalised the term in his article from 1967. The term goes back to Emile Durkheim and Jean-Jaques Rousseau, who had two different views on civil religion. Rousseau was a critic of religion, however, he still believed that religion in a more tolerating (civil) manner was necessary to legitimate the state morally and to teach the people to love the nation. Durkheim saw patriotism as civil religion; he believed that civil religion reflects a nation's shared values expressed in national religious terms. Both Rousseau and Durkheim saw civil religion as integrating for the people of a nation (Warburg 12-14). The two different definitions of civil religion have created a *Rousseuian* and a *Durkheimian* use of the term civil religion, and the two can essentially be used to describe a specific act of civil religion. Something can be more or less *Rosseuean* or *Durkheimian* and degrees of both at the same time. Bellah does not per se define what he means by civil religion, in his article, but Meredith McGuire has defined the term civil religion:

“Civil religion is the expression of the cohesion of the nation. It transcends denominational, ethnic, and religious boundaries. The civil religion has its own collective representations, by which the nation represents an ideal of itself to its members. It has its own rituals, by which members commemorate significant national events and renew their commitment to their society.” (McGuire 179)

Civil religion is an external term used by and created for sociologists. The term is used to describe a category of actions and events performed from a specific nation's history, culture and religion and is attended by most people in the World (8). Civil religion is not a religion in the traditional meaning of the word, and it does not have members. No one will define themselves as members of a nation's civil religion. When people practise a civil religion, they are likely unaware of it because the action might not be predominantly religious, and the practice is not done with a civil religious intent (Warburg et al. 7-8). A Dane is civil religious based on Danish history, culture, and religion, as an American is civil religious based on the American history, culture and religion. While civil religion exists because of a nation's history and culture, it is not the historical or cultural significance of, for instance, a tradition that becomes important, but the significance is the tradition's ability to represent transcendence of the nation as a people – i.e. the tradition's ability to, through religious reference, create national coherence among the people.

Civil religion is characterised as a theoretical and scientific term composing rituals, myths, texts, buildings, memorials, and symbols, which all both connote something transcendental and the nation itself (12). Civil religion is not a secular replacement for religion; civil religion has a religious background and refers to the transcendental, which in both Denmark's and America's case is mainly Christianity (12). There have been discussions on what is included in the term Civil Religion and if a transcendental reference is necessary, or if civil religion can have a functional definition as well. Warburg argues that a transcendental reference is necessary for something to be civil religious; otherwise every national event that creates identity becomes civil religious. Warburg does, for example, not see anything civil religious about a football game, where national/community identity is strong, because there is no reference to the transcendental. Warburg instead calls this banal nationalism (13).

4.1. Danish Civil Religion

Civil religion is the underlying notion of Christianity in Danish society that many traditions are based on in Denmark. The civil religious traditions have become the core of several Danish traditions that many Danes practice. A guess is that many people know that countless traditions are related to the Christian history in Denmark, but a safe bet would be that many people do not know more than that. Asking a random Dane to explain the details of the reasons for Sankthans or the Stone of Jellinge (Jellingestenen), religion might not be their first thought – even though religious history is the basis for both. People will often say "that is the tradition" when asked why they do something, and they do it because it is what is normal in their family

In Denmark, state, church, and nation are closely connected. The connection has given the National Church a double function as a Protestant Christian church, in the purely religious understanding, and as a frame for civil religion in Denmark. The National Church is a civil religious frame in official celebrations of state institutions or national unity. The yearly church service at the parliament's opening is an example of civil religion with the National Church as a frame (Warburg 9).

Every New Year's Eve, the Queen of Denmark ends her speech with a prayer. The words "Gud Bevare Danmark" are an intercession on behalf of Denmark. This action expresses a core in Danish civil religion, namely that Denmark as a nation is in the watchful eye of God. The Queen's final remark is the perfect example of referencing both nation and religion and combined appealing to the feeling of Danish nationality. The word God refers to Denmark's religious history, but the Queen does not specify the god she is referring to, so every person hearing the speech can relate with their personal relationship with God. I.e., the Queen is asking "a god" to protect Denmark and not explicitly asking the Christian God. The Queen might indirectly talk about the Christian God, since her personal religion is Christianity⁶, but by naming a neutral God the statement and the speech become more inclusive of the whole population, even in a country where 75.3% are registered as Evangelical-Lutheran Christians. If the speech is successfully inclusive is hard to say, there is a possibility of minority religions feeling excluded based on Denmark's official Evangelical-Lutheran profile.

There are both national and regional examples of civil religion in Denmark. National examples are for instance Fastelavn, Sankthansaften, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. A

⁶ The Queen is forced by the constitution to be a member of the Evangelical Lutheran National Church of Denmark

regional example is for instance, as mentioned before, the church service at the opening of the Parliament every year. Sankthansaften stems from before Denmark became Christian, but after Christianity came to Denmark, the tradition was made Christian and was used to spread a Christian message. Today, Sankthansaften is still widely celebrated, and the occasion has become a classic civil religious tradition in Denmark. Politicians and priests commonly give speeches on Sankthans. The occasion was once more *Durkheimian* by evoking the civil religious national identity (19). Over time it has become more *Rosseauian* by, for instance, the Prime minister, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, inviting the public into his garden to celebrate the occasion, with him as the host and key speaker of the night.

The yearly church service at Christiansborg Slotskirke when the parliament opens is regional civil religion. Firstly, because it is dependent on the exact place and it is only relevant to some people in Denmark. The occasion is religious because it is a church service, but the service is not like a typical Sunday service in the National Church. This service is about the underlying connection the Danish state and democracy have with the National Church. It is also an example of the National Church as the frame of civil religion. On the one hand, there is a priest conducting a service and giving a sermon, but it is on other premises than it normally would be. On the other hand, it does not signify the actual religion of the Parliament or Denmark; it is simply referring to the Christian history of Denmark and is done every year out of tradition. (Warburg 24). This action is *Rousseauian* by legitimating the state through religion.

Civil religion becomes more difficult in Denmark as the nation receives more immigrants and the diversity of the country's religion is increased. Is it for instance excluding the immigrants of a different faith than Christianity, to enhance the traditional civil religion in Denmark? In the end, this becomes a question of what it is to be Danish. A question that becomes harder to give one answer to the more cultures that become mixed in Denmark.

4.2. American Civil Religion

In America, there is a functional division between civil religion and Christianity. Civil religion is used in the public sphere, while Christianity is used privately (McGuire 180). Civil religion in America can be argued to be more diverse than the Danish civil religion. Religion in America is more diverse than in Denmark; civil religion could therefore be expected to be the same. Based on the separation of state and religion by law, civil religion should be separated from the state as well. There are no national religious holidays, such as Easter, because that would be

officially recognising a specific religion over another. The national holidays are days like Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. All days that have to do with the nation's history and freedom. Independence Day has, for instance, robust national identity connotations, and traditions surrounding the day has been formed throughout history and is an example of civil religion. Thanksgiving is perhaps the most significant holiday in America; it is riddled with traditions within families and is again an example of civil religion in its celebration of American history and identity.

Civil religion in America is based on its founding history and how history has involved religion in general. As it has been established by now in this thesis, religion plays a substantial part in American society and history, and there is no surprise in a politician using religious words in public speeches, even though politics and religion are said to be separated. The religion politicians use can in many cases be argued as civil religion (the analysis section of this thesis will elaborate and exemplify this). When politicians use a general religion and not their personal religion (which is considered private business) in speeches, the politicians are evoking a national feeling on the premise of religion being a part of American history and the nation's identity.

