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# GELEGENHEITSWORTE 5

Pastoraltheological Contributions

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## 1991 Great migration movements

(Club of Rome 1991)

"Great migration movements are foreseeable and this not only for reasons of political, racist or religious persecution but to survive economically. In future, such migration movements will take place in Europe not only from the East to the West but still more from the South to the North. The demographic development is a different one than in the North in the South of the earth. The residents of today's industrial countries will not even supply 20% of the world population by the middle of the next century. This creates an enormous population pressure which will produce in connection with missing equal opportunities as well as of tyranny and oppression a massive migration-will in the direction of the North. Our descendants will presumably experience mass migration of unknown extent. This process has already started. We think only to the boat people from the Far East to the Mexicans who illegally come into the United States and to the Asians and Africans who press for Europe. One can imagine easily that in the extreme case innumerable starved and desperate immigrants with boats will land at the northern coasts of the Mediterranean." (King, Alexander and others: The global revolution, Spiegel special 2/1991: The Club of Rome 1991, 42 report.)

As the club of Rome 1991 has predicted for the large number of protection, peace and a perspective seeking refugees will cause among many people a feeling of defence. They speak about a "defensive racism": For the experts of the Club of Rome 1991 is "clear that no measures will stop the migration effectively. This could lead in the destination countries to a plainly increase of the defensive racism and help right-wing dictators right to get the power in general elections."

## 1994 Surviving in Solidarity

A Meditation. Hofburg, 1.5.1994

Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to give you a short but - I hope - profound meditation in this marvellous chapel of the Hofburg, introducing the concert of the Vienna Boys' Choir.

### The need for solidarity

I'll take the opportunity to speak about the need for solidarity. This is indispensable if we wish to see a future in justice, and therefore, in liberty and peace.

The keyword in this political thesis is justice. Peace can only exist on its foundation. In contrast, injustice is a threat to liberty and peace.

There are many challenges we face that cannot be overcome without a high degree of solidarity. Let us recall the most important ones:

- The migration movements forecasted from the poor to the rich countries;
- the decrease of available employment opportunities;
- the redefinition of the gender roles and the redistribution of opportunities of life between men and women;
- the ecological challenges: will there be an earth worth living on tomorrow?
- the life chances of the unborn, the old and the dying.

### Supply of Solidarity

But do we have, what we need for the future: a sufficient supply of solidarity?

The answer is not simply yes or no. In many developed countries there is well-organised solidarity in the areas of health, employment and education.

An optimistic fact moreover, is that people know very well that we cannot overcome without solidarity. A survey made in 1992 concluded that 85% of the Austrians placed solidarity much higher than obedience as an important goal in education of their children.

But at same time, there is a dramatic deficiency of activated solidarity. People want to be solidarian, but they cannot realise what they want to be.

People are privatising happiness and unhappiness. 72% agree with the item: Everyone has to solve his own problems. Or they say: It is important for man to become happy. But the way he does it, is his own matter.

Here we reach an important conclusion: The majority knows that we necessarily need solidarity. But only few are able to actualise it. There is a wide gap between desire and actualisation.

## **Political consequences**

This lack of solidarity has far-reaching consequences. Many countries are lacking those cultural forces that are indispensable for maintaining justice and therefore, peace and liberty. So political parties are faced with the tragic choice of either carrying out solidarian policies or remaining in power. The temptation to favour unsolidarian policies is clear. But precisely those unsolidarian policies are the ones that lead us away from a liveable future.

## **What shall we do?**

The simple question to be asked is: How could we increase the stock of solidarity in our cultures?

The first part of a serious answer is that the lacking solidarity cannot be conjured up by appeals to ethics or politics. It is senseless to demand a lame man to run quicker.

A much more promising approach is the attempt to uncover those forces in society working against solidarity and to change these.

A study conducted in a European country enables us to name a series of cultural forces that are closely related to the existence of solidarity.

Here are the most important findings:

- Firstly: Persons with a weak self are more prone to be unsolidarian.
- Then secondly: The wider the reality (the "life-world") a person lives in is, the more probable he or she will show solidarity. Many people in our cultures live in very small "worlds". Living in this type of a small world is usually quite strenuous. Man strives to fulfil limitless desires within a short life span. In such a life design there is only little chance for true solidarity.

- A third factor influencing the virtue of solidarity is personal religiousness. A religious person relativizes this life before death. Religion lets psychologically homeless persons inhabit the mystery of God himself. Such kind of religion reduces that anxiety, which - to use a picture - on the roots of the soul makes a person unsoldarian.

## **Some final questions**

The results of my short meditation are primarily not clear answers, but precise questions:

- How can we strengthen the self of our populations? Is education for solidarity and, therefore, for a strong and free self an important goal in our education in families, schools and workplaces?

- How can we open the small "worlds" in which the majority of our populations live? What do our cultures think about the limitation of our lives by death?

- And last but not least: Are we cultivating in our lives and in our societies the desire of every human being to be related to a "reality beyond the reality" (as Elie Wiesel, a famous Jewish thinker, has called it).

Solidarity, and therefore, the future of our one world has deep roots in the old religious traditions of our cultures.

I thank you for your attention.

## 2001 Priests facing the Modernization-stress

Aus: Stimmen der Zeit, 219 (2001) Heft 7, 443-455.

The last extensive surveys about priests were made in 1971: in Germany, in Austria, in other regions of the worldwide Catholic Church. In the time of the post-conciliar departure one tried to know more about the life and work of priests. There were enough arguments available for it: The Council redefined (Philip Selznick) the Church and within it the role of the laity. This must have even affected the self-image of priests. The "Priests-Church" was transformed into a "People-of-God-Church". Because of a shortage of time, the Council didn't make enough progress with the re-organisation of the priestly service. Therefore, shortly after the Council debates began about the priesthood and its transformation. Conferences of bishops contributed, at the same time also groups of well-organized priests. Not only celibacy was discussed and kept the synod of bishops in 1971 occupied: The main question was, what a priest is, in the face of the new concept of the Church as well as the newly redefined role of the laity.

The research-field has since than kept surprisingly quiet. There have been only small studies about the priesthood in the last thirty years. Only systematic theologians have written extensive works about what a priest is. Further results of symposia, spiritually oriented articles have been published and in "Festschriften" one finds reflections about the situation of priests. However, the transformation of the life and work of priests continued unstopably. Two processes are prominent: the deep transformation of the position of religion and Church in a socially and culturally mobile Modernity and the Europe-wide phenomenon of shortage of "priests within earshot", as the German bishops identified it.

On the oldest Chair for Pastoraltheology, in cooperation with the Institute for Churchly Social Research (AfkS), I started to study the forgotten priests. The results of the study "Priests 2000" are available as a book. In this contribution the research-architecture and main results are presented to a wider public. There have preceeded presentations in Priest-Councils and for Leaders of the dioceses, which took part in the survey. I pay thanks to the priests for their cooperation in this study.

### Moving prelude

The advertising of the study in very different regions of the Church (post-communist regions, "western" dioceses) could be a study in itself. In

1971 the studies in Switzerland, Germany and Austria were ordered by the Conferences of bishops. Foreseeing that such a study as mine nowadays would not be welcomed by the Church leaders, we didn't address ourselves to the Conference of the bishops. We tried to win over the Priest-Councils. Some bishops decided later for or against their Priest-Council. The arguments were similar: "As bishops we know our priests." "Their priests" yes – but all priests? And how deep was the knowledge? Other bishops said they wish spirituality for their priests, not surveys. Who could argue against such a position? Reason or grace: an old move to avoid facing unpleasant reality. Much clearer was a letter of the nuncios to the participating dioceses: There were questions, which traditionally were handled in the „forum internum“ (perhaps questions about formation, about the well-organized household – there were no questions about a lady-friend or the culture of sexuality).

Moreover, in the course of a survey the "mystic-sacramental" image of the Church would be transformed in a "socio-logistical" one. It's true: some expect too much from a sociological survey, at the same time others fear too much. We were threatened by a third argument: "If the data were published, the stand of the clergy would be heavily damaged." wrote a bishop.

The "anxiety of mother Church" (according to the affected bishop) is great. The image of the western-European clergy is likewise bad. The bishops were urged to do everything to stop the survey. The nuncios, perhaps in theological daylight doubting their own arguments, were too late in delivering the letter, and the questionnaires were filled out and sent to Vienna.

The attitude of the priests to the survey was different to the official dis-suaders, who wanted to stop the survey: They expected that the study would create a solid basis for the reflection on the life and work of priests today. Looking away anxiously does not help priests, but looking on appreciatively does.

Even for us one of the aims of our research is personal development and with that development of the organization of the Church. Bishops are, within the frame of their duty of care, responsible for an appropriate and well-grounded personal development for all their co-workers. On this basis, one brave bishop did ask the priests of his diocese to participate in the survey, because he saw that as a useful service for their colleagues. The results of the survey support him.

## Participation

Nineteen dioceses of different regions of the Catholic Church in Europa (from Poland to Croatia, Austria, Germany East and West until Switzerland) took part. About 2500 anonymously filled out questionnaires are available. On average, 40 percent of the sent out questionnaires were sent back. This is a surprisingly high rate for a survey using a hard-copy questionnaire, which took about two hours to be completed.

Full sample surveys are never representative. But we asked the priests to send us a postcard with their name separate from the filled out questionnaire. In that way we could compare the age-structure of the clergy of the respective diocese with the age-structure of respondents. Both age-structures were very similar. We asked only the clergy doing pastoral care, independent of whether they belonged to a congregation or a diocese.

## Typology

The heart of the study is how priests understand their office. How do they see their priestly service, how do they fulfil it? Do they understand their office as Christ-centred and/or community-centred? How do they perceiving their office historically: timeless and/or in development?

Between the two covers of systematic books about priests you mostly find only one ideal image of what a priest is. However, between the book covers of real priests you find many concepts of priesthood. Not only every Christian, but also every priest is a "special case". Though among the unique types of priesthood we find many similarities which can be dug out statistically.

To separate the different types of understanding of the priestly office (priesthood) we used a lightly enriched battery of items of the German Priest-Study of 1971. This contains a handful of important statements about priesthood. We excluded only one item which was accepted by nearly all respondent priests: „The priesthood is a service for the communities.” Regarding the other items, there were considerable differences.

## Priesthood

...is a service for a community

...is installed by Christ.

... demands the whole inner life of its holder.

- ... represents Christ.
- ... serves the spiritual growth of the Church.
- ... is personal vocation.
- ... holds the entrusted community in the trace of the gospel.\*)
- ... takes care that the communities formed by the gospel are connected with the local Church \*)
- ... represents the community
- ... is the result of an historic development.
- ... is non rooted in a special ordination
- ... was created by the early Christian communities
- ... serves primarily for arbitration of conflicts, for human living together in the community

\*) we added these items

Based on the analysis of our rich data for types of understanding of the priesthood could be identified. Among them there are clear differences. They can be easily related to the theological debate about priesthood. The statistical program puts the priests in four “clusters” according to their answers. Whoever belongs to a particular cluster gave similar answers to all twelve items about the understanding of priesthood. We gave each of the four clusters a name.

## Four types of Priesthood

The first type we named „timeless cleric“. The definition of the priestly office is Christ-centred: from Him he has a vocation which is expressed by ordination. He represents Christ within in the community. This vocation occupies his inner existence and serves the development of the Church. He does not accept the idea that he represents the community. He shows even less understanding for an historic development of the office. He sees the office “timeless”. It is in every age there is nothing between the priest and Christ.

The contrasting type to the „timeless cleric“ is the „up-to-date community leader“. For him, ordination and direct vocation by Christ are secondary. He does not understand his priesthood as Christ-centred, but community-centred. He finds Modern concepts about priesthood acceptable (like to hold the community in the trace of the gospel, to hold the community together with the other communities of the local Church). He is open for a historical development of priesthood. Priesthood as it is nowadays is the product of an historical process. Perhaps it is a creation of

the early communities and not installed by Christ. Those items are highly accepted by priests of this type.

The third type is the „time-near Churchman“. He has no understanding for historical developments of priesthood. He highly appreciates vocation and installation by Christ. His orientation is not so much the community, but the Church.

