

Muslim and Christian  
cancer patients



*The need for existential and spiritual  
care in a secular society*

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# Program

- **Study:** Faith as a phenomena under influence of context, relation and process
- **Cases:** Thinking through narratives
- **Spiritual needs:** Accept & acknowledge
- **Existential approach:** Seeing religion as a way to come to terms with circumstances in life

# Faith and suffering



# Research design

- 15 Chaplains as gatekeepers
- 16 Cancer patients, 15 relatives  
15 professional care takers
- 4 medical wards at hospitals in DK
- 65 interviews. Contact from 3 weeks to 6 years



# Cancer Patients



# Faith as phenomena

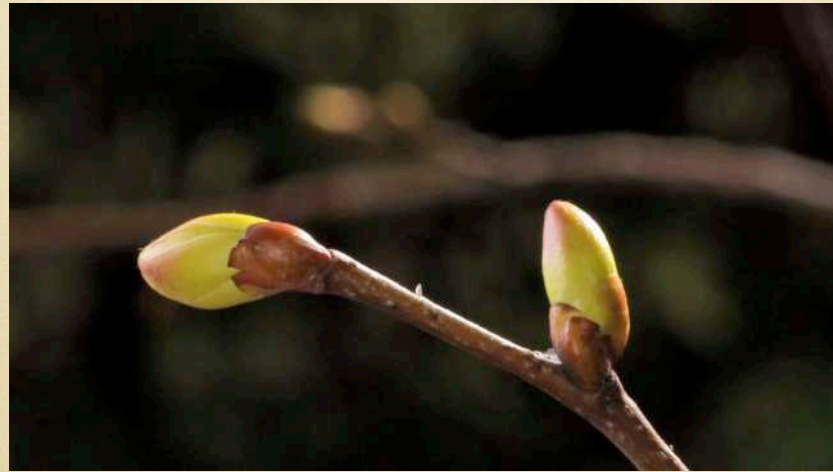




# Relational



# Processual





# Contextual



*Balkan Baroque*, Marina Abramovic

# Secularisation



# 'Society without God'



Chart on 'The importance of God' (EVS, 2008)

# Faith in numbers

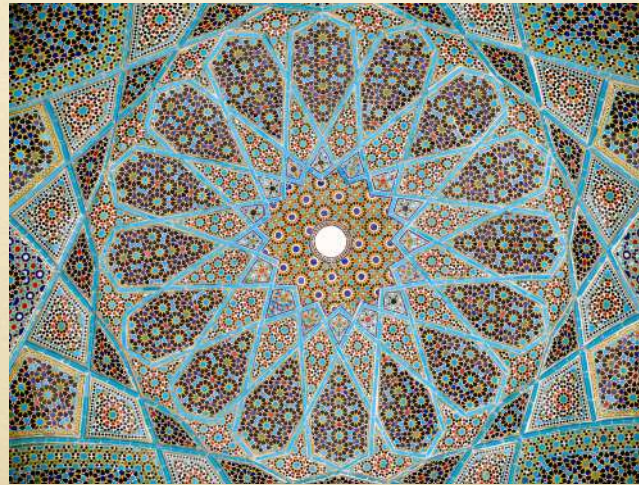
- Members of the state church: 76,9 % (2016)
- European Values Study : 64% (God) 9% (Hell)
- Practicing Muslims: app. 203.000 (2006)
- Practicing Buddhists: 20.200 (2005)

# Faith identiy

- Cultural Muslim
- Traditional Muslim
- Politic-ideological
- Conversion experience
- Modern Muslim
- (Bektovic, 2004)



# Meaning-making





# Spiritual needs

- Always in relation to a specific life world
- Interacting with others -also experience of God
- Identifiable through conversations and acts
- Expressing existential issues and concerns
- Changes over time (relapse, close to dying)

# Forgiveness



# Guidance



# Expression

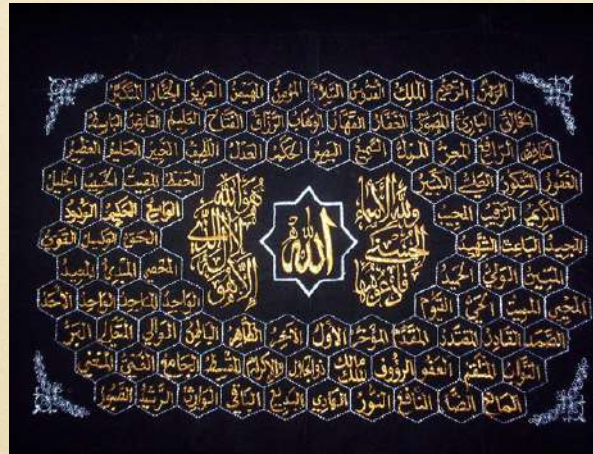


# Understanding





# Acceptance



Suffering as a renewed relation to God



# Connectedness



# Take home points!

- Faith is a complex phenomena
- Faith is influenced by context, change, illness experience, relatives' behavior and life world
- Spiritual needs may reflect existential issues
- Accept suffering and acknowledge faith

# Memento Mori



Thank you!



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