There is a conflict between two types of civil religion in the U.S. On one side is a type of power from above civil religion where for instance politicians are telling society what is right and wrong, which creates an *us* and *them* in society. On the other side a more power from below civil religion, where national community and identity puts enfaces on common human ideals (Warburg16). McGuire calls the first type a priestly version of civil religion, where the American nation's greatness, superiority, and achievements are celebrated. The second type McGuire calls a prophetic version of American civil religion, in which "the nation's attention [is called] to its offenses against the idealization for which it stands" (180). She exemplifies the two version with two different bumper stickers: the first saying "America – Love it or leave it!" and the second saying: "America – Change it or lose it!" Both bumper stickers are in relation to America's role in the Vietnam War. (180). Priestly civil religion has historically been used to legitimate intolerance in different ways and has been seen to develop in to worship of the nation itself (181). The analysis will exemplify this with statements from the current President of the U.S. Donald Trump.

As with the last words in the Danish Queens speech on New Year's Eve, there are several times when a neutral and abstract god is mentioned in an American context. Similarly, it would not be uncommon for the President of the United States to end a speech with "God Bless America". Alternatively, when a new president says "So help me God" during the inauguration as a promise to

protect the American Constitution. The civil religious value is the same as in Denmark. The word god is used neutrally and in an unspecific way in an attempt to reach every religion represented in America. Again, as in Denmark, if the President is successful in being neutral or not is another question. Based on America's predominantly Christian profile, there is a large possibility for the use of the word "god" to exclude minority religions in America. Unlike Denmark, immigrants from different countries have always composed the United States, therefore being American has always meant different things to different people. However, freedom and opportunity are strong defining aspects of American culture, which then is mixed with heritage from other countries.

An excellent national example of civil religion in America is the dollar bill. On every dollar "In God We Trust" is printed. Again, this is a reference to a neutral god, but it shows that America is a nation under God.

4.3. Transnational Civil Religion

Civil religion becomes transnational when one nation's civil religion is used to create a national identity or when civil religious traditions are celebrated in another country. As was mentioned in the section about immigration's role in religion in America, immigrants use religion to keep their own national identity alive. There are examples of immigrants of a country being very traditional in their celebration of an occasion from their home country, and even more so than it would be done in the country itself. A traditional celebration enhances the national identity and community between the immigrants from the same country or culture. It can become imperative for immigrants to do so to not forget or let others forget where they are from. When living in another country than one's own, being with people from the same country can create a national identity and this becomes more enhanced on special occasions in celebration of that country. Suddenly a holiday or a tradition that was not especially important before migrating becomes essential, because it creates a stronger connection with the home country. Creating this national identity with one's home country is also why there are small replicas of countries around the world. Many big cities in the world have a Chinatown or a Little Italy. The small town of Solvang is an example of Danish immigrants recreating a Little Denmark north of Los Angeles in California. A Danish/American example of active transnational civil religion is the 4th of July celebration in Rebil, Denmark. This event celebrates both nations in a manner that easily can be categorised as civil religious. Religion plays a part because the bishop of Aalborg speaks and prays for God's protection of both nations, which is an undeniable transcendental element. (Warburg 20-21).

5. Analysis

The relationship, the Danish and American governments individually have with religion in their own country, can be seen in public speeches and other forms of official statements by government officials and non-the less the leaders of both countries.

This section of this master's thesis will give an analysis of several speeches and official statements given in a Danish and an American context. The focus of the analysis will be on the specific language used in the given speech or statement and how this language reflects religion in the given country; along with the context that religion is used in in the speech or statement. The analysis is divided into two sections: the first section analyses Danish speeches and statements, and the second section analyses American speeches and statements.

5.1. Danish Speeches and Statements

5.1.1. "Hold Religionen Indendørs" by Anders Fogh Rasmussen

When Anders Fogh Rasmussen was the Prime minister of Denmark, he wrote an article expressing his thoughts on religion. The article "Hold Religionen Indendørs" was written as a debate in the newspaper Politiken on May 20th, 2006". The title of the article is telling of the Prime Minister's thoughts on religion and his intention. "Keep Religion indoors" paints religion negatively as something dangerous for the public, which is also essentially what Fogh Rasmussen says in his article. He clearly expresses that religion and politics need to be separated both to protect religion from a meddling state, but certainly also to protect the state from any religious influence (9). Fogh Rasmussen begins neutrally in his choice of words concerning religion in general and he also tries to be inclusive of all religions in Denmark. He, for instance, mentions the Bible, the Koran and other sacred texts when he exemplifies that it is the Parliament's laws that count in society and not the holy texts (10). He does the same in a negative context when he is talking about fundamentalism being dangerous for society. Not only does he refer to Muslim suicide bombers but also the violence between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, and the Orthodox Jews in Israel. The inclusive approach is an attempt to neither exclude or directly attack or blame a religion.

Fogh Rasmussen describes the concept of religion in general with both positively and negatively loaded words. Examples of positively loaded words are optimism, joy, gratefulness, equality, freedom, responsibility and capacious. Examples of negatively loaded words are: grotesque, fanatic, darkening, limiting and invasion. Fogh Rasmussen mostly use negatively loaded words in his description of the dangers of religious fundamentalism (10). Fogh Rasmussen uses two

different aspects to legitimate his argument of separation of religion and state. He looks to the Danish Constitution and his interpretation of §4. Regarding this paragraph, he puts emphasis on the word "folke" in "folkekirke" and notes that it is not a "statskirke" that paragraph four references. Fogh Rasmussen also uses Christianity to legitimate his argument. He says:

“I mit syn på religion og samfund er jeg stærkt påvirket af Jesu berømte ord: Giv kejser, hvad kejser er, og Gud, hvad Gud er. Med Luthers to-regimente-lære er det nærliggende at tage disse ord som udgangspunkt for en skelnen mellem det verdslige og det åndelige, mellem det politiske og det religiøse. At give Gud, hvad Gud er, og kejser, hvad kejser er, indebærer derfor også for mig, at staten skal holdes fast på ene og alene at være verdslig myndighed.” (9).

The Prime Minister is quoting Jesus in an attempt to legitimate his argument against religion in the public sphere; he uses religion's own words against religion. Fogh Rasmussen not only mentions Jesus but God and Luther as well and says that the words of Jesus strongly influence him. Jesus, God, and Luther, not only legitimate, but also give religious credibility to Fogh Rasmussen. These three words show that Fogh Rasmussen knows religion and especially Denmark's Christianity. Naming Luther refers to the Evangelical-Lutheran National Church of Denmark and the Christian history of Denmark. The way he mentions Jesus and God can give a notion of his personal relationship with religion.

On page 10 from line 31 to 39, Fogh Rasmussen mentions his own personal religious standpoint. Fogh Rasmussen takes his personal and private religion and uses it to legitimate his understanding of what Christianity is. He says: "Med mit kristne udgangspunkt [...] Efter min opfattelse er Kristendom en livsopfattelse, som vender sig imod alt det autoritære og undertrykkende, og som derved betoner den enkeltes frihed og ansvar." Rasmussen's personal religion should probably be irrelevant in an article where the message is the separation of religion and politics and religion being kept private, but Rasmussen does this to create religious credibility. He is not just an atheist, who is angry at religion. He thinks that religion – all religions – should be accepted and respected in the Danish society (9), and he does so himself and he has his own personal affiliation with religion (10). Fogh Rasmussen's own understanding of religion and the words he uses to describe it ("vender sig imod alt det autoritære og undertrykkende" "frihed og

ansvar") can also be interpreted to be a dig at the fundamentalist religions he talks about in the article.

The above four times God is mentioned, are the only times the word is used in the article. Fogh Rasmussen does not use the word in a neutral or civil religious manner as was exemplified with the Queen's speech in the section on Danish Civil Religion.⁷ Fogh Rasmussen says at one point: "Lad det velkendte danske frisind [...]". (12). Mentioning a positive Danish quality can evoke agreement among Danes, who see tolerance positively. The combination of referencing the Christian history in Denmark and positive traits of what it is to be Danish has the same results as, for instance, when the Queen mentions a neutral god.