The fourth type is the „time-open Man of God“. On the one hand there are many similarities with the “timeless clerics”, particularly the deep relation to Christ. He feels also that his office touches his whole inner being. At the same time he feels related to community. Though he holds the installation of priesthood by Christ, he nevertheless accepts historical developments of the office. The “time-open Man of God” is that type which does not fix itself to the one or the other polar position. He is not the “either-or-type” (as the “time-less clerics” or the “up-to-date community leaders”), but he is the “And-type”: Christ-centred and community-centred, timeless and in development.

The priests in the examined Church regions are distributed differently to these four types. In more modern and richer “Western regions” there is an above average number of “up-to-date community leaders” and “time-near Churchmen”. However, “Eastern regions” (the postcommunist countries) have a high percentage of “timeless clerics” and “time-open Men of God”.

Even according to the age of ordination the types are distributed differently. In the middle group (ordained after the Vatican Council) the percentage of “up-to-date community leaders” is the highest. It decreases in favour of the “timeless clerics” in the direction of the younger groups of priests and arrives among these the percentage of the eldest groups. This “U-shape” we find for many single results. The eldest and the youngest ordination-classes are similar, but presumably for different reasons, because former constellations historically never simply return. In the middle there are those who are ordained during the Vatican Council like a “sandwich-generation”.

## Forming forces

The second topic of the analysis of the rich data is the simple question how can we understand that at the same time in the same diocese one priest becomes a “timeless cleric” and another an “up-to-date community leader”. Where is the course set? Which forces influence the access?

The result: Many forces are working. Monocausal models of interpretation are discounted. A first bundle is theological. The different

understandings of the priesthood have their own strengths, which can always become dangerous.

## **Theological dimensions of the office**

The „timeless cleric“ stands theologically for the concept of representation of Christ as the head of the Church. He remembers that the gospel deals with the proactive action of God in Christ (“installation by Christ”). He indicates that the Church owes itself to Christ. He represents the official counterpart of Christ to the community. He stays for the underivability of the priesthood. He feels how much the whole person is absorbed by the office. The “timeless cleric” stand for the “Christological” dimension of the priesthood.

Completely different is the „up-to-date community leader“. His feeling for the Church as priestly people of God is distinctive. The appreciation of baptism is typical for him. Therefore, he understands himself as „a brother among brothers and sisters“. Augustin’s “Together with you I am a Christian” counts more than his “For you I am a bishop”. He respects the fundamental equality of all. To promote the different charismas is for him a matter of concern. He has a high theological and practical appreciation of synodality. The “up-to-date community leader” stands for the “ecclesial-functional dimension” of priesthood.

The „time-near Churchman“ points in a totally different direction theologically-speaking. His main position: Id needs ordination (jurisdiction), but also competence. Vocation has to become a profession: this is not possible without professionalization, because a priest is also an employee of the Church. The “time-near Churchman” relativizes community in favour of the Church as an institution. This has consequences for the role: Between the I and the official role a cultivated distance is needed. Who has a profession, needs profession-free spaces and times: recreation produces creativity. This type embodies the “vocational dimension” of priesthood.

To conclude, the „time-open Man of God“. He holds the balance between representation of Christ and of the community. According to the Vatican Council the representation of Christ is seen functionally: as a service within the Church. He balances the “opposite” with the “together”: the official and the common priesthood. Office for him has a synchronic and diachronic function for unifying: within the community and between them. Characteristic is also the balance between spiritual depth and openness. The “time-near Man of God” stands for the “pontifical function” of priesthood.

If we describe the strength of the different types positively, than it becomes clear, that every type carries within itself a dimension which is theologically valid. The consequence: No one owns for himself the whole richness of the catholic understanding of the priesthood. Only together they yield the richness of the Catholic priesthood.

Strengths always reveal limits. According to personal development every type of priesthood needs the three others so as not to be one-sided. Therefore, every priests has to learn from the other three types of understanding of the office. This demands that priests do not use the differences for building battle camps and for hostile sieges, but see them as an enormous chance for self-development. Every priest should gain from the other three groups a good friend, from whom he can learn for his theological understanding of his priesthood.

A priest who doesn't learn bunkers himself so to speak within his (finite) strength, he gets into danger and becomes a pastoral danger. The strength of a "timeless cleric" tips over easily into a clericalism which attributes no significance to the common priesthood of all believers. The "up-to-date community leader" is endangered by laicism and doesn't know any longer why he is ordained because he overrates the common "brotherhood". The "time-near Churchman" can become simply an official and deteriorate into a "liberal Parish-Sir". The "time-open Man of God" is not immune to fleeing the tension which is within his "pontifical understanding of priesthood". He is in danger of leaving the bridge between time and God and of fleeing to one side or the other.

## **Stress of Modernization**

The different theological dimensions of priesthood do not explain sufficiently, why priests have different understandings of their office. The question is left open why some are attracted by the one theological dimension and others by those which clearly put the accent on another dimension. The attitude of a single priest to the world of today, to "Modernity" progresses.

As the data of the study insinuate, many priests feel a strong tension between culture and the gospel, the lifeworld of the people and the positions of their own Church. Within this tension priests take their position. Some go on the side of the Church and view the world from there. The others take exactly the opposite viewpoint. They look from the world at the Church.

By that positioning the understanding of the picture of the priesthood is clearly formed. "Timeless clerics" position themselves on the side of the

Church und criticize the, in their eyes, faithless “modern world”. The “up-to-date community leaders” are found on the side of the “world”. They feel themselves to be contemporaries. From there they look at the Church which is for them „world-alien“ and „unmodern“. The “time-near Churchmen” are similar to the “up-to-date community leaders” and therefore near to the pole of the “world”. Finally the “time-open Men of God” move according to their character of balancing “in between”. They feel bound to the Church as well as to the people. To use some literal word-play: The “timeless clerics” are “world-averted”; the “time-open Men of God” are “world-converted”; the “time-near Churchmen” are “world-deft” and the “time-open Men of God” art “world-related”.

Therefore, the types of priesthood are not only formed in the confrontation with the multiple facets of the Catholic understanding of the office, which are have grown historically and are simultaneously accessible. The experiences with the “modern” world of today also shape their image of priesthood in the long term. Many priests are living in the stress of modernization. Both forming forces, for instance the relation to the world, develop from childhood. Their understanding of the priesthood can be developed according to a priests live experiences, for example, if a priest changes from a traditional parish in the country side to working with youth or from a hospital to a leading position within the Church.

This pliability strengthens the hope that the single types are open to learning and can be moved by self-development or organized personal development: not simply by changing from one type to another, but by enriching one own’s strength by some qualities which are characteristic of others.

## Branches

The third big palette of insights is “consequences”, which the respective understanding of priesthood has for the work and the life of a priest. The type is like the trunk of a tree with branches.

A first branch is the evaluation of the religious situation of the culture and the situation of the Church within it. I can illustrate this by comparing the two opposite types: The “timeless clerics” diagnose a crisis of faith, the “up-to-date community leaders” a crisis of the Church. Consequently the one claim for a new evangelization of the unchristian culture, the others for a modernizing of the unmodern Church. For the ones the Church after der Vatican Council is “secularized”, the others are complaining that the Church is “alienated from the world”. Consequently the evaluation of the Vatican Council differs. There are only a few “timeless

clerics” who refuse the Council totally. Most of them are satisfied with the direction, but also with the realization of the Council, which has slowed down very much in the last few years. Among the “up-to-date community leaders” are many “disappointed Council-reformers”, which we find among the signatories of the Church-Reform-Petition.

The second branch is related to the main focussed points in the service of a priest. “Timeless clerics” see the strength of a priest to be free for propagation of the gospel. “Up-to-date community leaders” see themselves shoulder to shoulder with those people, who they want to accompany through their lives. “Timeless clerics” see their main task in liturgy and proclamation; “Up-to-date community leaders” in diaconal Social-Pastoral. The relation to the laypeople differs as well. „Timeless clerics“ tend to claim for a final- therefore an sole-responsibility of priests for the decisive processes in the life of the Church and its communities. On the contrary, the “up-to-date community leader” demand an expansion of synodality: the pastoral boards should not only give advice, but should decide on many more matters than today is possible. While the ones support monocratic leadership, the others appreciate synodic structures. The “time-open Men of God” combine both and stand for well led synodality. They follow the rule: The more participation, the better the leadership needed. Therefore they are interested in professional development not only for training in modern propagation of the gospel, but also in leadership and cooperation.

## **Spiritualities**

The third branch is related to the person of the priest: to that which is helpful to fulfil his priestly work and to cultivate his celibacy. There are differences in regard to helpful resources. These are multiple. Traditional „institutions“ are experienced as being helpful because they relief the burden from the individual: the regular liturgy of hours, spiritual guidance connected with regular confession, retreats. There are some forms of personal spirituality which help priests: prayer, meditation and theological readings. Common spirituality differs from them: bible-sharing, common prayer and spiritually directed supervision. The Vatican Council suggested spirituality in the everyday pastoral work: this is a fourth variation of spirituality. Finally priests are supported by networks: teams in which priests work together, life together and pray together.

The four types have at theirs disposal a different amount of these multiple resources regarding quality and quantity. The “time-open Men of God” have, followed by the “timeless clerics”, in sum the most helpful resources, the “Up-to-date community leaders” have the least. In

direction to the “Up-to-date community leaders” the base of the resources decreases: traditional resources like common spirituality are totally lacking. Only private spirituality, pastoral service and human support are helpful for them. This insight is upsetting. The „Up-to-date community leaders“ experience the highest degree of stress of modernization. Therefore they should have a high degree of spiritual resources: but obviously they don't possess enough. That causes a low average level of satisfaction with the profession. Among this group are the most (although not many), who – if they could choose again – would not become priest and who would not advise young people to choose the priesthood. Among them are relatively speaking the most who leave office because of celibacy.

## **Unsupported celibacy**

The topic of a celibate life-style was given much attention. This was not with the aim which Church leaders feared and reformers hoped, who expected data for the abolition of celibacy and who wanted to hear how priests didn't keep their celibacy.

The result regarding the quality of celibacy of priests was surprisingly positive. In our hypothesis we expected, that celibate life as well as marriage in our times was under heavy stress. We determined hypothetically that a third are successful, a third fight and a third fail, resigning themselves inwardly or openly leaving the job.

The data show that priests recognize for their celibate life many good reasons and accept these. However, only a segment masters celibacy without crises. For modern cultures crises are normal, is fluctuation up and down like in marriage (looking back two third of the questioned priests see themselves so). Only a few give up and stop the celibate way of life: formally by leaving the office because of marriage, or they live in a liaison without formally cancelling the vow of celibacy. Fewer as 10% belong – varying according Church region and modernization-stress – to this group of “priests in a clandestine liaison”. Even celibacy suffers modernization-stress. The answer of most priests is not dropping celibacy, but its “modernization”. Such modernization is a risk for its maintenance. But at the same time it is problematic, because priests are measured by premodern criteria, and this by those, who for themselves practice a modern style of relationship.

As the data show modernization influences also the beginning of celibate life. There are only a few priests, who decided since very beginning freely and think that there were not really changes during their life. We find

them mostly among the “timeless clerics”. Much bigger is the group of priests, whose celibacy matured. They also vowed clearly at the beginning for the celibate life. However, there was a maturing over the years. The third group are those, who accept this lifestyle without persuasion. This doesn’t change over the years. In the younger generation of priests this number decreases.

Therefore, those who live the celibate lifestyle traditionally fence themselves off. Their principle in the traditional education in seminaries was “Numquam solus cum sola!” Other priests style their celibacy in a modern way. They are open to experiences, have an open visor for women, risk relationships, deep communications and conflicts, life on the border, but through all ups and downs stay celibate. A third small group doesn’t contemplate such risky experiences.

But isn’t it the same with married people? As for them, important questions arise for priests who live their celibacy in a modern way: In their risky life, is there enough support for them? Is there counselling available for priests who lack the personal resources to deal with the crisis? Are there enough spiritual resources? The data suggests that those who need many spiritual resources have only a few.

The experiences of celibate priests have an interesting cultural aspect. There is at first glance a trend in our culture, that relationships between persons who are attracted to one another are marriage-like or they cannot be lived. There seems to be nothing between these two possibilities. Today a rich and elaborated culture of friendship is lacking. Priests who don’t want to become lonely and therefore want to have close relationships, could gather experiences for our culture, neither to become lonely nor to be married: but still to live in mature and responsible relationship which earns the name “friendship”.

