



# Religion, Rights and Secular Society: European Perspectives

*Peter Cumper, Tom Lewis*

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'Religion, Rights and Secular Society by Peter Cumper and Tom Lewis is a both timely and important publication. In a series of highly interesting and well-written essays - some of which are case studies covering many different European nations whereas others are more theoretical - the book looks at a key paradox in contemporary Europe: the relatively high levels of secularity in most European countries on the one hand, and the marked resurgence of religion in public debates on the other. While never pretending that there are ready answers to the problems of reconciling secular and religious values in Europe, the contributors make it quite clear that Europeans need to return to questions about religion that they had previously regarded as being settled. This is food for thought at a very high level!'

- Helle Porsdam, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

This topical collection of chapters examines secular society and the legal protection of religion and belief across Europe, both in general and more nation-specific terms.

The expectations of many that religion in modern Europe would be swept away by the powerful current of secularization have not been realized, and today few topics generate more controversy than the complex relationship between religious and secular values. The 'religious/secular' relationship is examined in this book, which brings together scholars from different parts of Europe and beyond to provide insights into the methods by which religion and equivalent beliefs have been, and continue to be, protected in the legal systems and constitutions of European nations. The contributors chapters reveal that the oft-tumultuous legacy of Europe s relationship with religion still resonates across a continent where legal, political and social contours have been powerfully shaped by faith and religious difference.

Covering recent controversies such as the Islamic headscarf, and the presence of the crucifix in school classrooms, this book will appeal to academics and students in law, human rights and the social sciences, as well as law and policy makers and NGOs in the field of human rights.

**Contributors include:** S. Bacquet, P. Cumper, E. Daly, G. Davie, P.W. Edge, A.C. Emilianides, T. Lewis, T. Loenen, V.A. Lykes, J. Mertus, M. Morav íková, J.S.

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