In the article, Fogh Rasmussen creates logos, pathos, and ethos. The constitution and his religious knowledge create logos while evoking national feeling and his personal religion create pathos, and ethos is created in his political credibility as the Prime Minister, along with the credibility his knowledge and inclusiveness create.

This article is an excellent example of the widespread Danish political mind-set to accept religion in society in general but firmly separate it from politics and let it be a private matter and it also exemplifies how religion is in Danish society in general.

5.1.2. The Prime Minister's New Year's Speech 2018 – Lars Løkke Rasmussen.

On January 1st, 2018 the Danish Prime Minister, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, gave a speech where he mentioned religion in the same manner as the former Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen did in his newspaper article in 2006. Løkke Rasmussen shortly mentions religion in Denmark in the second to last paragraph of his speech (Appendix 1). He says:

Den nation i verden, hvor der bor flest muslimer, er Indonesien. Jeg besøgte landet i november. Og deltog i et dialogmøde i en moské, og vi besøgte herefter en katedral på den anden side af gaden. Den muslimske stor-imam side om side med den kristne biskop. I gensidig respekt. Jeg vil holde fast i, at vi også her i Danmark møder hinanden med tillid og med respekt. Vi er sammen om Danmark. Derfor vil jeg understrege: Mit budskab i aften handler ikke om hudfarve. Ikke om religion. Det handler

⁷ Allah is mentioned once in reference to Muslim suicide bombers on page 10

om at vælge Danmark til.

Løkke Rasmussen does not mention God, Christianity or Denmark's religion in general or his own personal religion in his speech. The above is the only time religion is mentioned in the entire speech. Løkke Rasmussen is completely neutral and strictly factual. The only positively loaded words he uses is "gensidig respekt" "respekt" and "tillid" in line 4-6 of the above quote. This perfectly reflects what was made clear in the section called Denmark in this master's thesis, and what was stressed by Phil Zuckerman several times in this book. To the Danish people, religion does not matter in the public and political sphere. Danes do not care about Lars Løkke Rasmussen's personal religion and it certainly has no place in a political speech; and it has no legitimising effect or credibility to quote the Bible or use "God", so Løkke Rasmussen does not do it.

5.1.3. Kristian Thulesen Dahls åbningstale ved DF-årsmøde, 16 September 2017

Kristian Thulesen Dahl gave a long speech at the opening of the yearly party meeting for Dansk Folkeparti (DF). DF is known for political views with enfaces on Denmark and what it is to be Danish, which results in a strict position on immigration and integration. Dahl is most of all patriotic and proud of Denmark, which he uses to enhance his arguments and political views in his speech. Dahl says the word "Danmark" forty-three times and references the greatness of Denmark as a country countless times during the speech. Dahl, for instance, says: "I den amerikanske præsidentvalgkamp blev vi fremhævet. Alle ser, om der er noget, de kan lære af – kopiere" (Appendix 2 line 12-13) and "Alle kigger de på Danmark og tænker; kan vi bare bo i sådant et land – så ville alle problemer være løst!" (line 16-17). Both quotes are from the beginning of Dahl's speech and set the tone for the rest of the speech, where Dahl is positive of everything regarding Denmark, as long as it follows his political views. Dahl uses positively loaded words to describe Denmark as a country, which in return evokes pride or even patriotism among his audience. Positively loaded words such as, "lykkeligste", "fantastisk", "stolthed", "unik", "tryk" "sund skepsis", "sammenhængskraft", "superdygtig", "dybt imponeret", are primarily used in description of Denmark and DF itself. All of these words appear throughout the speech and create a positive sphere around Denmark and DF. In the end, the words create national unity and a feeling of being a part of something great. The positively loaded words are a rhetorical strategy to accentuate Denmark and DF and to, directly and indirectly, undermine other political views, nations, religions, and individuals.

Religion's first appearance in the speech is when Dahl quotes a former critic of DF, who is now a supporter. He says:

”Det er ikke nok, at de mennesker, der kommer til Danmark med en anden kultur og religion end vores, overholder landets love. De skal gå ind for vores samfund, og de skal assimilere sig, ellers kan vi ikke opretholde sammenhængskraften”

This quote is to a degree an example of priestly civil religion. Denmark, its greatness, and the national unity is used in an argument for intolerance of other cultures' presence in Denmark. It is also very notable that the words "vores religion" are said. As the section on Denmark established, there is an official religion in Denmark, but that does not mean that other religions are not or should not be accepted and welcome in Denmark, as the Constitution states; however, the above quote seems make a requirement for other religions to assimilate in accordance with the National Church of Denmark/Evangelical-Lutheran Christianity. The use of "our" also very strongly establish an *us* and a *them*, which is clearly present throughout the speech as well⁸. *Us* is the ethnical Danish citizens, and *them* is immigrants with different cultures and religions now living in Denmark/coming to Denmark. The effect of the *us* and *them* groups is a strong sense of animosity from Dahl towards *them*. Dahl defines what it is to be Danish with this quote – Danes are Christian and members of the National Church.

Dahl uses the Danish Christian history and the Reformation as a reason for the Danish society and welfare being as prosperous as it is. At the same time, Dahl calls Denmark a secular society and he believes that the Reformation cleared the way for secularity in Denmark (line 76-80) as Berger argued as well. Dahl says that Denmark/Danes can comfortably rest in its/their religion, while at the same time having the political freedom to vote for whomever they want (line 80-81). Dahl speaks about how great it is that Denmark has an official religion and at the same time political freedom, without religious influence, to speak against Islam, which in Dahl's belief is the exact opposite. (line 83-84). Again, Dahl uses Denmark's religion and nationality as an argument for intolerance. Dahl says: "Ikke mindst derfor er kombinationen af et sekulært vestligt folkestyre

⁸ There is both an "Us" and a "them" referring to Danes and Middle-Eastern immigrants and an "us" and "them" referring to DF and other political parties.

som vores og islam så vanskelig. Et nærmest uoverstigeligt problem." (line 99-101). All of the negative words against Islam are used to argue for DF's strict immigration and integration policy.

Further on in his speech, Dahl questions Mosques and Muslim schools in Denmark; expresses a fear of Muslim indoctrination of children by teaching hatred, violence, and terrorism (line 241-257). Dahl clearly expresses his dislike for Muslims that belong to the more radical understanding of Islam, by using words as "forvaklede" "middelalderlig" "nonsens" (line 257).

The speech is an excellent example of a civil religious speech in a Danish context. Dahl uses Danish patriotism, nationality, and characteristics in combination with the Danish Christian history and tradition to further his argument. Dahl on occasion uses this to argue intolerance of other cultures, and it is clear that he is from a Christian tradition, however, he does not explicitly refer to his personal religion at any time or use it as an argument.

5.1.4. *Landsmødetale* by Stig Grenov, 14 October 2017

KristenDemokraterne (KD) is a Danish political party that could be suspected to be riddled with Christianity in their speeches and statements. The party struggles to make it into the parliament every four years, which might be due to the use of religion in the party's name. As it has been documented earlier in this thesis, there Danes tend to be afraid of religion in public and especially in politics, which is reflected in KD's struggles.

The foreman of KD, Stig Grenov, gave a speech at the opening of the national meeting for KD in October 2017. Overall, he does talk more about religion than other politicians, but it is not as religious as could be expected. Though Grenov does emphasise Christian values several times, the focus is on religion in general than a focus on preaching Christianity. As it was made clear in the section on Denmark; Christian values and traditions influence the way of life in Denmark, and many people share these values and traditions without thinking of them as Christian. Following this, Grenov says: "Vi er et demokratisk parti bygget på de kristne værdier, som langt størsteparten af danskerne tilslutter sig. De er KristenDemokrater – de ved det bare ikke – endnu." (Appendix 3 line 15-18). Grenov believes that more of the Danish citizens than vote for them share the party's political view. Again, expressing a fear of religion in Denmark.

