



TESS

T.I.M.E. European Summer School

June 29th to July 11th, 2009

SUSTAINABILITY

SOCIAL MODELS – RELIGIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Objectives

The objective with the course is to give the student a deeper knowledge in non-technical issues concerning sustainability and the interactions between social models, religions and public affairs. Topics on sustainability to be discussed are *e.g.* sustainability in economic and political terms, approaches and ways to sustainability and sustainability in the world of business. Topics on social models, religions and public affairs to be discussed are *e.g.* European institutions and policies, the idea of Europe in the perspective of world views and values and environmentalism as civil religion.

The course will be performed in collaboration with SUPELEC (Paris), BUTE (Budapest) and UPM (Madrid). All sites will be audio and visually connected by Internet in real time.

After the course the student should be able to:

- Understand the principles of sustainability
- Understand the principles of and principal interactions between social models, religion and public affairs

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Introduction

Although the concept of sustainability has been around for a long time, it became more widely used in the 1980s. Back in 1983, the Secretary-General of the United Nations established a commission called the World Commission on the Environment and Development. This commission is frequently referred to as the Brundtland Commission, after Gro Harlem Brundtland, the head of the commission and formerly the Prime Minister of Norway. The commission was asked to look at the world's environmental problems and propose a global agenda for addressing them. She put together a team that went around the world and talked to people in all walks of life: fishermen, farmers, homemakers, loggers, school teachers, indigenous people and industry leaders. They asked what peoples' environmental concerns were and how they should be addressed.

The result of the study was that there wasn't one environmental issue that was first and foremost in peoples' minds. People talked about living conditions, resources, population pressures, international trade, education, and health. Environmental issues were related to all of these, but there was no hard and fast division separating environmental issues, social and economic issues. All the problems were intertwined. There were links among the environment, the economy and society that caused problems in one of these areas to affect the other areas.

As a result, the Brundtland Commission came up with a definition of sustainable development which emphasizes meeting needs, not just now, but in the future as well: "...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Earlier, independent states used to be the key actors in the world, and national governments used to be in control of domestic politics as well as the domestic economy. This is no longer true. There has been a change in the State-Market relationship; the market has gained influence, while the state has lost influence.

Some argue that this change in the State-Market relationship, what one might call globalization, have had serious consequences for the European Social Models. The re-launch of Europe, the Single European Market, can be seen as an attempt to mitigate the effects of increased globalization, but it can also be seen as an attempt by liberal

forces to force change upon the welfare models of Continental and Nordic Europe. However, the social models of Europe have proven very resistant, despite the challenge from globalization, much due to the public support of the national social models. The importance of path dependency has shown to be very strong.

The evolution of religions from their primitive forms to how they are today is a complex matter. The really important multiethnic religions are: Christianity (Protestantism, Catholicism and Orthodoxy), Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism.

In opposite to multiethnic religions, there are ethnic religions. The difference between a primitive ethnic religion and a multiethnic religion is the "exportability" of multiethnic religions. Ethnic religions are extremely associated with the particular ethnic group that practices it, so it is very difficult for others to embrace the same beliefs and therefore these religions cannot spread. Other people can sometimes take elements or even the whole cult, but always adapting it to their own nationality (e.g. Greek religion passing to Romans). If you take ancient Egyptian religion or Aztec beliefs, it is clear to see how religion has to do with the Egyptians and Aztecs respectively, but not with humanity in general. Multiethnic religions go beyond the tribe, so no matter where you come from, it is sufficient to follow what the religion dictates to be part of it and therefore it can be spread through the world.

Social models in different cultures are strongly influenced by religion. Furthermore, different social models lead to different ways of performing public affairs. These issues will be discussed and analysed in this course.

References

- Apolyton Civilization Site.
<http://apolyton.net/forums/Forum21/HTML/000279.html> (accessed 28-Feb-2008).
- Sustainable Measures, West Hartford, Connecticut, U.S.A.
<http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/Training/Indicators/Def-Br1.html> (accessed 28-Feb-2008).
- The Clash of Civilizations Team.
<http://clash.apolyton.net/models/Model-Social.shtml> (accessed 28-Feb-2008).
- Thörn, P. 2006. The Merchant and the Guardian - Ideological Economism: A Challenge to the Welfare State? Lunds University, Department of Political Science, Lund, Sweden. MSc Thesis

Course content and organisation

The different sites will take it in turn to give lectures every morning from Monday to Thursday. Lectures will be sent by Internet video link to the other sites



In the afternoons, local group discussions will be held on the topic given in the lecture on the morning. Thereafter, oral presentations and discussions will be held between the sites by video link.