Additionally to the insights in the modernization of celibate lifestyles, the study demonstrated that the celibacy which is expected by the Church has no support neither in society nor in the Church itself. In that question all types of priests agree. The conclusions which priests draw differ however. The „timeless clerics“ complain a lack of support and demand it; the “Up-to-date community leaders” can’t see any chance, that in our region in foreseeable future there will be a broad support in society and Church and therefore they demand free choice. In that case, according the study, the celibacy would disappear. Many priests agree with the item: Even when celibacy would be free, it would be very difficult for young people, to choose celibacy, because nobody supports and encourages it. Therefore, whoever wants that celibacy remains even they were free to choose, pleads for a greater appreciation of celibacy in the communities at least, before priests can make a free choice.

## **Secondary, unavoidable defensive clericalism**

The study draws attention to a supposedly irrelevant problem which is a result of the current shortage of priests. This problem would become better accessible, if we juxtapose important phases in the recent development of the theology of priesthood. The starting point is the Tridentine picture of the Good Shepherd: it is a priest, who cares for the entrusted believers – he must know them – and gives them the sacraments for their life-journey.

The Second Vatican Council has enriched this traditional image of the priesthood. Next to the responsibility for the sacraments the promulgation of the gospel – the Word of God – was highlighted. The promotion of the laity brought new tasks for the priests. The image of the priest, who founds and leads communities, was painted.

The shortage of priests transforms this enriched role of the priests perceptibly. Now the focus of the priestly activities shifts from the person to the organization of often many communities. The priest becomes the Coach of many full-time and unsalaried co-workers. He loses the access to ordinary people. Over 80% of the priests, across all types of priesthood, complain about this “pastoral state of emergency”. This loss is the more precarious, as according to studies in modern populations people expect from the Church rites and comfort through care of their souls. What holds stable amidst the shortage of priests is the responsibility for fewer sacraments (even baptism, marriage, sometimes anointing of the sick, migrate from the priest to the laity) and the celibate life.

Especially the younger classes and the coming candidates for priesthood experience this development as a threatening hollowing out of the role of priests. Their answer is defence against the ongoing development.

They resist celebrating more masses, which they are asked to perform because of the shortage of priests; they are reluctant to take on the responsibility for more parishes. They are against the plan, to transfer more and more task to lay-people which until now have been bound to the priesthood. They do not do this for traditional arguments of a returning authoritarian clericalism. The new clericalism is rather unavoidable, secondary and is the result of a creeping hollowing out of the profile of priesthood.

Priests who tend to that new clericalism push back the lay-people, reclaim more responsibility for the priests, even in the parish councils. They are also against “viri probati” for whatever considerations – pastoral (because of the possibility of celebration of the Eucharist in communities) or liberal ones (because of human rights). The recent development, which manages the shortage of priests – something which is unavoidable – by

building new pastoral structures, endangers the priesthood as well as authentic pastoral professions for lay-people. All this could lead to troubles in the development of the reform planed by the Vatican Council.

Aus: Stimmen der Zeit, 219 (2001) Heft 7, 443-455.

## 2004 Religion in Austria

### Austria Steeped in Christendom

Historically, Austria is one of the countries that were once “steeped in Christendom.” These countries originated during the fifteen hundred years that Christianity predominated in Europe. The Reformation in the sixteenth century, moreover, had a lasting effect on the structural formation of Austrian society. The Peace of Augsburg (1555) and the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), the peace negotiations which ended the Thirty Years’ War, led to a close interplay between Church and State. The decision that the religion of each state was to be settled by the ruler, the phrase “Cuius regio eius et religio” meant that, as the ruling Habsburgs were Catholics, Austria, much of which had meanwhile become Protestant, was re-Catholicized. This Counter-Reformation was undertaken with full force on the part of the state and society. Anyone who did not comply lost their social status and, therefore, all means of earning a livelihood. Sometimes, they even lost their lives.

Thus in 1527, the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand I introduced a “Law to Stamp Out and Punish Heresy” which said the following:

*Whosoever shall sinfully and obstinately hold beliefs that are against the Twelve Articles of our Holy Christian Faith and against the Seven Sacraments of the Communion of Christian Churches, which clearly marks such a person as a heretic, that same person shall receive due punishment of life and limb in accordance with the occasion and dimension of his wrongdoing, unrepentance, blasphemy and heresy. Likewise, any person who acquiesces with anyone guilty of such heresy as described above shall also be placed under the ban. In like manner, such a person shall be robbed of the freedom Christians enjoy, and shall be declared to be without honor and unfit for any honorable post or office, nor shall he be allowed to hold any such honorable post or office. In the same way, anyone who effects the punishments called for above, or carries out similar punishments, shall not be considered in any way culpable or guilty. A heretic shall not have the power to purchase or sell anything, nor to pursue a craft or trade. Such a person shall not be allowed to make a last will or testament that could be beneficial to him. Likewise, every good Christian father must disinherit his own son if he is a heretic and legally dispossess him of all his paternal possessions. And similarly, the son must disinherit the father [ . . . ]<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> P.J. Riegger, *Corpus Iuris Ecclesiastici, Bohemici et Austriaci* (Wien, 1770), 100 ff

But not only was church membership and the “true” (that is, Catholic) faith protected and prescribed by the state, participation in the life of the Church was also subject to state laws. Thus, on 7 February 1532, a law was passed requiring “[e]veryone to go to confession and communion at Easter: Secondly, every Catholic of responsible age, both male and female, must prepare themselves for confession and communion provided by the Christian Catholic Church and must therefore draw up a proper list of sins and deliver the same to the master of the house.”<sup>2</sup>

Of course, such decrees also show that people obviously did not always participate in the life of the Church to the extent that the Church or the rulers would have liked. Thus, in a decree issued by the Empress Maria Theresia on 14 July 1770 and entitled “On Keeping Holy Days Holy,” the Empress notes that certain abuses had arisen. Among other things, it came to her notice, “Celebrating Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and keeping them Holy is being neglected, especially by the common man,” whereupon she passed a decree which aimed above all to give “the common man, who has become lax” no further opportunity for idleness and the excesses which result from it, and by means of better religious instruction which “will lead men to keep the Day of the Lord and his Saints Holy.” Markets were no longer to be held on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation, and all parishes were to hold “Christian Instruction” instead. The Imperial Royal Austro-Bohemian Court Chancery was to ensure that the decree was enforced.<sup>3</sup>

The result of such policies was not merely that church and state were closely interwoven in this Austrian version of a society steeped in Christendom. All the other important social institutions, like marriage and family, education and schools, research and the penal code were equally closely interlinked.

But not only were the social structures closely interwoven in post-Reformation Austria, Catholicism was seen as a sort of socio-cultural legacy that one took for granted. The everyday life of the population was deeply molded by the feast days, rites, and images of the monopolistic Catholic Church. With time, people automatically belonged to it. Children were baptized, couples married in front of or in the Church, and the dead were buried in Catholic graveyards. People believed what the Church told them to believe, or at least in the package deal as a whole. They were also well-acquainted with their church’s moral directives, and were prepared to go to confession if they did not obey them. For a long time, that was inescapable. Faith and the Church were a part of one’s destiny.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 230.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Appendix 12-15.

They were naturally accepted as a part of one's life that were simply there. But, in fact, they were actually more than that. The Catholic faith and the Church were collectively "apportioned" to each individual.

Austria as a whole was Catholic and so was its culture. The state was based on Christianity in its Catholic form, "In Austria, as in all those European states which have accepted Christendom as the basis of their constitution, baptism is the necessary condition for civil rights and for full civil legal status."<sup>4</sup>

## Western European Modernization

A change set in when, under the Habsburg Monarchy, western European modernization reached Austria. It was triggered by a mental (nominalism, a new concept of the world), technical (the invention of the steam locomotive), social (transformation of a corporate into a class society with the dramatic impoverization of the industrial proletariat recruited from the now disintegrated ranks of the craftsmen and peasants), and, political revolution (enlightenment, struggles for freedom and social revolutions). Step by step, a modern state was formed, and what had up to then been a culture steeped in Christendom became a pluralistic culture. With that, however, the social position of the Catholic Church changed as well. Unlike the modernization that took place in England or North America, this revolution was also always against the Church because the Church was one of the pillars of the political and social hierarchy. The churches were to lose their political influence so that, without the fierce opposition that religious motivation caused, it would be easier to change society. In practice, this movement led, in Austria, to the gradual withdrawal of the Church from politics and, as a consequence, the retreat of politics from the churches. This withdrawal took place in stages. First of all, the Church withdrew to the ruling dynasty. Then, after democratic political parties had been formed, it withdrew to the "Christian-Social camp," and, finally, after the experiences shared by all the democratic forces in Austria in Nazi concentration camps in World War II, the Church became "a free Church in a free state" as defined in a church declaration of 1952. According to a survey taken in 2000, 80 percent of Austrians think that "church leaders should not try to influence the government in its decision-making." An even higher percentage (84 percent) stressed that "church leaders should not try to influence voters at elections." At the

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<sup>4</sup> D.J.Helfert, *Darstellung der Rechte, welche in Ansehen der heiligen Handlungen dann der heiligen und religiösen Sachen sowohl nach kirchlichen als nach Österreichischen-bürgerlichen Gesetzen stattfinden*, 3rd ed. (Prag, 1943), 18.

same time, only 24 percent of the population of a country formerly steeped in Christendom was convinced that “politicians who do not believe in God should not hold public office.” Even among regular churchgoers, only 28 percent were of this opinion.

The separation of Church and State facilitated the modernization of society. As in other western European countries, the cultural revolution of 1968 was a decisive moment for the Catholic Church in Austria. Freedom, that European cultural achievement, became a mass product. All forms of outside control were rejected. Individual choice, on the other hand, became socially acceptable. Institutions, traditional norms (not only as far as morals, but also as far as roles were concerned), and authorities all came under “outside control.” That is why all three of the above went through a transformation crisis. They were not principally rejected, but their image deteriorated greatly, and they remained “acceptable” only if they were judged to be useful. It was a final “Goodbye to the Underling.”<sup>5</sup>

The year 1968 and those that followed were a period of noisy but non-violent revolution. The extent to which this revolution was radical is born out by Austrian long-term surveys. Initiated by the Institute for Church Social Research (Institut für kirchliche Sozialforschung, or IKS), “Religion in Austrians’ Lives” was statistically recorded in one such survey. In this socio-religious project, the interaction between the religious and church affiliation aspects of life in Austrian culture and other fields of private and public life was studied.

One aspect was the development of that basic mental attitude known as “authoritarianism” after Theodor W. Adorno. The willingness to subordinate oneself, the willingness to accept outside control, was studied for several years. The result is notable. Authoritarianism has declined noticeably since the 1970s. That typical willingness to obey, which was evident in Austria and other European cultures above all before and during World War II, is decreasing. Consider the maxim, “The most important thing for children to learn is obedience.” While 86 percent considered this important in 1970, by 1990 only 48 percent thought so. But in the 1990s, the statistics began to fluctuate. This shows that for more and more people the culture of freedom is becoming a tiresome burden of which they want to be rid. There is a growing demand for “law and order” both in the Church and in politics, whether it be in the form of populist leaders or authoritarian church communities, both within and outside the old

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<sup>5</sup> So-called authoritarianism, as Theodor Adorno called it, declined noticeably between 1970 and 1990, see Paul M. Zulehner, o.m., *Vom Untertan zum Freiheitskünstler* (Wien: Herder, 1991).

established churches. In our advanced, freedom-loving society, the individual risk that freedom brings with it (an idea postulated by Ulrich Beck) obviously poses too great a strain on a certain percentage of the population. In the words of Karl Marx, our modern culture of freedom is about to dig its own grave.