Grenov mentions "Kirkens Korshær" (line 84), "Folkekirkens Nødshjælp" "Frelsens Hær" (line 172-173) and other charity foundations with a Christian background in the speech, which makes KD's Christian platform clear. Grenov could just as easily mention foundations without a special religious background. Along with the Christian charitable foundations, the Christian agenda

is apparent when Grenov says: "Det er KristenDemokraternes pligt, at fremme det kristne livs og menneskesyn gennem en historiefortællende kristendomsundervisning. Vi vil give kirkelige foreninger større og bedre muligheder for skattefradrag og momsfrihed." (line 170-172). The importance of teaching children the Christian way of life in Christianity classes in schools and the desire to give economic relief to unions associated with the Church strongly highlights Christianity. Even though state and religion are not officially separated in Denmark giving religion such a prominent role in a party's political views and standpoints are unusual in Danish politics.

KD is a strong advocate for religious freedom, and a large part of Grenov's speech focuses on just this. Freedom for Christians but especially also for the Muslim minority in Denmark to believe what they believe. In Grenov's opinion, Denmark is too strict on religion; religion has become something people see as a danger to the Danish society and what it means to be Danish (line 195-196). It seems as Grenov believes that the degree of secularity there is in Denmark hurts people's private religion (both Christian, Jewish and Muslim religion) and he argues that other politicians with great influence are moving Denmark towards even more secularity by ignoring religion (line 225).

A notable and interesting aspect of the speech is that despite the party's Christian profile, Grenov does not mention any type of personal religion, nor God, Jesus, the Bible or any other predominately Christian aspects. Grenov only mentions general Christian values, which he does not specify thoroughly. In line 180 Grenov does mention Grundtvig to legitimate and enhance an argument, but even that is not explicitly religious. The speech was given to an audience of KD's members, whom presumably share KD's political values and Christian platform. Therefore, a stronger sense of religion in the speech would imaginable be accepted by this audience. However, personal religion in politics are not accepted in Denmark and religion cannot be used to legitimise arguments, opinions and statements – not even by Denmark's Christian party.

Grenov is positive towards Denmark and describes the country positively; he is not explicitly patriotic or trying to evoke a strong national unity among the audience; he does not use personal religion or religion to legitimate. Grenov is mostly neutral and speaks about his and the party's political standpoints when it comes to several topics including religion. Moreover, even though the arguments, statements, and opinions are given from a background of Christian values and the Danish Christian history, the speech is neither explicitly religious or even civil religious. The focus in the speech is on religion in general but without being religious. Keeping in mind

that the speech's audience was KD members, the unusually heavy use of Christian values was probably not surprising or off-putting, but a different audience might not have received it as positively. As it has been established, religious words can almost be categorised as dangerous in Denmark regarding political support and credibility. So, when Grenov wants to economically benefit church unions and charities and focus on Christianity in schools, many Danes possibly see red flags. Religion might be a non-issue, but only when it is kept private as soon as it is brought up politically, it becomes an issue.

5.2. American speeches and Statements

5.2.1. The Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America
and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation
under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
(The Pledge of Allegiance, 1954).

“The Pledge of Allegiance” was originally written in 1892 for the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America. It has since then been revised several times; the last revision was in 1954 and "under God" was added. As it was determined earlier, for something to be an expression of civil religion a national aspect and a transcendental aspect are necessary, which together integrates a nation. “The Pledge of Allegiance” is a perfect example of this.

The entire text honours, unifies and affirms the greatness of the United States of America. The flag is a civil religious symbol of the U.S. that represents the positive things America stands for – unity, liberty and justice. The addition of "under God" in 1954 gives the pledge a religious aspect. "One Nation under God" puts enfances on the U.S. as a land of god and also enforces that god is important and a key aspect of America and its people. If god was not important, god would not be referenced to in a pledge used in public settings. The word God is used in a neutral form and is inclusive of any religion. So, if an American-Muslim or Jew is reciting the pledge next to an American-Christian or Hindu, there is no difference, and the national, religious, unifying feeling should be the same. The use of a neutral god puts religious differences to the side and nationally unifies on the basis of the United States of America, where freedom and justice are cornerstones,

but where a god is essential to the many and the country in general.

5.2.2. The Oath of Office

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.
(The U.S. Constitution, Article two, section one, clause eight).

Every President-elect from George Washington to Donald Trump has taken The Oath of Office and been sworn in as the President of the United States. The oath is given with the right hand raised and the left hand on a book; most often the Bible is used, but there have been exceptions, and it is not a requirement to use the Bible. Neither are the words "So help me God", which are most often uttered after the oath. "So help me God" is not written in the Constitution but is often added at the end, which, as was seen in "The Pledge of Allegiance", gives the oath a religious aspect. It is a neutral God that is mentioned in "The Oath of Office"; but since the President-elect can choose to say the words or not, the word god possibly refers to the personal religion of the president-elect but is still neutral to the public.

The Constitution is a key element in America and is often referred to in law conflicts; it is the foundation of the freedom and justice America stands for. The combination of the Constitution and the religious element make "The Oath of Office" an example of American civil religion. It would be interesting to see how the American people would react to a president-elect not saying, "So help me God". It would most likely create a debate and questions would be asked. A guess is that the president's personal character would be questioned, since god is a large part of what America as a nation is and the president's patriotism could also be questioned.

5.2.3. John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, 1961

On January 20th, 1961 after taking The Oath of Office and being sworn in as President of the United States, John F. Kennedy gave, what has become a very famous inaugural address. Robert Bellah (1967) argued that the speech is a perfect example of civil religion in America.

J.F.K. directly mentions God three separate times in the speech; in the two opening paragraphs and the closing paragraph (see Appendix 4). In the middle paragraphs, there are few

references to religion. Religion or god is used as a frame for the speech, while the heart of the speech involves no mentions of god because the notion of religion is not relevant to J.F.K.'s message. The first use of the word god is in line four, where J.F.K. says: "For I have sworn before you and Almighty God [...]". This is a reference to and a reaffirmation of "The Oath of Office" that preceded the speech. The second time god is mentioned is in line nine, where J.F.K. says: "And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe--the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God." (line 6-9). The third time the word god is said, is in line 78, here J.F.K. says: "[...] knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own". The second and third mention of God are more interesting than the first. The second and third are used to talk about a strong reliance on god in America; and that America's freedom is due to the state and man and not God, and that the American people need to do god's work, which can be interpreted as the people needs to act and not rely solely on God. The significant element in all three uses of the word god is that it is a neutral use. J.F.K was a Catholic, but he does not refer to a Catholic understanding of the notion of a god, nor a Christian understanding; he does not mention Jesus or any other Christian aspect. As before, this is as not to exclude members of America with a different religious affiliation. It is imaginable that J.F.K was careful not to be explicitly Catholic in his speech. Through time it has become almost a tradition for American politicians to mention the word god in speeches like this. It is an act of civil religion and is meant to evoke absolute unity in the people and set aside the details of what personal religion is to the people.

J.F.K sets aside neutral religion twice by quoting the Bible. First, in line 55 and 56, where he directly quotes the Bible. He says: "Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah--to "undo the heavy burdens . . . (and) let the oppressed go free."" This is a quote from the Old Testament's Book of Isaiah 58:6 from the King James Bible. In line 66-67, J.F.K indirectly quotes Romans 12:12 when he says: "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation." Quoting the Bible is a full on religious act that brings J.F.K.'s personal Christianity forward. The first Bible quote has a legitimising aspect by J.F.K using it to further the understanding of and the reasoning for his message. He might as well have said: "It's not just me, the Bible says it too. So, listen!" The second Bible quote is indirect and is probably not detected by everyone hearing the speech. It is a rhetorical strategy that creates ethos with the people in the know – i.e. readers of the

Bible, which makes this indirect reference excluding of other religions than Christianity.