After the lecture day, there will be time to write individual assignments of the day's topic at each site. Written individual reflections of the course have to be submitted at mid-term of the course.



Two study tours will be arranged each Friday at each site, one on each topic. They will also be followed by local group discussions and presentations on video link in the afternoons.



Programme

<p><u>Course introduction</u></p> <p>Monday the 29th of June 8.15 – 9 Overview of course content and course details.</p>	
<p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <p>Tuesday, June 30 Simulation and modelling of sustainability (BME)</p> <p>Wednesday, July 1 Energy, Climate Change and (Sustainable) Development (UPM)</p> <p>Thursday, July 2 Sustainable development – Vision or Fiction? (KTH)</p> <p>Friday, July 3 Study visit. Local arrangement at each site.</p> <p>Wednesday, July 8 Business in the Community: Sustainability in the World of Business – Corporate Social Responsibility (SUPELEC)</p>	<p><u>Social models – Religions and Public Affairs</u></p> <p>Monday, June 29 Technology for Human development – Challenges and answers in our changing world. (UPM)</p> <p>Monday, July 6 Sustainability and local adaptation strategies in the Tisza region (BME)</p> <p>Tuesday, July 7 The Social Future of Europe: Social Theories, Social Models and Social Problems (KTH)</p> <p>Thursday, July 9 European institutions and policies (SUPELEC)</p> <p>Friday, July 10 Study visit. Local arrangement at each site.</p>

Individual assignments

Tasks for individual written assignments will be distributed at the end of each lecture day, based on the topic given during that day.

Literature

Lecture material and parts not included elsewhere will be found in Bilda, an electronic platform administrated at KTH.

Course requirements

- Participation and approval on all course items (lectures, group discussions and study tours).
- Participation and approval in written group reports and individual assignments.
- Written individual reflections of the course.

Examination: 5 ECTS credits, given by KTH.

Grades

ECTS grades (A – F) will be received, mainly based on the individual assignments and to some extent based on group presentations. For receiving the grades A and B, the individual assignments have to be submitted on the last day of the course at latest.

Applications

- Opening date for application 12th of January 2009
- 1st due date of application 15th of March 2009
- 2nd due date of application 24th of April 2009
- Deadline date of application 15th of May 2009

If the student applies before the first due date, the first choice of Campus site and Accommodation should be guaranteed if the maximum number of students allowed at the campus has not been reached.

Between the first and second due date the student has to accept the second choice of campus if the maximum number of students allowed at the campus has been reached at their first choice campus, but not at their second choice campus.

After the second due date, the student has to accept the campus available and cannot expect help with, for example, accommodation and VISA. Applications are submitted at the course web page at KTH (please see below).

Scholarships

The TESS programme receives student grants from the EU-financed Lifelong Learning Programme *Erasmus*. These grants are aimed at travelling and subsistence costs. Students eligible for these Erasmus grants have to be enrolled at any of the four organising universities (*i.e.* KTH, SUPELEC, UPM or BME).

Course Web page

The course Web page can be found at www.energy.kth.se, under [Education](#).

Persons involved

KTH, Stockholm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Torsten Fransson – Head of Department of Energy Technology, Course examiner)• Dr Peter Hagström – Course responsible peter.hagstrom@energy.kth.se Tel.: +46-8-790 74 72 Cell: +46-70-231 96 85• Ms. Anneli Carlqvist – Course assistant• Mr Miroslav Petrov – Responsible for the communication tool Centra
SUPELEC, Paris	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Claude Lhermitte – Director for International Affairs• Anne S. Chretien – Accommodation, etc.
BUTE, Budapest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Peter Moson – General coordination• Mr. Gyorgy Horvath – Main responsible for TESS• Mr. Jozsef Balogh – Technical issues• Ms Ildiko Varga – Accommodation, etc.
UPM, Madrid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prof. Teresa Riesgo Alcaide – Vice-Director• Dr Isabel Ortiz – Main responsible for TESS

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