Table 1: The Development of Authoritarianism in Austria between 1970 and 2000, in percentage

	1970	1980	1990	1992	1994	1996	2000
The large amount of freedom that young	65	51	40	40	45	45	40
Where there is strict authority, there is	44	33	24	18	28	33	21
People should only be allowed have a	62	43	34	29	33	34	22
The most important thing for children to	86	62	44	48	53	47	41
Index of authoritarianism (1+2/4)	79	67	51	52	57	57	47

Source: Department for Church Social Research (Arbeitsstelle für kirchliche Sozialarbeit, or AfKS)

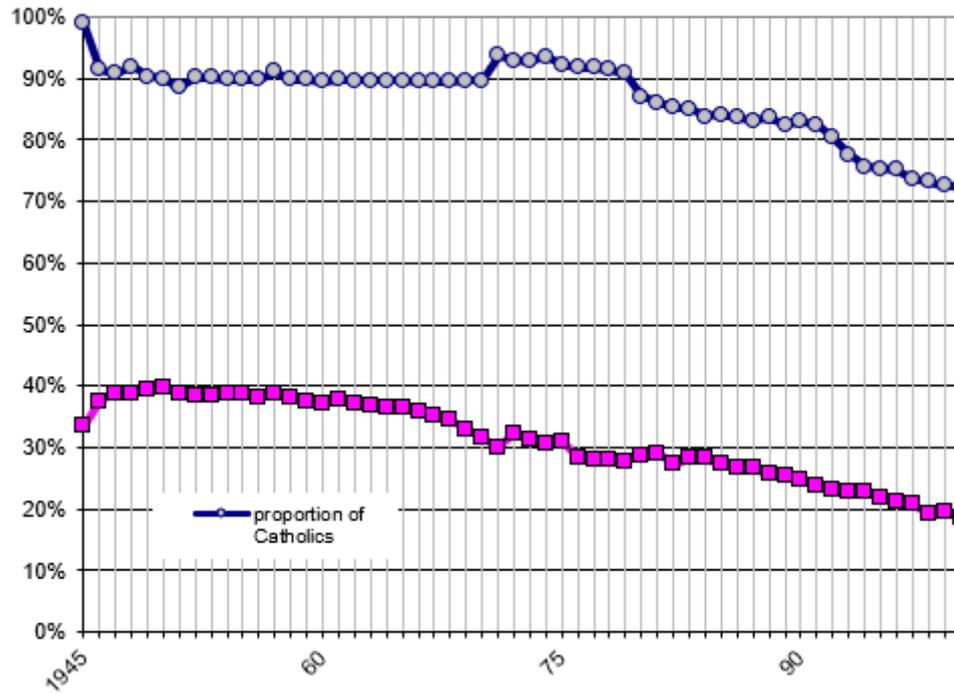
## The Church's Disappearance from Religion

Religio-sociological studies attempted to explain this development by putting it in the "secularization" category.<sup>6</sup> However, the only evidence we have is that in a very short period of time a process of privatization occurred which led to the Church's disappearance from subjective religion. In the course of this disappearance, "religion" as an objective organization itself changed. What remained of religion was, above all, that which was useful biographically.

This gradual decline of the Church, above all since the 1970s, is reflected in the statistics which show the proportion of Catholic Church members and of regular church-goers, but also of people leaving or being admitted into the Church.

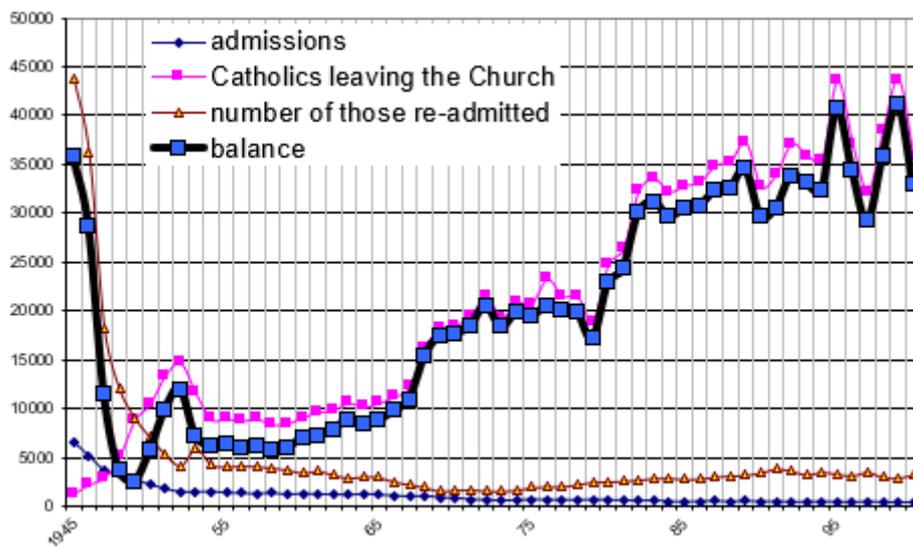
<sup>6</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, *Säkularisierung von Gesellschaft, Person und Religion* (Wien: Herder, 1973).

Figure 1: Development of Church Indicators (proportion of Catholics, regular church-goers) 1945-2000



Source: Kirchliche Statistik Österreich

Figure 2: Catholics leaving the Church between 1945 and 2000



Source: Kirchliche Statistik Österreich

This dilution of devotion to the Church since the 1970s also meant that, in most cases, church communities now had less influence on people's personal religiousness, with the result that in the year 2000 quite different types of private or communal religiousness existed side by side. "Private" can mean "without others," but can also mean "personal or individual." Individualization can lead to both the evaporation and the personalization of the Christian faith.

For 37 percent of those interviewed in Austria in the year 2000, religion was both a private and a community matter (See Table 2). For 21 percent, it was a purely private matter. Thus, religion has been privatized. Approximately 28 percent who were not very religious considered religion a purely communal matter. A full 15 percent thought neither the one nor the other was the case.

Table 2: Types of Religious Orientation

	Percentage of the population
Both a private and a communal matter	37
A private and hardly a communal matter	21
If at all, then a communal matter	28
Both comparatively low	15

Source: Religion in the Lives of Austrians 2000

People in Austria have obviously subjectivized religion. It is now what Peter L. Berger calls "the compulsion to heresy,"<sup>8</sup> that is, one is forced to choose. This does not only mean that one has to construct one's own religious creeds, but that it is a matter of one's own choice whether—formally or informally and with or without obligation—one orientates oneself to a church community.

This withdrawal of personal religiousness from an organized Christian church has also effected a withdrawal from religion as a whole. For, according to subjective self-assessment, the four types of orientation are quite differently distributed. For the very religious, religion is 71 percent a private and a communal matter. For religious (but not very religious) people, this percentage falls to 45 percent. For the non-religious, it is only 4 percent.

<sup>7</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, u.a., *Kehrt die Religion wieder? Religion im Leben der Menschen 1970-2000* (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag); Hermann Denz u.a., *Konfliktgesellschaft* (Wien: Czernin, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> Peter L. Berger, *Der Zwang zur Häresie* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1980).

For one-third of the last three groups listed in Table 1, religion does, however, remain loosely connected with the community. People who are only faintly religious personally regard religion not so much as a personal undertaking, but as something loosely connected with a community. In the three groups which have little personal piety, the percentage of those who regard religion as neither a private nor a communal matter is about the same. Only a minority in all five sub-groups regard religion as a purely private matter.

## Religion by Choice

Quite how diversified subjective religiousness has become in Austria since the retreat of religion from the Church is revealed in an ideological typology from the year 2000. This shows how different the religious creeds which people construct for themselves or accept today truly are.

First, with the help of Carsten Wippermann's tools enhanced by our own research tradition, eight ideological dimensions were established. Each dimension is followed by a definition of what it stands for:

**Humanism:** If God exists, then this is solely in people's hearts. God is that which is valuable in human beings. One does not have to be a Christian in order to be a human being.

**Naturalism:** Life is ultimately determined by the laws of nature and is part of the evolution of nature. Nature is also the higher power, the cycle of human beings, nature, and the cosmos. There is no answer as to whether there is anything beyond our world. Statements such as "For me, the meaning of life lies in life itself," or "We ourselves give life its meaning" are closely connected with naturalism.

**Far Eastern:** This philosophy of life is expressed in a belief in reincarnation, which is not only the belief that we will be born again and that death is only a transition to another existence, but includes the belief that how we behaved in a former life effects our present life.

**Atheism:** There is no God, and even if there is a God, we human beings cannot perceive Him. In any case, death is the end of everything.

**Theism:** Theists believe in a higher Being, a God who wants to be here for us, who cares for each one of us and who determines the course of the world. They believe in a life after death.

**Christianity:** Christians expressly accept the beliefs of the Christian faith. They believe in Christ's Resurrection, that God shows Himself to us through Christ and that he will restore His Kingdom.

Those who believe in God but not in a Christian sense: Strangely enough, this is a separate category of believers.

Anomie: This philosophy of life says there is no sense in life.

These eight dimensions were the basis for the cluster analysis which led to the four main categories of philosophies of life (Weltanschauung).

The first cluster is made up of very committed Christians. They are consistent in their faith with a strong church commitment. They made up 27 percent of those interviewed. Then there are those who accept certain Christian beliefs, but think that God cannot be understood in the Christian sense. This group is most inclined to assimilate far eastern elements, but is also the most humanist and has a medium percentage of naturalists. Because of this readiness to combine, we have called them “religion composers.” Almost a third, 30 percent, of those interviewed were in this category. The third type are the naturalists and they tend to be non-Christian humanists with a faint inclination to theism. Neither far eastern philosophies nor atheism mean anything to them. 30 percent of those interviewed belong to this group and this is the group in which anomie (the senselessness of life) is most frequently encountered. Finally, there are the “would-be atheists.” A high percentage of these hold naturalistic, humanist, and atheistic beliefs, but few are believers. Only 13 percent of those interviewed belonged to this group (See Table 3).

Table 3: Main Types of Weltanschauung

	Percentage of the Population
Committed Christians	27
Religion composers	30
Naturalistic humanists	30
Those with atheistic views	13

Source: Religion im Leben der Österreicherinnen 2000

The main types of Weltanschauung can be further examined to uncover the social groups to which adherents of each type belong (See Table 4). For example, in the committed Christians group, there is an over-average percentage of women, elderly people, and the very young (those under age nineteen) as well as people with only a primary school education. However, there are people with secondary and university education in this group, too. The committed Christians tend to live in the country rather than in towns. The lowest percentage of committed Christians is

found in small towns with between ten to twenty thousand inhabitants. It is generally true that the higher a person's education level, the greater the chance of him or her holding atheistic views. They tend to live in small towns. Religion composers are most likely to be found in small towns and in Vienna. There are roughly the same amount, approximately 34 percent, of humanists and religion composers in the city of Vienna. These two groups are followed by very committed Christians (20 percent). The smallest group, at 12 percent, are those with atheistic tendencies.

Table 4: Breakdown of the Four Weltanschauungen into Social Groups, in percentage

	Atheists	Humanists	Religion Composers	Very Committed Christians
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	18	31	28	23
Female	8	30	33	29
<b>Age</b>				
19 or younger	11	30	27	32
20-29	15	39	29	17
30-39	13	31	33	24
40-49	11	28	40	21
50-59	16	33	25	25
60-69	16	23	29	32
70 or older	6	25	25	44
<b>Size of Place of Residence</b>				
Up to 2000 inhabitants	11	30	25	34
Up to 5000	11	31	30	28
Up to 20 000	17	30	34	19
Up to one million	14	27	31	27

Vienna	12	34	34	20
Formal Education				
Primary and secondary school	8	26	31	35
Technical school and/or college	13	32	30	24
Secondary school	13	28	33	26
University	18	27	29	26

Source: Religion im Leben der Österreicherinnen 2000

#### The Continuing Trend toward Secularism and Atheism

These surveys show that in Austria, as far as people's weltanschauung is concerned, traditional Christianity in its pure form is being abandoned by a certain percentage of the population and that this trend is unbroken. A number of these people hold atheistic views. Theoretically, but sometimes only in practice, they become godless or free of God.

Those who abandon the Christian faith often adopt a very heterogeneous brand of humanism with a strong ecological tinge which places human beings in the center of the world while incorporating them into the never-ending cycle of "nature," which they perceive as their destiny.

### The Parallel Trend toward Re-Spiritualization

Withdrawal from the Christian and church sphere of influence does not always result in pure worldliness in the form of atheism or naturalist humanism, however. Socio-religious research data for the city of Vienna between 1991 and 1999 show the recovery of a number of religious and church indicators. The Viennese prayed more in 1999 than they did in 1991, and more of them believed in a personal God whom they consider as playing an important role in their lives. What is more, the inner core of the Christian communities, strengthened by the commitment of its members and by those who regularly attend Sunday Mass, has now become stable.

