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Palacký Lecture

Stein Ringen

University of Oxford

**The Role of Religion in European Modernisation:
The Case of Scandinavia**

25 April 2024 at 4 p.m.

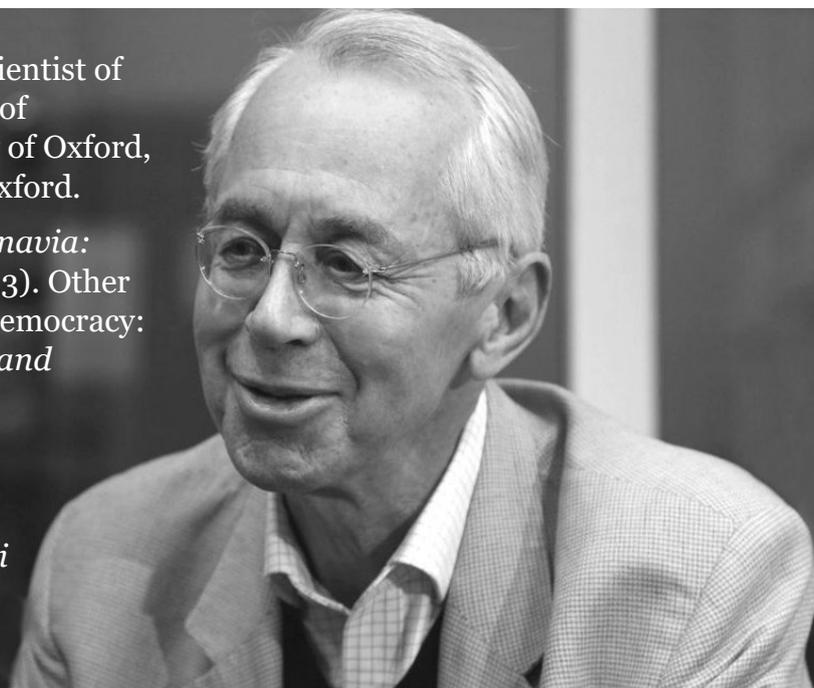
Charles University, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics

Refectory, Malostranské náměstí 2/25

In 1200 years of history, the Scandinavians have evolved from being Europe's barbarians to becoming its beacon of civilisation. They were latecomers in modernisation and only unexpectedly successful. In following their dramatic history through the centuries, religion presents itself as a constant influence, perhaps the only ever-present influence. That influence is two-fold: from faith itself and from church organisation. The story will bring us to a final question: Is the influence of religion still present or has secular modernity made religion obsolete?

Stein Ringen is a historian and political scientist of Norwegian origin. He is Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of Green Templeton College, Oxford.

His most recent book is *The Story of Scandinavia: From the Vikings to Social Democracy* (2023). Other books deal with various aspects of modern democracy: *How Democracies Live: Power, Statecraft, and Freedom in Modern Societies* (2022); *What Democracy Is For* (2007); *Social Reform in the Czech Republic* (1994); *Societies in Transition: East-Central Europe Today* (1993-1994). In Czech: *Národ ďáblů: Proč si necháváme vládnout?* (2017); *Perfektní diktatura: Čína ve 21. století* (2018).



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