5.2.4. Donald Trump's Inaugural Address, 2017

Donald Trump says the word god four times in his inaugural address and uses the term *almighty creator* as well. Unlike J.F.K., Trump does not frame his speech with religion; he waits until the end of his speech to mention any religious references. Trump's first religious statement makes it clear that Trump is not trying to be neutral or inclusive of every religion in America. The first mention of religion is a Bible reference and legitimates and creates credibility.

The Bible tells us, "how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity." [...] When America is united, America is totally unstoppable. There should be no fear – we are protected, and we will always be protected. We will be protected by the great men and women of our military and law enforcement and, most importantly, we are protected by God. (Appendix 5 line 99-100, 103-106)

In this excerpt, Trump expresses his personal religion as a Christian with the Bible reference, just as J.F.K did. "Us" and "we" refer to the American people as a whole and both words are unifying; "us" and "we" aligns Trump with the American people. By using these words, Trump says himself and the American people are the same. As using "I" and "you" would be alienating. The words "God's people" is Trump's reference to the American people as God's people; further in the excerpt Trump puts enfaces on God's protection of America no matter what. Trump even promotes God's protection as more important than the protection from the military (line 5-6 in the above quote).

And whether a child is born in the urban sprawl of Detroit or the windswept plains of Nebraska, they look up at the same night sky, they fill their heart with the same dreams, and they are infused with the breath of life by the same almighty Creator. (Trump line 124-126)

Trump's first religious statement in the inaugural is explicitly Christian by fault because of the bible reference. The second religious statement is neither neutral or inclusive of other religions than Christianity. In the above excerpt, Trump generally attempts to be inclusive of the entire

United States by mentioning several American states, but the moment he says "by the same almighty Creator" the inclusive aspect changes even though it sounds inclusive. Of course, one has to keep in mind that the majority of Americans are of a Christian faith and share their God with Trump, however, there are still Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and so on, among the American population and they will probably argue that Allah, Jahve, Krishna, Vishnu, Buddha and every other Hindu and Buddhist deity are not the same as the Christian God. The use of "Almighty Creator" might be an attempt to be inclusive of every religion represented in America, but for one, Buddhism does not recognise any god as a creator, which then excludes Buddhists from this statement.

And, Yes, Together, We Will Make America Great Again. Thank you,
God Bless You, And God Bless America. (Trump line 136-137)

This religious statement is a classic among American politicians and is the same as when the Danish queen says "Gud Bevare Danmark". The statement is highly civil religious; it is a neutral use of the word god that includes every American's personal God (it is of course excluding atheists) and brings a transcendental aspect, while the use of the word America is a national unifying element. Trump could, for instance, have stopped his speech at "God bless you" but that would not result in the same unity and love of country that he created here.

The rest of Trump's inaugural address is filled with words to evoke unity, national pride, and patriotism. He mentions the flag, the greatness of America and its people, and creates immense unity among his supporters when he, for instance, says: "We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and to restore its promise for all of our people." (line 3-4). Trump makes it clear that it means something to be American – that it is unique.

5.2.5. National Security Speech by Donald Trump, 13th June 2016

Trump is not religious in any way in his speech on immigration from 2016; he does not say the word god once; he does not quote the Bible or reference his personal religion. This speech is still chosen for this analysis because it is a fine example of both priestly and prophetic civil religion (see the section American Civil Religion). Trump gave this speech during his presidential campaign in 2016 as his reaction to the terrorist attack on a nightclub in Orlando, Florida. Trump will likely proclaim his speech as anti-terrorism and anti-radical Islam, and it is, but it is also anti-Islam/anti-Muslim in general. Trump uses the term Radical Islam seventeen times during his speech and says

the word Muslim five times; two of the times have a positive connotation (Appendix 6 line 192 and line 218). In the speech, Trump quotes Hillary Clinton: "Muslims are peaceful and tolerant people and have nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism." (line 90-91). In the quote, Clinton says that not all Muslims are terrorists, which Trump seems to disagree with in his use of the quote to undermine Clinton. Trump says something that is accepting of everyone, inclusive of religions and immigrants a few times as an attempt not to give the impression of bigotry against certain nations⁹. Trump says American and Americans thirty-nine times in his speech. Every time it has a positive connotation; it plays on his audience's patriotism and enhances his anti-radical Islam/anti-Islam views and arguments, which gives the entire speech a priestly civil religious undertone. Trump successfully, creates an *us* in-group and a *them* out-group. *Us* is America and Americans and *them* is radical-Muslims, Muslims, Muslim nations and Muslim supporters. Trump even goes as far as saying that Hillary Clinton cannot be an LGBT supporter when she is a "Muslim supporter" (line 171-173).

Trump is very abrasive in his choice of words. He says "They enslave women, and murder gays. I don't want them in our country." (line 181-182) about radical-Muslims. He says: "we don't know who they are, they have no documentation, and we don't know what they're planning" (line 154-155) "This could be a better, bigger version of the legendary Trojan Horse" (line 140-142) . about Syrian refugees. Along with this, Trump uses words such as "slaughter" a few times (line 89 and 96) instead of the word kill. Slaughter is normally used concerning the killing of animals and not humans and is somehow more negatively loaded than the word kill. The use of the word slaughter to describe the terrorist killings, has stronger negative connotations and makes the barbaric nature of terrorism stronger in his speech.

Trump passion about the immigration issues in America and his eager desire to enhance immigration policies in the country and generally stop terrorism comes across in his speech. In his passionate speech, his word choices come across as bigotry and anti-Muslim, which he presumably does not want to come across as (being it or not), but because his words are so strongly negatively loaded towards Islam, it is difficult only to see his speech and him as anti-radical Muslims and not anti-Muslim as well. All in all, he plays on the well-known American patriotism to enhance the

⁹ E.g. line 230-232: "When I am President, I pledge to protect and defend all Americans who live inside of our borders. Wherever they come from, wherever they were born, all Americans living here and following our laws will be protected."

understanding and acceptance of his intolerance, and thereby his speech becomes priestly civil religious; Trump promotes intolerance of a particular people in promoting the greatness of another.

5.2.6. Statement by the President on the Passing of Reverend Billy Graham, by Donald Trump, 21st February 2018

On February 21st, 2018 @realDonaldTrump tweeted to his 51 million Twitter followers: "The GREAT Billy Graham is dead. There was nobody like him! He will be missed by Christians and all religions. A very special man." Billy Graham was an influential religious/Christian figure in America; he was a well-known televangelist with religious TV and radio programs. Graham was the first religious leader to lie in honour at the United States Capitol in Washington D.C., where Donald Trump and other politicians spoke. It is extremely rare for a person to lie in honour, only three people have done so in the history of the U.S.

Shortly after Trump's Tweet, the White House published Trump's official statement on the matter, which is most of all a tribute to Graham and how he influenced religion in America. Trump says: "Billy's acceptance of Jesus Christ around his seventeenth birthday not only changed his life—it changed our country and the world." (Appendix 7 line 7-8)

Trump's personal religion is clear when he says: "Our prayers are with his children [...]" (line 5). Or when Trump agrees with Graham's message "God loves you" (line 10-11), making it obvious that Trump is a Christian himself. The words "prayer", "ministry", "Jesus Christ" "God's Ambassador" "the power of God's word", "crusades" "faith" "missionary" "Christ's message" and "heaven" are all overtly religious – mostly Christian – and they not only signal Graham's faith but also Trump's own personal faith.