Table 5: Shifts in Key Religious Indicators in Selected European Cities, 1990-1999, in percentage

	Year	Religious Self-assessment	Belief in God	Belief in a Personal God	Great Importance of God in Life	Sunday Church Attendance
Bruxelles	1990	48	61	27	31	17
	1999	59	78	26	48	29
Belgium, rural areas	1990	71	75	34	36	29
	1999	73	73	26	32	23
Lisbon	1990	51	76	47	37	18
	1999	82	93	74	55	24
Portugal, rural areas	1990	80	90	70	59	45
	1999	91	98	80	65	40
Paris	1990	55	62	24	26	11
	1999	48	62	24	22	9
France, rural areas	1990	54	67	19	19	13
	1999	45	58	17	16	5
Vienna	1990	62	71	19	27	12
	1999	64	79	24	35	13
Austria, rural areas	1990	92	96	39	55	44
	1999	88	91	40	59	37

Source: European Value System Studies 1990-1999; data from the cities compared with data from rural areas.

One of the megatrends of the late 1990s, “re-spiritualization” (to use the term of trend-researcher Mathias Horx)<sup>9</sup> is evident here. From the first qualified surveys, it is clear that this trend is multidimensional.<sup>10</sup> In a

<sup>9</sup> Mathias Horx, *Megatrends der späten neunziger Jahre* (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, “Megatrend Religion,” *StdZt* 221 (Feb. 2003): 87-96.

materialistic world from which they feel estranged, people with spiritual needs and desires are looking for an “Exodus into the Ego.”<sup>11</sup> Besides exploring one’s inner self, people also investigate cosmic forces and pantheism. Healing is what is important, which means that great significance is ascribed to ritual. Faced with too much choice in a multi-optional society, people seek structure and strictness and, through them, certainties which become important. People want communities with an alternative ethic. Because individuals do not think of the “old world” as capable of producing such communities, people suppose that the “old world” will die and a “new world” for the good and just will take its place. Hardly any of the new movements participates in all these dimensions. Because such spiritual journeys are not always undertaken with a community, diverse individual forms come into being. That, in turn, reinforces the group which we in our research team in Vienna have begun to call “religion composers,”<sup>12</sup> as discussed previously.

After decades of people leaving institutions, it is surprising to find them returning in many different ways and forms to the institution of the established Christian churches. Sometimes this happens “invisibly” in that, without becoming members or participating in church life, people expect the Church to perform certain social tasks. Others begin to take part in one or the other “event” organized by the big churches without binding themselves to congregational membership. But there are also those who are definitely willing to take on a commitment in a church community or in one of the new movements and are even prepared to give up a lot of their time. For those churches that were traditionally supported by a high, stable, and predictable degree of participation on the part of their members, such selective behavior is something to which they are not accustomed. This new way of behaving towards an established church calls for new social practices and unexpected patterns of encounter on the church’s part. Church life in our highly individualized and, therefore, pluralistic societies is itself about to become highly individualized and pluralistic.

## The Multireligious Future

Up to now, this analysis of socio-religious development has been restricted to Austria. Today, however, Austria is tightly woven into a European megaculture influenced as much by its similarities as by its

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<sup>11</sup> Hans-Wili Weis, *Exodus ins Ego: Therapie und Spiritualität im Selbstverwirklichungsmilieu* (Zürich: Benzinger, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Definitions such as “patchwork” are pejorative.

differences. What Europe has in common as far as religion is concerned is the great diversity of types of weltanschauung, not only individual ones but also those of whole nations.

Europe, then, is a combination of religious and non-religious attitudes and beliefs. Thus, in the heart of Europe, a region that was for so long steeped in Christendom, there are now three countries where the majority of the inhabitants are atheistic, namely the Czech Republic, Latvia, and the region formerly known as East Germany, but today is referred to as the new German Bundesländer or federal states. Around them there are still religious cultures like Catholic Poland, Croatia, and, above all, Malta. Transylvania is multi-denominational while Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece are orthodox. The situation in other countries is polarized. In Slovakia and Hungary, a strong atheistic faction is pitted against an equally strong faction of very committed Christians.

Christianity in Europe is, moreover, divided into several denominations, namely Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism. They emphasise different fundamental values, and this has had a formative influence on European history in recent centuries. Protestantism advocates freedom. Catholicism is skeptical of freedom and advocates justice. For Orthodoxy, neither freedom nor justice is of prime importance; it is chiefly concerned with keeping the heavens open.

Finally, in the coming years, one will have to reckon with the growing influence of Islam, not only if Turkey, which is a Muslim nation within a secular state, becomes a member of the European Union. Islam has already had a lasting influence on parts of Europe, especially the Balkans and certain districts in European cities such as Berlin-Kreuzberg and Vienna's tenth district (where in one single parish there are three rival mosques for people of three different nationalities). European culture would not be what it is today if Aristotle had not been introduced to Islam and been influenced by it, in turn influencing Thomas Aquinas who read about it when studying Aristotle in the south of Spain. Additionally, Islam also introduced Europe to astrology.

Many people today ask themselves whether these different religions (the Christian denominations, the religion composers) and philosophies of life (naturalistic humanism, atheism) will be able to live together peacefully in future in a Europe that is rapidly becoming one. Perhaps Europe can learn from the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. With the exception of the modern religion composers and those with atheistic views, all the variants mentioned above lived together in the former Austrian Empire. With increasing tolerance, Austria managed to accept not only Protestants, but even allowed Islamic soldiers, who had their own rules, to take part in the Catholic Church's annual Corpus Christi procession in

Vienna, and permitted specially founded Serb-Orthodox wehrdörfer (literally “defense villages”) as a bulwark against the Turks in the south of Bosnia and Croatia. Can Austria be a role model for peace between the different religions and, consequently, for peace in the European Union?

## The Effects of Religion

Theoretically, religious sociologists have been divided on the subject of the future destiny of religion in the modern world. Some prophesied that religion would disappear altogether; others said it would merely withdraw to the private sphere and become invisible, perhaps just becoming something very personal within individuals.<sup>13</sup> The one thing upon which they agreed was that the churches had had their day and that “invisible religion” had no influence on people’s daily lives and even less on political events.

Recent experiences in and with the Islamic world reveal a very different picture. Here the connection between everyday life and politics is closely knit. Is this because Islam has not yet experienced the Enlightenment and is, therefore, not compatible with a modern state? Or could it be that there are different forms of modernity, those that get along with religion and those that do not?

Using the latest research data, we traced the influence of religion in Austria in its different institutionalized forms. This augments the picture of the role religion plays in Austria, for we not only analyzed religiousness and commitment to the church, but also the effect religious constellations have on people’s lives. In particular, the following topics were studied:

Do a person’s social and religious convictions influence how they vote?

Does religiousness play a role in teaching solidarity?

Does religion influence the formation and development of gender roles?

How does religion influence morals?

Does religion play a role if people get together in small groups and give their relationship a visible form?

### Behavior at Elections

Theoretically, a person’s religious convictions only have a marginal effect on how he or she votes at political elections. This is because religion has been privatized and because the Church’s influence on the formation of individual religiousness has diminished as people are no longer strongly attached to church institutions. The latest research data, however, tell us

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<sup>13</sup> Zulehner, *Säkularisierung*.

something different. At the structural level, Church and State—and, consequently, religion and politics—are now largely disconnected, even if not actually separate (as in some European countries like France). This has not changed now that Wolfgang Schüssel, a practicing Christian, is chancellor, or now that one Catholic and one Protestant theologian are on the ethics commission. The Protestant theologian, incidentally, is of the opinion that the present government “ticks the Catholic way” as far as ethical problems are concerned. The rejection of euthanasia by all four parties in Parliament and the government’s support of the Hospice Movement by ruling that people who wanted to care for sick or dying relatives at home and in order to do so had to stay away from work could not be sacked, shows that the Christian heritage is still at work in Austrian society.

The influence of the Christian heritage comes out even more clearly in the surprisingly obvious interaction between religious conviction and preference for a political party. There are far fewer people (7 percent) with atheistic beliefs in the People’s Party, which has many more committed Christians (39 percent) than in Jörg Haider’s Freedom Party (14 percent) or in the Social Democrat Party (21 percent).

As far as the Social Democrats are concerned, it would seem that at least the older generation still has bitter memories of the fierce controversies in the Civil War Years of the mid-1930s when the Christian Socials, at the time led by Prelate Ignaz Seipel, a Roman Catholic priest, and the Austro-Marxists under Otto Bauer were bitter enemies.<sup>14</sup> The alienation between these two factions which went very deep in the days of the so-called *Ständestaat*, or corporate state, on account of the bloody sieges that took place at the time, is deep-rooted and, to a certain degree, still exists today. Thus in Lower Austria, for instance, the Social Democrats and the Greens are vehemently against putting up a crucifix presented by the local bishop in the provincial parliament, while the Freedom Party and the People’s Party are in favor of it.

Surprisingly, there are a remarkable number of Christians in the Green Party, yet the Green Party also has the most religion composers. It is, therefore, polarized as far as philosophies of life are concerned. On the one side, there are voters with Christian and social leanings, and on the other, those with socio-critical, feminist, and ecological leanings.

This polarization is reflected in the Green Party’s ambitions to form coalitions. One wing is clearly left of the Social Democrats. Should an election point in that direction, this wing would only want to form a coalition

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<sup>14</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, *Kirche und Austromarxismus* (Wien: Freiburg, 1967).

with the Social Democrats. The Christian Greens, on the other hand, think that a coalition with the People's Party is not only possible, but desirable, provided, of course, that the neo-liberal economists in the People's Party did not become too dominant and that the Christian Social Trade Unions, the ÖAAB, or the Farmers' Union, the Bauernbund, were allowed to have more say in social and ecological matters. The Freedom Party has a small percentage of conservative Catholics who are most likely to sympathize with the fundamentalist (and therefore anti-Islam) circles not only in the Church, but also in the People's Party.

Table 6: Distribution of Voters according to Weltanschauung and Church Attendance, in percentage

	weltanschauung					Church Attendance		
	Athe- istic	Huma- nist	Reli- gion Com- posers	Christi- ans	Sunday s	Once a Month	Several Times a Year	Almost Never
SPÖ	17	30	33	21	8	19	41	32
FPÖ	17	40	29	14	7	18	35	41
ÖVP	7	26	27	39	39	18	31	11
Greens	15	25	35	25	18	16	31	34

Source: Religion im Leben der Österreicherinnen 2000

#### Solidarities

As only justice can achieve a lasting peace, the extent to which wealthy, democratic societies manage to enact solidaric policies will be of great political importance in the coming years. This will apply at the national, as well as at the European and international, level. The available reserves of people's willingness to show solidarity thus acquire great significance. In a democracy, policies based on greater justice to balance out the injustices in the economy and in society must both be desired by and voted for by a majority of the population.

The reserves of solidarity in the Austrian population were investigated against this politological background in a research project undertaken by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Value Research at the beginning of the 1990s. Using more or less the same items, it was possible to repeat the survey in 2002. In it, three types of solidarity were defined according to their spatial range:

“Micro-solidarity” based on the “small world” of the family, friends and neighbors. The investigation of this type of solidarity, which is limited to a small circle, was based on statements such as: “Sharing is the most important thing for children to learn,” “Sharing is best learnt in the family”, “Without the family one cannot learn to solve conflicts.”

“Meso-solidarity” which is connected with solidarity in the social environment was based on statements such as: “One should be allowed to take from those who have more than enough in order to give to the needy,” “Differences in income should be reduced,” “If everyone sacrificed a little, there would soon be no more poverty.”

“Macro-solidarity” at the global level whose main concern is the treatment of foreigners and asylum seekers was based on statements such as: “Foreigners should adapt their way of life a little better to that of the people in whose country they live,” “When jobs are scarce, foreigners should be sent home,” “Foreigners should not be allowed to take up any form of political activity in their new country of residence,” “Foreigners should marry people of their own nationality.”

Both Austrian solidarity surveys (the 1992 and the 2002 survey) indicate that “micro-solidarity” is a kind of socio-cultural self-evident truth (On a four point scale, 68 percent are very committed to it (See Table 7). The score for both the positives scale value 1 and 2 is 96 percent). There is much less support for “meso-solidarity” (24 percent are very committed to it. The value for both positives scale value 1 and 2 is 62 percent). Finally, “macro-solidarity” does not have strong support (only 12 percent reach scale value 1. The value for both positives scale value 1 and 2 is 34 percent). The larger the range, the weaker solidarity becomes.

