

Twelve Points on the historical-sociological Setting and theological Profile of the Danish Folk Church

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1. As a people of a common culture and as a nation Danes were formed by Christianity. During the development in more than 1000 years Christianity has become "the traditional religion" of the Danes. The content of Christianity in Denmark has to a far extent been eaten up: The property, infrastructure, ideological apparatus and social project of Christianity has been expropriated by the state and facilitated the development of our modern Welfare State.
2. The Christian Church - since the Reformation in 1536 The Evangelical Lutheran Church - has had a formal Monopoly of religious activity, since the free Constitution of 1849 the Monopoly is not formal but still rather practical. Denmark thus has the longest and strongest state-church tradition ever found. This is the main course behind our strong secularisation.
3. The connections between church, state and people in Denmark may be seen as the result of four wars: The civil war between e.g. Count Christoffer of Oldenburg and Duke Christian of Holstein 1534-1536, the 30 years war (1618-1648), resulting in Absolute Monarchy in Denmark 1660, and the wars with Germany 1848-1950 and again 1864.
4. There have not been any ruptures between state, people and church (i. e. civil wars, occupations, revolutions, cultural clashes, formation of alternative churches, great peoples movements etc) in Denmark since the reformation.
5. The continuation of the Lutheran church as a - passive - folk church (National Church) is greatly helped by the legal arrangement of the folk church as a state church, with privileges and restrictions (an insurance against too much religion).
6. The Danish tribe being almost communistic in terms of social and economic matters is extremely individualistic in existential, ethical and religious matters.
7. The Danes have no sense of "ecclesia" - in stead of a church we have a folk church which is the perfect church for people, who do not want to have a church.
8. The Danes are a plain people living at the plains - believing too little in too much. We are belonging - without even believing in belonging - to the church.
9. The folk church is structurally and ideologically a predominantly rural church - in a predominantly urban setting.
10. The Danes are Culture Christians, while a few are also Church Christians or Charismatic Christians.
11. The Mission of the Folk Church is being a Telephone Station for inter-communication between the three groups.
12. Theodor Jørgensen has suggested differentiated membership (catechumenal and double) of the folk church and non-Lutheran electoral congregations to cope with the new situation of growing plurality in terms of denominations, others religions and cultures in Denmark.

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