The statement is not overtly political, but there are underlying tones of establishing personal ethos for Trump. For instance: "Melania and I were privileged to get to know Reverend Graham and his extraordinary family over the last several years, and we are deeply grateful for their love and support." Trump indirectly creates credibility by mentioning his friendship with and support from Graham after he has praised him and referenced his religious status.

Another rhetorical strategy is Trump's use of September 11. In the statement, Trump says: "In the wake of the September 11th attacks in 2001, America turned to Billy Graham at the National Cathedral, who told us, "God can be trusted, even when life seems at its darkest."" (line 13-14). September 11 is a pivotal point in American history, and every American will have strong feelings about what happened that day. Mentioning September 11 in the statement shows what an

important religious role Graham had and how trusted he was. It is a rhetorical strategy that goes beyond religious denomination.

Trump ends his statement on an almost inclusive note: "Christians and people of all faiths and backgrounds will miss him dearly. We are thinking of him today, finally at home in Heaven." (line 21-22). Here he includes other faiths than just the Christian, because of the influence Graham has had on America as a whole nation, but Trump then returns to Christianity when he says "Heaven"

5.2.7. Remarks by President Trump at the 66th Annual National Prayer Breakfast

This speech is an example of extreme use of religion by a politician. Trump has forgotten everything about separating politics and religion in his remarks. Trump says the word god no less than twenty times in this fairly short speech at the National Prayer Breakfast in February 2018. Trump's speech is a god and nation speech; he puts extreme enfaces on God, prayer, America as a religious nation and what faith in God brings. The speech is first and foremost about God and America, with few political remarks but because it is the President speaking it will always have political connotations regardless of the speech's content. Trump directly quotes the bible one time (Appendix 8 line 17-18) in his speech as an attribution to god for a politician's recovery from being shot. Trump also attest the health of a nine-year-old girl and the freedom of a North Korean defector to prayer and God (line 94-99 and 81-82). Countless times Trump connects God and faith to America and its people. For instance, in line 19 he proclaims: "America is a nation of believers, and together we are strengthened by the power of prayer." Alternatively, in line 29-30 he says: "Each year, this event reminds us that faith is central to American life and to liberty". Moreover, he gives several examples of how god's grace is visible in America and its people's actions. Trump also mentions some of the things discussed in this master's thesis such as "The Pledge of Allegiance" as central to American faith in god (line 32). Trump ends the speech with the classic civil religious "God bless you, and God bless America" which is the only neutral religious utterance in the speech. Every other mention of god is strongly Christian. Although Trump never directly says Christianity or Christian, the bible quote indirectly mentions Christianity. This is a speech that is unimaginable in a Danish context. The speech is too religiously expressive for a Danish audience in a political context. The speech is an example of how it is acceptable for an American politician to mention religion very expressively. A speech like this is among the possible reasons for Americans being less private about religion. Americans are here aggressively met by religion, as they generally are in

society as well and are therefore forced to be more open about religion in general.

5.2.8. Three speeches by President George W. Bush

September 11, 2001 was a day that changed America forever. President Bush addressed the nation and expresses his sorrow, gratitude and plan of action. Bush delivered three different speeches regarding September 11. One on the night of the attacks, one nine days later and one a year and a half after the attacks. In the three speeches Bush's focus is not on religion, and he mainly speaks of other things, but all three speeches have religious elements in them to different extents.

In Bush's "9/11 Address to the Nation" (Appendix) in the second to last paragraph of the speech Bush asks the American people to pray for the victims of the terror attack and their loved ones (line 35); he says that he himself "pray they [victims and loved ones] will be comforted by a Power greater than any of us" (line 36-37). Followed by a bible quote that essentially is used to assure and comfort the American people. The quote is from Psalm 23 and says that God will get the American people through this (line 38). Prayer is a strong religious word that on its own can refer to every religion where prayer plays a role, while the bible quote gives a purely Christian connotation. The speech's turning point is when Bush asks for the American people's prayers. From this point, the separation of religion and politics is forgotten and the focus shifts from political action to religious action. The President asking the American citizens for their prayers says a lot about religion's place, status and value in America. On the basis of this speech, religion clearly plays a large role in society and in reassurance and comfort in tough situations. Bush ends the speech with the civil religious "God bless America" that depicts America as a religious nation under the watchful eye of God. Both this last use of the word god and when Bush says "Power greater than any of us" he is not referring to a specific God. Bush might have his personal Christian god in mind, but every listener of the speech can have their own god in mind. The effect of the religious statements and the connotations they have are painting Bush as a religious person both privately and publicly and as a politician that will express religion in his politics.

Nine days after the attacks, Bush delivered the "State of Union Address" (Appendix 10) where he declared war on terror. In the speech Bush primarily gives the plan of action following the terror attacks but he also involves religion. This speech is religious in mentions of prayer, God and faith, but the tone is less religious than the speech Bush gave on September 11. Bush does not directly ask for prayers, but he does express appreciation for the prayers that the U.S. has received

from all over the world (line 26-28). Bush also mentions several religions directly and even speaks directly to the Muslims in Iraq and the rest of the world (line 74-79) to show his respect of Islam as a religion, and to make Muslims around the world understand that the war on terror is not a war on Islam or Muslims. In line 198 to 199 Bush says: "The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them." These two sentences express how Bush believes that God is on the American side of freedom and justice. When Bush says that the outcome of the conflict is certain, it can be understood as the terrorists and supporters of fear and cruelty will receive godly punishment. Bush ends the speech with an upgraded version of the classic civil religious "God bless America". Bush says: "In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America." (line 201-202). These ending words are neutral and inclusive of every religion until Bush uses the pronoun he for God. The pronoun he excludes religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism and it creates a stronger sense of Christianity.

In 2003 Bush again spoke to the nation about September 11 and the plan of action. In the short speech "The War against Iraq has Begun", Bush again mentions prayer as reassurance and comfort for Americans in the military and their families (Appendix 11) line 26-29). He ends the speech with "God bless our country and all who defend it" (line 43). Which again expresses that America is a nation under God, but the addition of "all who defend it" shows appreciation to allies and has value in an American understanding. In the speech, Bush is mainly factual in delivering information on what will and have happened. He ends his speech with religion possibly in an attempt to be reassuring and comforting of the American people and the military going to war.

The word "prayer" is mentioned in all three speeches and is used as an action and comfort. The significant use of religion and asking for prayers in the "9/11 Address to the Nation" shows the desperation and state of emergency the terror situation created immediately after the attacks. In the two other speeches, religion plays a lesser role. Prayer is still present, and the word itself is mentioned several times and is the religious trick word in these speeches as well. The difference in the use of the word "prayer" is in Bush asking for prayers or stating that the American people are praying. In the first speech, Bush, as mentioned, asks the nation for their prayers, while in the other speeches Bush says that the American people are praying.

In these speeches from Bush, it seems to be that Bush himself and the American people (at

least some) believe that there is power in prayer and that it has an effect, which would not be believed in a Danish context. Speeches like these are unimaginable in a Danish context. Firstly, a politician would never ask Danes for their prayers in a terrible situation. Secondly, mentioning prayer would create a strong critical response by many people in Denmark.

In conclusion to this analysis, it is clear that the American politicians are more willing to use religion in general and personal religion in political speeches. American politicians' use of religion reflects the nation's religiosity, while the Danish politicians' reluctance to use religion shows that religion has no place in Danish politics. The discussion will look at the differences found in the analysis and discuss possible reasons for them.

6. Discussion

Through establishing the religious landscape in both Denmark and the U.S. and analysing political speeches and statements from each nation, this thesis has found that there are profound differences in religion's presence and value in society; and differences in how religion is used politically. This thesis will now discuss possible explanations for these differences. The discussion will, by looking at the differences discovered between Denmark and the U.S., discuss what secularisation theorists and sociologists have said about secularisation. This will lead to a discussion of what the crucial factor(s) for the differences might be.