Table 7: Solidarities (according to their range) and Church Attendance, in percentage

Church Attendance	Macrosolidarity	Mesosolidarity	Microsolidarity
Sundays	8	24	73
Monthly	8	24	77
Feast days	11	21	67
Seldom	12	25	60
Never	18	25	60
All	14	24	68

Source: Solidaritäten 1994-2002

The influence that religion has on the solidarity radius varies. If one takes church attendance as one of the most reliable religious and church indicators, then one will find that regular Sunday church-goers tend towards micro-solidarity, while macro-solidarity is less well developed among them.

Church attendance strengthens the readiness to help others locally. Church-goers find it easier to help in the family, and with children, friends, and acquaintances than non-church-goers do. Church attendance, which usually correlates to an attendee's personal faith, also promotes a readiness to practice solidarity. To be precise, church-goers are more prepared actively to do something for the family, for neighbors, elderly people, immigrants, the sick, and/or the handicapped.

A development that has appeared clearly in the last ten years is that church-goers also belong to that circle of people in modern societies who do not withdraw from civil and social movements. When religiousness is linked with church attendance, it strengthens solidarity in Austrian society, above all when it reduces those fears that work against solidarity and lead to de-solidarization. In practice, the solidarity map corresponds to the church network map: parishes, religious orders, and the aid organizations "Caritas" and "Diakonie." Religion, therefore, boosts a society's solidarity capital.

#### Gender Roles

The mythological narratives of the world's great religions all define what a man and a woman are. Christianity is no exception here. These religious narratives do not only describe the vocations of both genders, but also the images that exist of them in the respective religious culture. The most effective influence of religion on gender roles (that is, the way in which a culture expects a man or a woman to live and behave) is the legitimization of traditional role patterns.

In so far as religion legitimizes the formation of images of men and women and how they should behave, it simultaneously becomes one of the most powerful opponents of any change in those roles. What is part of a religious heritage cannot be discovered anew by human beings. This is what makes religion so significant in today's important pursuit of justice for both genders.

One of the few long-term studies on the male role has been carried out in Austria. In 1992, a first empirical analysis of the male role was

undertaken.<sup>15</sup> Ten years later, this survey was repeated.<sup>16</sup> The survey results clearly show that men are going through an intense process of development, something which women have already been going through for some time.

Various types of men exist in contemporary Austria. The number of men in traditional roles is declining. They are almost completely absorbed by their work or profession which forms their identity. These traditional men are only marginally present in their families. Their chief role in the family is that of breadwinner, and they delegate the housework and childcare to their wives. In contrast, modern men are the opposite. There are more of them among the younger than among the older generation, and this group has grown significantly in the last ten years. Another group, realistic or pragmatic men, adopt those patterns from both the traditional and modern roles which make life easier for them. Finally, the largest group of men are those that can be formed. They are skeptical about both traditional and modern role patterns. Because these men are enmeshed in a transformative process, they go through phases of destabilization, searching, and learning.

In Germany<sup>17</sup> and in Austria, it was, above all, those responsible for working with men in the Church who were primarily interested in surveys of male behavior. The reason for this was that hardly any men were participating in traditional church group activities any more. The aim was to get men to participate once again and to work out a program for men that was based on credible research findings.

The research data shows that those responsible in the Church will find it difficult to motivate men to participate in church groups. The studies investigated in which social domains modern men (and women) were most likely to develop and whether the Church played a role in those domains. The result is astonishing: the distribution of the four different types of men differs only slightly as far as their church practices go. There are a few more modern men among those who do not go to church, and among the church-goers, there are a few more traditional men. Most of the formable men are found among those who only occasionally go to church.

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<sup>15</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, and Andrea Salama, *Österreichs Männer unterwegs zum neuen Mann? Wie Österreichs Männer sich selbst sehen und wie die Frauen sie einschätzen. Erweiterter Forschungsbericht, bearbeitet im Rahmen des Ludwig Boltzmann-Instituts für Werteforschung. Österreichisches Bundesministerium für Jugend und Familie, Wien 1994.*

<sup>16</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, Hg., *MannsBilder: Zehn Jahre Männerentwicklung* (Ostfildern 2003).

<sup>17</sup> Paul M. Zulehner and Rainer Volz, *Männer im Aufbruch* (Ostfildern 1998).

The situation is quite different as far as the women who were investigated in the same study are concerned (See Table 8). The connection between devotion to the Church and women's image of themselves is much closer than that of men. There are five times as many traditional women among church-goers (25 percent) than among non-church-goers (5 percent). On the other hand, among the women who do not go to church, there are twice as many (44 percent) modern women as among the church-goers (25 percent).

It is obvious that devotion to the Church and to religion hardly plays a role in the development of men's self-image. With women, it is quite the opposite. Women in the Church tend to slow down the development of women's role, whereas women who are not church-goers tend to boost women's role. There are, of course, well-organized feminists in the Christian churches, but they are a minority.

At the same time, the data show how polarized committed Catholics are as far as the development of gender roles is concerned. Modern male church-goers make up 21 percent as compared to 18 percent made up of traditional male church-goers. There are the same number of modern and traditional women church-goers, 25 percent of each.

Table 8: Church Attendance and Gender Roles

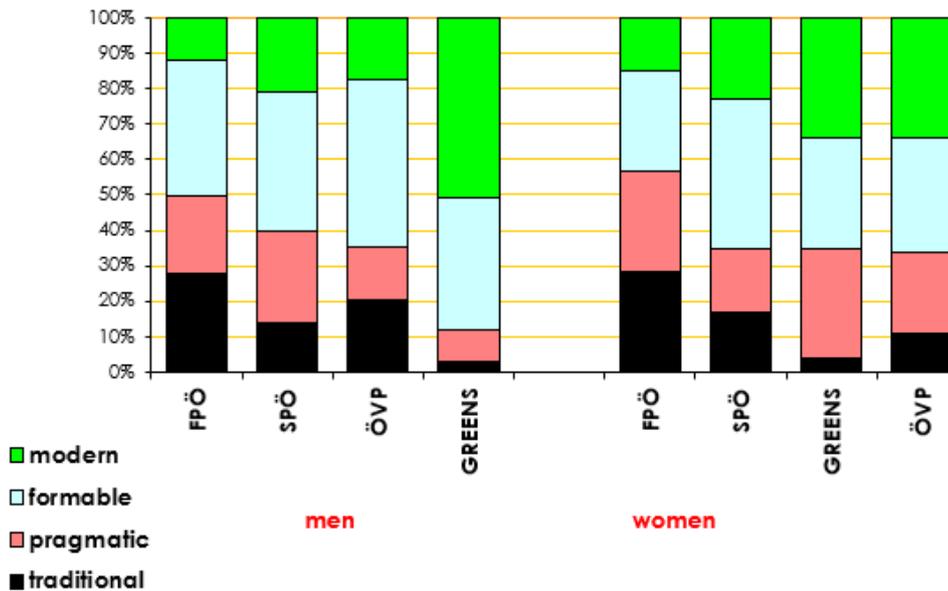
	Church Attendance	Gender Roles			
		Traditional	Modern	Pragmatic	Formable
Men	Sundays	18	21	18	43
	Monthly	15	14	17	54
	On Feast Days	19	24	15	42
	Almost Never	16	25	20	40
All Men		17	23	18	42
Women	Sundays	25	25	26	24
	Monthly	9	36	21	33
	On Feast Days	13	37	18	31
	Almost Never	5	44	18	33
All Women		12	37	21	30

All		14	30	19	36
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Source: Männer 1992-2002

The distribution of gender roles in the political parties is also surprising (See Figure 3). Female Freedom Party sympathizers turn out to be traditional women while women who sympathize with the Greens are modern women. As women's politics is a key issue for the Greens, it is not surprising that there are hardly any traditional women and an above average number of modern women in that party. It is, however, surprising that there are more modern women in the People's Party than in the Social Democrat Party, for women's issues have always been a matter of great concern for the Social Democrats.

Figure 3: Gender Roles and Political Preference



Source: Männer 2002

## Moralities

Since the Enlightenment, morals have been closely linked with religion and religious institutions. The pragmatic thinking of the Enlightenment, represented in Austria in an exemplary way by the Emperor Joseph II, had no feeling for religious mysticism, nor for the contemplative orders, or for mystical worship. The task of religion was to make people happy. This was accomplished when, through faith, people were taught to be obedient and to pay their taxes. Religion was transformed from having been something mystical into something morally useful; thereby, it was

reduced. This same principle of usefulness is still reflected in the more modern rules which regulate religious instruction in Austria today and aim at a moral and religious education.

Every mature religion including Christianity has, in fact, a well-thought out ethical system. Religion and morals are not identical in Christianity, but there are normative religious patterns of behavior which the churches imposed by spiritual force. In Austria, this occurred for a long time, aided by the help of the secular state.

This connection between the Christian faith and Christian morals still exists today, of course, with the difference that the Church can only present its moral teaching by appealing to reason and responsibility. The surveys that have been carried out confirm that the Christian churches in Austria obviously still manage to convey their moral concepts to a core section of the population. This potential to form people's ideas does, however, differ depending on the issue concerned.

The European Value System Studies of 1990 and 1999 in which Austria participated studied morality in Europe. A series of moral norms were presented. Those questioned were asked to state what they would not allow under any circumstances, and what in their view was always permissible. Three moral dimensions emerged. The first dimension is "social morality." The following statements were used to identify this dimension:

- claiming state benefits to which one is not entitled
- withholding taxes if one gets the chance
- lying for one's own advantage
- accepting bribes

The second dimension is "life-related morality." It was concerned with normative values such as:

- when married men or women have affairs
- homosexuality
- abortion
- divorce
- mercy killing (euthanasia)
- suicide

Finally, the third dimension is "material goods morality," and the following statements were used:

- forcibly unlocking a car which does not belong to one in order to go for a joy ride
- taking drugs like marijuana and hashish

In Austria, as in other European countries, the last of these, namely the “material goods morality” has the greatest support among the population. It is followed by “social morality” with “life-related morality” coming last. Thus, goods are better protected than life. If one were lucky enough to be a car, one would be well protected morally.

A further analysis of the data shows that as far as these three dimensions are concerned, very committed Christians differ only slightly from people with atheistic views on some topics, yet quite considerably on others.

The difference is only slight when it comes to “material goods morality,” which is so highly valued in our modern societies today (10 points). But this difference grows when it comes to “social morality” (12 points) and is even greater when it comes to the “life related morality” (41 points).

Sensitive issues concerning “life-related morality” like euthanasia and abortion but also divorce or homosexuality, will definitely play a lasting role in Austrian cultural politics in the years to come. The more these issues influence the political discussion—and that will certainly be the case Europe-wide as far as euthanasia is concerned because life expectancy continues to rise and with it the cost of caring for the elderly and dying—the more moral options will influence the way people vote. The possibility that a religious faction will clash with a secular faction in such politico-cultural conflicts and that this will once again lead to “sieges” cannot be excluded.

Table 9: Moral Dimensions and Weltanschauungen, in percentage

	Material Goods Morality	Social Morality	Life-related Morality
Very Committed Christians	95	86	61
Religion Composers	91	80	37
Naturalistic Humanists	89	75	28
Those with Atheistic Views	85	73	20

Source: European Value System Study 1999, Austria

#### Relationship Formality

The issue of which lifestyle a person chooses, a choice which nowadays everyone is free to make, is closely connected with the above moral dimensions. Besides traditional marriage, other kinds of relationship have become completely acceptable in modern societies today. People can

choose to live alone, or to cohabit without binding themselves in any way, or decide to bind themselves to another for a certain period of time. The Christian churches have always favored marriage, but has allowed people to choose to remain single. Cohabitation, disqualified as “living in sin,” and even more living together for only a certain period of time, are regarded as ethically dubious by the Catholic Church.

However, the Christian churches have only been partly successful in imposing their moral concepts on their loyal members, that is, on regular Sunday church-goers. In theory as well as in practice, a certain percentage of church-goers put the respective situation they are in before norms. Only 39 percent of church-goers (11 percent of non-church-goers) hold that “there are perfectly clear rules as to what is good and what is evil and this applies to everyone and moreover under all circumstances.” But a clear link remains between the formality of relationships and church attendance. Fully 62 percent of church-goers, both men and women, are married, compared with only 36 percent of both men and women who do not go to church. Devotion to the Church, therefore, promotes and protects marriage.