While researching religion in Denmark and the U.S., it became apparent that the most significant differences are the constitutional stipulations and the visibility of religion in society/secularisation on the societal level. As was initially hypothesised, there is a connection between religion's prominence and the separation or connection of state and religion. Denmark's constitutional connection between state and religion has resulted in low religious activity, low religious value and insignificant presence in society and higher societal secularisation. The United States' constitutional separation of state and religion has, on the other hand, resulted in high religious activity, high religious value and significant presence in society and a lower societal secularisation. As was also hypothesised, the political use of religion by politicians is also different between the two nations and the political use or non-use of religion reflects religion in the given country.

According to Steve Bruce, these differences are due to differences in the countries' modernity and urbanisation (89). According to Rational Choice Theory, the religious differences

are all connected to the constitution either creating a religious monopoly or a free religious market (Woodhead and Davie 532); while Andersen and Lüchau see Individualisation Theory as an explanation and argues that religion becomes individual instead of collective (78).

One cannot argue that the U.S. is less modern than Denmark. Both nations are highly urbanised and modern. Moreover, in a critique of Bruce's argument, it seems as if Bruce considers religion as unmodern and secularisation as modern. Bruce seemingly has turned the factors around; that religious decline is a factor of a country's modernity and not the other way around – that modernity is a factor of religious decline. This is argued here because of Bruce's argument of the U.S. not being as modern as Denmark and therefore more religious than Denmark. This thesis does not consider Bruce's argument as a valuable and reasonable explanation for the differences found between Denmark and the U.S. concerning religion and secularisation. Be it said that this thesis has not extensively researched factors of modernity in either Denmark or the U.S. but calling the U.S. less modern or less urban seems unreasonable. The article by Bruce that this thesis uses is from 2001, and a lot can happen concerning modernity and urbanisation in seventeen years. The U.S. is more modern in 2018 than it was in 2001; however, Denmark has also become more modern. Following Bruce's argument, this thesis should have researched Denmark's secularity/religiosity at one point in time and the U.S.'s at another point in time to be able to compare the two. This thesis did not do that because the state of modernity was not a factor in this research. Moreover, this thesis believes that both nations are modern to a great extent; to different extents in some cases, but one nation's modernity does not lessen the other nation's modernity. Modernity can be different things, and a country like the U.S. that is one of the most powerful nations in the World in 2018 cannot be considered much less modern than Denmark in 2018, despite the current leadership of the U.S.

It is a fact that the Danish Constitution connects state and religion and that the American Constitution separates state and religion. It is also a fact that there is a larger religious market in the U.S. than in Denmark and that religion is more public in the U.S. than in Denmark. Overall, the American people is more religiously active and more expressive and acceptant of religion than the Danish people is. These factors align with Rational Choice Theory. Rational Choice Theory connects everything to the constitutional stipulations, which the findings in this thesis support. The fact is that the National Church of Denmark is very close to a religious monopoly; it does not market itself extensively and minimally tries to attract new members. The state and tax funding has

made the National Church a lazy institution. Moreover, the majority of the Danish population sees the National Church as *the* religious option in Denmark, which is why 75.3% are members of the church and many within that 75.3% are inactive, cultural members, whose parent baptised them as babies, and who have not signed out due to tradition or maybe they just have not gotten around to it. The membership statistic is not representative of religion in Denmark because the inactivity is too prominent; however, the memberships are still an aspect of religion in Denmark that has to be considered and most of all it says a lot about Danish culture.

Another fact is that religions, different denominations, and institutions market themselves extensively in America. Marketing is the surviving factor for many religious institutions in America because this is how they attract new members and money. The heavy use of marketing also makes all the religious opportunities visible to the American people. This then makes it possible for the American people to make a rational choice regarding which religion suits them best, which results in higher religious activity. In reliance with RCT the constitutional stipulations have resulted in all of the above.

Based on the findings this thesis strongly agrees with RCT as an explanation for the differences in religious value, prominence and activity between the U.S. and Denmark. This thesis has not researched if RCT can explain the religious situation in other countries than Denmark and the U.S. RCT theorists claim that the theory can explain the religious situation in every country at any time. Further research into this could be used to support or challenge the findings in this thesis and its agreement with RCT.

As it was mentioned previously, this thesis has not researched secularisation of the individual or religion of the individual to a great extent. Doing so is an enormous undertaking that would have to involve fieldwork in the form of surveys and interviews in both Denmark and the U.S. Research on this would be extremely interesting and would further the understanding of the religion and secularisation of both nations. Unfortunately, the time frame for this thesis did not allow for such research. However, Zuckerman has contributed to research on secularisation of the individual in a Danish context in his process of proclaiming Denmark as a godless country. Zuckerman concluded that the Danes see religion as a private matter and are thereby reluctant to speak about it, in contrast to the American people. Zuckerman favoured secularisation in Denmark and saw the reluctance in the Danish people as an example of secularisation. Andersen and Lüchau

however, see aspects of societal secularisation as religion becoming individual and not religion declining.

This thesis does not believe that Danish religion is especially individualised today. Religion is private, but the National Church is still the frame that the majority of the population officially sets for their religious affiliation. However, Individualisation Theory (IT) can explain what religion is evolving into in Denmark. Religion is already a private matter, as it is established above, and there is a decline in the traditional use of the church concerning weddings, baptisms, and confirmations, which is an aspect of IT. Religion is and, if the decline continues as it has, could become utterly individual in Denmark. However, by the rates, the memberships, baptisms, weddings, and confirmations are declining, it would not happen in the near future.

Peter Berger is, as stated in the theory section, one of the founding voices of secularisation theory; his first statement was the foundation of the theory for many years, and his recantation was pivotal for the more recent understanding of secularisation. In the process of disregarding Bruce's claim, this thesis also disregards Berger's statement from 1967. The statement does not explain religion's prominence in the U.S. In 1999, Berger said that societal secularisation does not equal secularisation of the individual (Berger "Desecularization 3), which is supported by Davie, Zuckerman, Andersen and Lüchau and this thesis. Berger does not explain why religion is the way it is in the world today. However, he claims that the religions/institutions that have adapted to modernity are the ones experiencing a decline in supporters and activity, while the conservative and traditional religions/institutions are generally not declining and are in some cases increasing. This claim is a possible explanation for the religious situations in Denmark and the U.S. The National Church of Denmark has adapted significantly to the modern society it is a part of and is suffering a slow decline, while the more conservative Evangelical denominations in America are flourishing and contributing to the vast religious majority in America (6).

All of the factors discussed above have contributed to how religion is in society and how politicians use religion. This thesis, however, argues that the nature of religion in both countries comes back to the two constitutions. Both constitutions have affected its society and helped shape how the cultural and social acceptance of religion is today. American politicians use religion because the citizens accept it and the citizens accept it because religion is so public in America; while Danish politicians do not use religion in speeches because religion is a non-issue and a

private matter that has no place in Danish politics. The political use of religion in both countries affects private use and public acceptance and vice versa.

While individualisation of religion and modernisation of society have and presumably will continue to have an effect on religion in both nations, this thesis conclusion to the discussion of these aspects is that the constitution is the most influential factor. The constitutions have throughout history shaped each nation and their cultures and are a backbone of how several aspects of American and Danish society work. The constitutions do not directly affect religion in either country in everyday life, but it is the foundation on which religion has been implemented, upheld and understood for many years. Therefore, it must be the crucial reason for religion being the way it is in each country.

7. Conclusion

When comparing religion or secularisation in Denmark and the United States, the theory of modernisation by default creating a decline in religion promptly falls to the ground. It just seems impossible to explain the differences in religion in the two countries based on modern society, since both the Danish and the American society can be thought of as modern. Denmark is modern in one way and the U.S. in another, neither making the other less modern. The same can be said about religion and secularisation. Both countries are secular and religious to different degrees. Denmark is socially very secular, but a vast majority of Denmark's population is members of the National Church – for different reasons and to a different extent, but members non-the less. The United States of America is riddled with religion, primarily Christianity, but many other religions as well, while at the same time there is a clear separation between state and religion; and a secular elite is influencing society and creating conflict with the conservative religious. Religion in the U.S. is active, competitive and strong, while religion in Denmark is passive, lazy and insignificant. Denmark is religiously defined by the National Church, while the U.S. gives freedom to define religion. In both nations, new age spirituality is on the rise and eclectic religion is becoming more and more common. Believing in karma, reincarnation, and Jesus is possible and acceptable for both a Dane and an American. Some think of the U.S. as the exception, while others see Denmark (Europe) as the exceptional case concerning religion and secularisation.

This thesis argues that the most significant differences between Denmark and the United States of America concerning religion and secularisation are on the societal level and in how politicians publicly use religion. Secularisation on the societal level means that religion has lost its

capabilities to legitimate society and generally lost its value to the citizens and society as a whole. Through the work of this thesis, it can be concluded that Denmark is socially more secular than religious and that the U.S. is socially more religious than secular. Bush, Trump, and the other American politicians showed through their speeches that religion has value in society and is a legitimising factor, while the Danish politicians showed the opposite in their speeches.

While Denmark is less religious in the traditional understanding of religion, Danish civil religion seems to be flourishing as vigorously as ever and as vigorously as the American civil religion. Civil religion is notably expressed differently in the two countries. Religion, civil or otherwise is more directly addressed in the U.S. than it is in Denmark. The most direct use of civil religion is "Gud Bevare Danmark" and "God Bless America". The English version is used countless times in public by many different people, and the Danish version is only used once a year by the Queen.

This thesis also argued that a legal separation of state and religion has resulted in high religiosity in the U.S, while a legal connection between state and religion has resulted in low religiosity in Denmark. While looking at the religious landscapes in Denmark and the U.S., it became apparent that both nations have a strong religious history, but that the U.S. is now a religiously more prosperous country concerning active religion. Denmark has become a country that seems afraid of public religion, and personal religion needs to be kept entirely private, as Anders Fogh Rasmussen explicitly said in his article. The analysis showed that American politicians are more avid in using religion in speeches. Stig Grenov was the exception in Denmark, but even he did not mention personal religion. From a Danish point of view Grenov's use of religion in his speech was a lot but compared to, e.g., Trump's National Prayer Breakfast speech, it was nothing. American politicians use religion to establish ethos, to enhance arguments and create comfort and reassurance. This is unimaginable in a Danish context. Using personal religion would possibly have the opposite effect in Denmark.

The discussion concluded that the constitutional separation/connection of state and religion is the cause for how religion is socially in both countries, which then have resulted in the political use being either accepted or not. Religion has no merit outside the personal sphere in Denmark, and it seems essential for politicians that it stays this way. This is a sharp contrast to religion in America. In Denmark, expressing one's private religion is a bold statement, while it is bolder to express no religion or atheism in America. Going to church on Sundays in America is very common, wherein Denmark most people only go if there is a family event happening, such as a

baptism or if it is Christmas. It is fascinating that Americans, in general, are more acceptant of open religiosity than Danes. The reasons for this are many and individual, but the country itself has something to do with it as well. A considerable influence is the straightforward and public appearance of religious institutions, options, and offers in American society and the very invisible role religion plays in Denmark. Another influence is the political use of religion. As seen in the analysis of the speeches and statements, Danish politicians do not use private religion, rarely use civil religion and mostly only mention religion when speaking of religion in general and how it should not have an influence in Danish society and politics. The analysis also showed that American politicians are not shy to quote the bible or use other religious aspects to legitimate or enhance an argument. Hearing religion being used actively as a strategy to enhance an argument influences how a people itself speaks about and uses religion in their daily lives. The two aspects influence each other: politicians use religion publicly because Americans are open when it comes to religion, and Americans are open because religion is used in public. The same is true for Denmark; politicians do not use religion in public because it is a private matter and it is a private matter because religion is not visible in public. Changing one aspect would possibly affect the other.

It is understandable that people see Denmark as a secular country; it is highly secular in several aspects and seems secular on the surface due to the private nature of Danish religion. One cannot look at the National Church to find actual religion in Denmark. The memberships are far from representative of actual religion because of the tradition-based memberships and the low activity. So, overall religion in Denmark today is tough to determine especially because of the private nature of religion and the religious connotations in society have moved towards civil religion. What can be concluded is that there is an overall agreement that religion has to be kept out of the political system. America is stereotypically seen as a very religious country, which is also understandable, especially when the president proclaims it, but religion is also visible to the extreme in the political system and in society. Denmark's has an autonomous political system, but not an autonomous religious system, while America has an autonomous religious system, but not an autonomous political system. All of this shows two different approaches to religion and state: protect religion from the state or protect the state from religion.

8. Abstract

This thesis' hypothesis is that the most significant differences between Denmark and the United States of America concerning religion and secularisation are on the societal level and in how politicians publicly use religion. This thesis also hypothesises that a legal separation of state and religion has resulted in high religiosity in the U.S, while a legal connection between state and religion has resulted in low religiosity in Denmark.

There have been many voices of secularisation theory; most notably is perhaps Peter Berger's two separate statements on the theory. Firstly, Berger argued that modernity would by default create a decline in religion. Secondly, Berger argued thirty years later that the World is as furiously religious as it always has been.

One of the most significant differences concerning religion in Denmark and the U.S is the constitutional separation or connection of state and religion. This thesis believes that the constitution has affected the shape of religion in each country. The Danish National Church has close to a monopoly on religion in Denmark, while there is a vast religious market in America. This has caused low religious activity in Denmark and high religious activity in America. However, 75.3% of the Danish population are members of the National Church. The low religious activity means that most members of the National Church can be categorised as cultural members and primarily use the church for civil religious purposes. Even though there is high religious activity in the U.S., there is also many examples of civil religion, for instance, Independence Day, where patriotism and history are unifying factors. A day such as Sankthans is an example of civil religion in Denmark.

Another significant difference between the two nations concerning religion and secularisation is the social acceptance of religion. By this is meant how religion is present publicly in society. In Denmark, it is difficult to find active religion in public; there are many church buildings, memorials and other religious representations around Denmark, but these have slowly become more historical than religious. In the U.S. religion is more public and more actively present in society. Most noticeable are religious advertising, religious TV and radio stations and people on the street vigorously expressing their religion.

The two differences described above are both factors of Rational Choice Theory, which can be an explanation of religion's status in both nations. The religious monopoly in Denmark has created low religiosity and a religious decline because the National Church is one of the only prominent religious options in Denmark. The free religious market has created a need for religious

marketing in America, which means that every religious option is visible in the U.S and the American people make a rational, active choice concerning religion, which has resulted in less decline of religion and higher religious activity.

American politicians often mention religion in some way in their speeches. Be it a civil religious "God bless America" at the end of a speech, or an explicitly religious Bible quote, many American politicians do not shy away from expressing religion. Danish politicians on the other hand, are reluctant to speak about religion at all and if they choose to do so, it is most often strictly in general terms. Both the Danish and American political speeches exemplify how each nation value religion politically and societally. America as a nation is open concerning religion, while in Denmark religion is a non-issue. American politicians use and can use religion because of America's and the American people's open-mindedness concerning religion, while Danish politicians do not use religion and cannot use religion because of religion's low value and non-issue status in Danish society.

The political use or non-use of religion, the open- or closed-mindedness of the people and religion's societal presence all affect each other and changing one would possibly affect the other aspects as well. Seemingly it can all be traced back to the constitution of each country.

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