Table 10: Forms of Living Together after Church Attendance, in percentage

	Church Attendance	Way of Life				
		Single	Periodically Single	Cohabiting	Married	Alone
Men	Sundays	10	12	12	62	5
	Monthly	11	14	14	59	3
	On Feast Days	10	18	14	52	6
	Almost Never	14	22	18	36	10
All Men		12	18	15	48	7
Women	Sundays	3	5	6	62	24
	Monthly	6	5	5	66	18
	On Feast Days	7	14	14	49	15
	Almost Never	12	26	14	36	12
All Women		8	16	12	49	16

All		10	17	13	48	12
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Source: Männer 2002

The above connection, too, is not without significance. Austria belongs to those European countries which confer a higher status on marriage between men and women than on other relationships. It has not yet given same-sex partnerships or cohabitating couples (who are unmarried) the same legal status as married couples. There is even less chance of homosexual couples being allowed to adopt children in Austria.

Religious traditions are still effective in Austria. This is evident not only from the way such cultural and political issues as the privileged status of marriage or the adoption laws have been handled, but also in the way the question of euthanasia and extending welfare state measures to give extra help to those who are nearing the last stage of their lives are handled.

One should, however, not overlook the fact that where issues such as abortion and political regulations concerning foreigners and asylum seekers, Austria is at the moment forging ahead with restrictive practices. Incidentally, this means that the churches have a split and, therefore, have tense relationship with the state and the present government which is led by the People's Party and calls itself "Christian Social." On the one hand, the churches, with their powerful aid organizations "Caritas" and "Diakonie," are in favor of treating asylum seekers generously and promoting help for the developing world in the hope that this will diminish migration. On this issue, the churches have always met with political resistance from all Ministers of the Interior no matter what their party affiliation, first from the SPÖ and then from the ÖVP. The FPÖ is in favor of stopping immigration altogether. On the other hand, however, the churches applaud when the Austrian government supports measures to improve the care of the sick and the dying.

## Conclusion

The results of studies examining the role of organized religion in Austria shows that the acceptance of secularization which began in the 1970s only applies in a very limited way to this small country in the heart of Europe. Religion still affects private and political life—at first invisibly, but later also in a church organized form—more than theoretical interpretations of the destiny of religion and the Church in modern western Europe expected it to.

This also comes out in the high expectations people have of the churches in the social field. In response to the question, "Generally speaking, do you believe that your Church/the churches in our country have an answer to ....?", 60 percent of Austrians believe the Church has answers to "spiritual needs" (church-goers, 85 percent; non-church-goers, 31 percent). Slightly more than a third, 37 percent, want the Church to provide answers to moral problems and to individual needs (church-goers, 62 percent; non-church-goers, 15 percent). Only 29 percent want the Church to provide answers to questions concerning family life (church-goers, 46 percent; non-church-goers, 12 percent) and a similar percentage want it to provide answers to social problems (church-goers, 43 percent; non-church-goers, 15 percent).

## 2013 Pastoral Theology

The first Chair was founded by Maria-Theresia for formation of the religious servants of the Empire in 1774

### 1. Objects

Priests: administration of the sacraments, to preside the liturgy. To teach children (and adult men). To care for morality of the citizens

Church: how it is built by God himself, which are the main dimension of the life of the Church (leiturgia, martyria, diakonia: option for the poor, for building a just society). Who are the decisive actors.

The religious dimension of societies: theology of the modern world, what are the challenges for the Churches / the Religions in the different Societies within a globalizing world (religion and violence, religion and justice and freedom, religion an gender-roles

### 2. The main Questions [a biblical lesson: Mt 8,1-4]

Kairology: Is the Church acting up to date (aggiornamento: II Vatican Council)? (situation)

Kriteriology: Does the Church act according to Jesus (tradition)

Praxeology: At the interface between tradition and situation – how ca the activity of the Church be meliorized, improved? Which are the main actors within the Church, models for leadership and participation, the richness of Charismas (1 Kor 12, Rom 12)?

### 3. Methodology

Pastoraltheology depend on the results of many disciplines:

Theological disciplines like exegesis, the Church Fathers, Church history, the Mystics, the doctrine of the Church, of the priesthood, of laity

Secular discipline: all human sciences (psychology, sociology). Their results (first reflection) need a second reflection in the perspective of the gospel. We need a Theology of the modern World. Jesus: Read the signs of the time – John XXIII, II. Vatican Council – Francis.

Example: A serious theological reflection about modernity/the modern world supposes that God is acting through the Holy Spirit even within this modern world (the longing for freedom, for peace, the fight against poverty...).

In the secular world there are a lot of positive elements. Therefore it is not enough to complain secularization – and this as a process against God or against the Church.

Of course, there are dark elements within modern cultures – especially violence [terrorism], greed [financial crises] and lie [corruption].

Therefore, we must define the relation between Church and Society respecting both direction: Evangelization means: The Church learns from the (modern, secular) world and teaches it (Carlo M. Martini as president of the Council of the European bishops CCEE).

# 2013 The medieval religion Peace Agreements and their effects on the ideological development of Europe

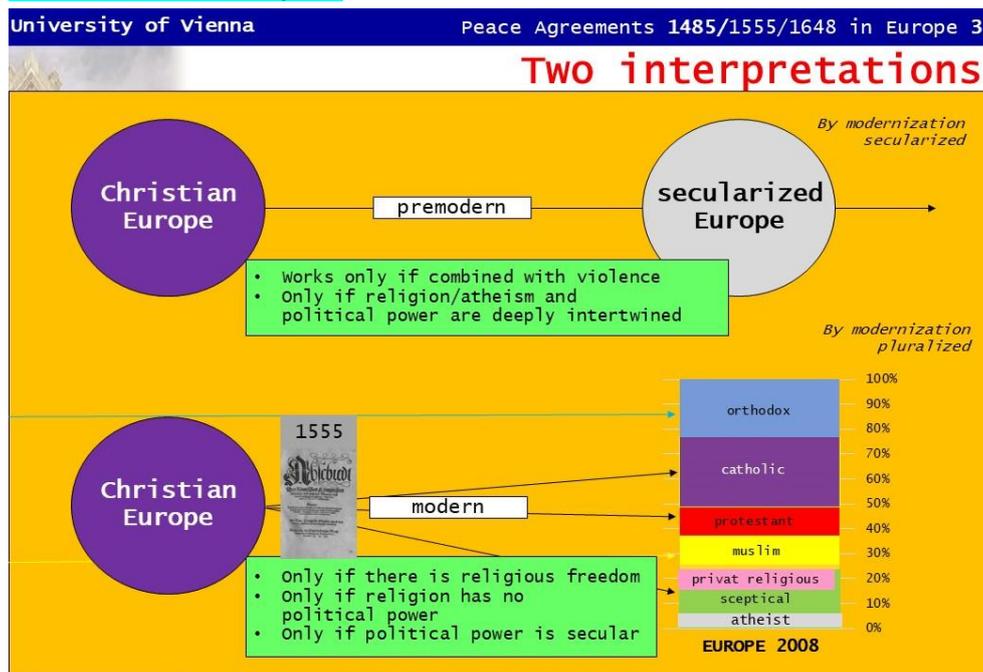
Boston 17. 10. 2013

## Overview

In this lecture I will propose my reflections in three parts. <sup>A1</sup>

- In the first part I will look at the historical context of the medieval Peace Agreement for instance of that in 1555 in Augsburg.
- Then I will say something about the historical effects of the Agreements.
- Finally You can expect a short summary.

I start with the first part.



I'll start with one slide of the summary. <sup>A2</sup> It shows You where I'll lead You by my lecture. In this slide I'm comparing the Europe of 1400 with the Europe of today. My question is: How to explain the way from then to now. Some interpreters mean it is a simply transformation from a

Christian to a secular/secularized Europe. I'll demonstrate, that this is a premodern theory. I tend to interpret that the result of the ideological development of Europe in the last 500 years is not a secularized continent, but a colourful one. And precisely this colorization (you can call it also pluralization) has its roots in the medieval Peace Agreements.

## Augsburger Reichstag 1555



# The Peace Agreements

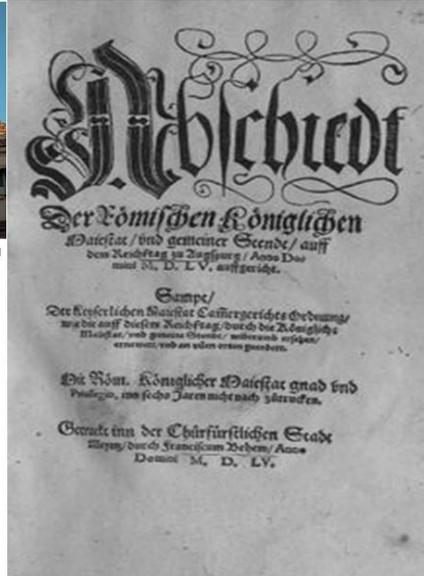
## „Reichsabschiedt“ 1555



1458 Bohemia  
(for Hussits):  
„Kuttenberger  
Religionsfriede“



Augsburg



When Emperors and the "Reichsstände" (the princes who elect the Emperor) assembled in the medieval Empire at a "Reichstag"<sup>A3</sup>, it was the duty of the Emperor to read at the end of the session publicly the discussed and discerned agreements and to put the decisions in force. "Reichsabschiedt"<sup>A4</sup> [Imperial Declaration] was the title of that document, declared 1555 in the free city of "Augsburg", which founded the so-called "Landfrieden", the peace for the whole country, the whole Empire. The conflict loaded discussion about Martin Luther should be ended by a political act.

## Schmalkalden

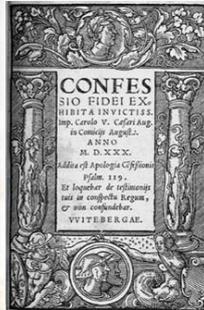


Kupferstich von Schmalkalden, dem Gründungsort des Schmalkaldischen Bundes [1531] (1645)  
An etching of Schmalkalden, the place where the Smalcaldic League was founded in 1531

How conflicting the situation was in the Empire shows the war between the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire Charles V and his Catholic League with the so called "Smacaldic League" (1546/47). This federation was founded 1531 in the city of Schmalkalden<sup>A5</sup> under the leadership of the princes of the Saxons and Hessians. The federation formed an association of those princes and towns of the Empire, which supported the reformation by Martin Luther.

The Protestant princes and towns could face the "Imperial Ban" ("Reichsacht"), if they broke the peace in the Empire according to the Edict [idict] of Worms of 1521. The support of the Reformation threatened their power and possession. To make it more difficult for the Emperor to apply the "Imperial Ban", the threatened princes founded their federation.

## Reading of the „Confessio Augustana“



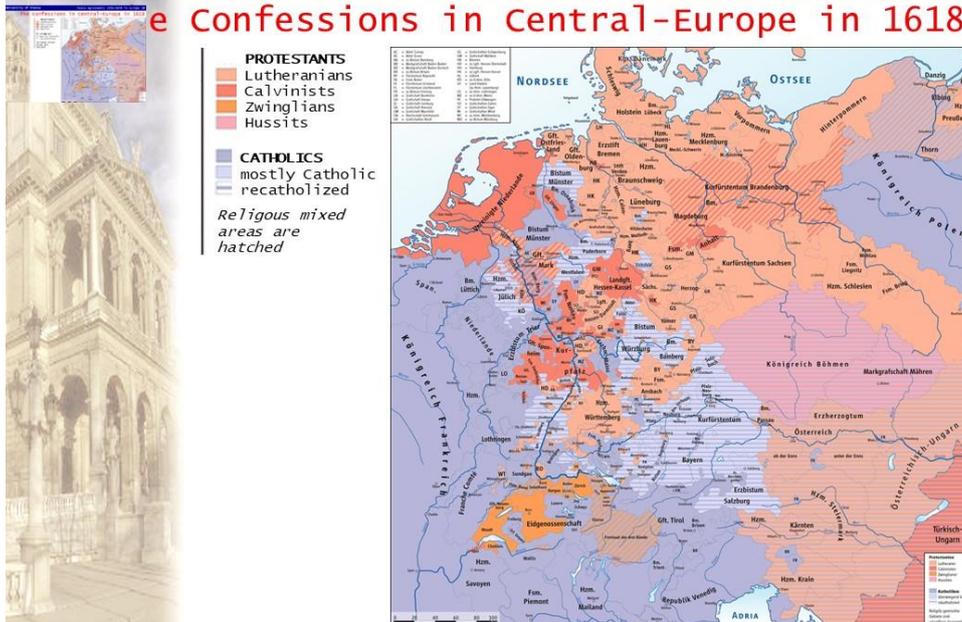
To protect and establish the still young reformation in the Empire, the **"Confessio Augustana"**<sup>A6</sup> was written as a basis for the formation of an independent Protestant Church. In 1530 at the "Reichstag" in Augsburg the "Reichsstände", who had converted to Protestantism, tried to make the Emperor accept that "Confessio". But the Emperor refused it. He did not want a second Christian Church. A new Church would endanger the unity of the Empire. However, his rejection did not bring the desired unity. And this for political reasons.

The Emperor had to stand idly by while Protestantism further strengthened despite rejection of the "Confessio Augustana". He had to defend Vienna from the Turks, which in 1529 besieged the Capital of his Empire. At the same time, he was engaged in a war in Italy. Moreover, France supported against the Habsburgs, the Smalcaldic League, which reached the peak of its power in 1540.

Then there were tensions between the Protestant League and the Catholic Emperor. The Roman Catholic duke Heinrich II of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, a determined opponent of the reformation, was expelled by the Protestant League. This gave the Emperor a good reason for war. Pope Paul III financed the war of the Emperor; the Pope was concerned to sustain the unity of the Church and to ward off the reformation. The concern over the unity of the Church and the Empire strengthened the ties between Pope and Emperor. The Pope Paul III wanted the unity of the

Church; the Emperor wanted it for the Empire. In the "Smalcaldic war" of 1546/47 the Roman Catholic Emperor defeated the Protestants.

e Confessions in Central-Europe in 1618



However, this victory did not end the conflict between the old (Roman Catholic) Church and the supporters of Luther. The reformation was **already too deep-seated** <sup>A7</sup> in the northern part of the Empire. The Emperor was politically and financially too dependent on the Protestant princes and the free cities, which turned Protestant. The first decades after the break of Luther in 1517 show that the Protestantism could not be destroyed neither politically nor militarily. This insight led to the Augsburg Peace Agreement and with that to the end of the medieval idea of the "Roman Empire". The "raison d'etre" of the Holy Roman Empire was the unity of Emperor and Pope, of Church and Throne, and the Empire was therefore called the "Sacred Roman Empire".

The Passau contract of 1552 had preceded the Augsburg Peace Agreement of 1555. The main aim of both contracts was the political toleration of the reformation on the basis of the "Confessio Augustana" presented at the "Reichstag" in Augsburg in 1530.

### Peace in the Country ("Landfrieden")

The aim of the Peace Agreement was peace in the whole Empire ("Landfrieden"). As can be seen in chapter 14 quote unquote:

*"General peace commandment: 14. Therefore We insist, organize, want and demand, that nobody - despite his status, position or whatever else - makes war against another one, besieges, captures anybody but everybody shall counter the other ones with real friendship and Christian love. "*

## Double-“ius“ (law)



### Ius reformandi

- ☐ The “ius reformandi” contains the legal acceptance of the „Confessio Augustana“ and with that an independent new church.
- ☐ "cuius regio eius religio" (1604 by the Lawyer Joachim Stephani [1544-1623])
- ☐ Regionalizing of the liaison religion-political power

### Ius emigrandi

- ☐ whoever did not want to accept the imposed religion of the rulers for conscience reasons, could emigrate with all his belongings.
- ☐ The aim was the “confessional purity”.

The most important point of the Augsburg Peace Agreement is a **double right** (in Latin ius): The “ius reformandi” and the “ius emigrandi”.<sup>A8</sup>

## Ius reformandi

The “ius reformandi” contains the legal acceptance of the „Confessio Augustana“ and with that an independent new Church. The Protestant princes now achieved what they had wanted to safeguard before by the Smalcaldic League and during the Smalcaldic war. The reformation of Luther had found a safe political basis in sovereign and free cities with that “ius reformandi”.

The religious unity of the Empire had come to an end. The Emperor lost the right to determine the religion of all subjects in the Empire. Nevertheless, some Roman Catholics and then occasionally some Protestant tried to restore the unity of the Latin Christianity. Instead of the desired

unification there was in the Protestant area a further splitting between the Lutherans and the Zwinglians; and little by little further Protestant Churches were founded.

The religious Peace Agreement of 1555 allowed only two confessions in the Empire, the Roman Catholic one and the Protestant. The Zwinglian reform movement, coming from Switzerland, was not recognised.

This term "ius reformandi" was coined half a century later (1604) by the Lawyer Joachim Stephani [1544-1623] as "cuius regio eius religio". The Emperor couldn't determine the religion for all subjects of the Empire anymore as had been until that time. This right rather went from the imperial level to the level of regional princes and to the free towns in the Empire. Therefore, the religion right was in principle not changed but merely "regionalized". The alliance between political power and religion remained unchanged. In fact, it was strengthened. Both sides preserved their existence.

### **Ius emigrandi**

The Augsburg Peace Agreement also provided that the implementation of the new conditions should happen peacefully. To this end, the "ius emigrandi" was formulated. Whoever did not want to accept the imposed religion of the rulers for conscience reasons, could emigrate with all his belongings. The aim was the "confessional purity". The confessionally mixed free cities were exempted. The "confessional cleansing" was instrumental to purify the country from other religions. Moreover, all this took place in order to end religious conflicts in the respective domain.

### **"Confessionalization"**

To strengthen their power the Roman Catholic and the Protestant rulers used all available social means to consolidate and deepen the religion of their citizens. Moreover, this was necessary because many people sympathized with the reformation and took up the reformation ideals primarily in Roman Catholic areas. Strong groups still existed in Protestant areas, which adhered to the "old" Catholic faith.



## "Confessionalization"

- ☐ To strengthen their power the Roman Catholic and the Protestant rulers used all available social means to consolidate and deepen the religion of their citizens.
- ☐ Confessionalization of all areas of life.
- ☐ Since then: two very different confessional cultures in Europe – the Protestant and the Catholic

This led to the **Confessionalization of all areas of life**.<sup>A9</sup> The law and the education at school were important confessionalistic instruments. A confessionally coloured religious culture arose in the different countries. Luther himself composed many new songs. The Christmas-manger carol owes its origin to him. Protestants practice was based on the Bible, Roman Catholics on the sacraments and rituals. Protestants searched a direct approach to the merciful God, whereas Roman Catholics communicated with God through the medium of the Church and her priests. In Protestant services bread and wine were needed. For the Roman Catholics bread alone was enough. The confessional differences were emphasized.

Even the unique Church of the western Christianity in Europe, the Roman Catholic Church, was transformed into a confessional Church. On one side, the council of Trent (1545-1563) introduces reforms, which had been demanded by Roman Catholic reform movements even ahead of Luther. On the other hand, the council demarks the positions of the two confessions.

## Counter-Reformation



### Counter-Reformation

- ❓ The ius emigrandi, formulated to protect citizens with their new belief,
- ❓ became an often violent instrument of the "confessional cleansing".
- ❓ The aggressive religion policy of the time before Augsburg was taken up by the Roman Catholic Habsburgs for many centuries.

1532



Archduke and 1558-1564  
Emperor Ferdinand I

1770



Empress Maria Theresia  
1740-1780

Besides the inner Roman Catholic reform a Counter-Reformation <sup>A10</sup> in Roman Catholic areas started. This was carried out with spiritual and secular means as well. The ius emigrandi, formulated to protect citizens in their new belief, became an often violent instrument of the "confessional cleansing". The aggressive religion policy of the time before Augsburg, was taken up again by the Roman Catholic Habsburgs for many centuries. Ferdinand I, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, expelled all Underground-Protestants from a valley near to Salzburg in 1837. A law of the Archduke of Austria Ferdinand I in 1532 may illustrate the new policy. It has the drastic title "Von der Ketzereyen Ausrott and Bestraffung" (of the extinction and punishment of the heresies). This law destroyed the living conditions of heretics, if they were not ready to live as Catholics.

The affiliation to the Church as well as the "right" (Roman Catholic) faith were protected by the state. The participation in Church life was also subject to state laws. So a law with the title "confession to Easter and how to receive the Communion" on February 7th, 1532 ordered every Roman Catholic to confess and to receive the Holy Communion. If a person hasn't confessed in his parish, he had to present a confession-sheet to the house owner.

Such ordinances show that people apparently did not always participate in the life of the Church to the desired extent. So empress Maria Theresia made a note in her ordinance "of sanctification of the Feyertägen (holy days of obligation)" much later on July 14th, 1770: In view of the fact that some man tended not to go to Church on Sunday, but go to taverns or bars instead, she decided to close the bars on Sunday morning. Besides this, everybody had to take part in a Catechesis ("Khristenlehre") on Sunday in the afternoon.

## Unstable period of peace



### 1555 to 1618: unstable period of peace

- ☐ "Reservatum Ecclesiae"
- ☐ resistance to the violent "confessional cleansing" (primarily the case in the Habsburgian Bohemia)

The Augsburg Peace Agreement calmed down the situation for long time. There was peace from 1555 to 1618: to be precise there were no wars. However, the tensions remained, because the Augsburg Peace Agreement was partly unclear even in important issues. Some decisions simply were not executed. **It was an unstable period of peace.**<sup>A11</sup>

This concerned particularly the regulation, that in case a Catholic prince bishop or another higher officeholder of Roman Catholic Church converted to Protestantism the Roman Catholic Church should retain the properties. This had been decided upon in the so-called "**Reservatum Ecclesiae**" of the Augsburg Peace Agreement. This regulation should be

valid even retrospectively. But some princes, who became Protestant, refused the return the properties.

## Defenestration in Prague 1618



Moreover, there was an intense resistance to the violent "confessional cleansing". This was primarily the case in the Habsburgian Bohemia. The Protestantism served for the attainment of the national independence of the Czechs. Church and political interests were still connected. The rejection of the Roman Catholic Habsburgs was strong by the Czech Hussite nationalists. When imperial delegates in Prague with representatives of Bohemia negotiated, three of the imperial emissaries were thrown out of the window. The so-called "Prager Fenstersturz" [Defenestration of Prague]<sup>A12</sup> in 1618 was the prelude to the Thirty Years' War.

This bloody war is commonly interpreted as a confessional war. The war parties formed up along the confessional limits in Europe. The Protestant Union confronted the Roman Catholic League. The dominant players of the war were however on the one hand Roman Catholic countries (Austria, Spain, at the beginning also France), on the other hand Protestant countries (Denmark, Sweden, Brandenburg, Saxony). Nevertheless, the confessional dimension lost meaning in the course of the war. So for example, Roman Catholic France allied itself (after 1528) against the Roman Catholic Habsburgs with the Ottomans under Francis I. More and more this war should decide which of the dynasties is dominating in Europe: The Habsburgs in Austria or the House of Orange in the Netherlands or the Bourbons in France or the Swedish dynasty of Charles IX.

## 1618-1648 Thirty Year War

- ☐ It was a religious (one christianity) and a political (safeguarding power) war
- ☐ A bloody and dirty war



The Hanging during the Thirty Year War  
Painted by Jacques Callot

The Thirty Years' War was a very dirty war. <sup>A13</sup> It cost in some regions of the Empire the life of **up to 70%** of the population and left misery and poverty. The population had to finance the war themselves in respective war-zones. Not only was there much loss of life, but also much looting.

## 1648 Peace Agreements in Westphalia



- ☐ In Münster for the catholics,  
in Osnabrück for the Protestants)



Triumphus Pacis

The Westphalian Peace (1648) <sup>A14</sup>, made in Münster and in Osnabrück, brought the bloody Thirty Years' War to an end.

## Some Historical effects



# Historical Effects

In the second part <sup>A15</sup> I will try to work out, which consequences the medieval religion Peace Agreements had for modern Europe. No complete analysis is to be expected. Merely some development lines shall be pointed out. The aim is particularly to understand better Europe's ideological situation of today. Perhaps it is also possible for non-European regions of the world suffering religious conflicts to learn from the medieval experiences of Europe.

## Benign Secularization



### Benign Secularization

- ❓ To make peace it was necessary to remove politics from the struggle for truth.
- ❓ Politics became "dereligionized" ["entreligionisiert"] and in this meaning "secular(ized)".
- ❓ Michael Balint: benign and malignant regression
- ❓ state of law ("Rechtsstaat")
- ❓ Immanuel Kant: morality and legality

The religion Peace Agreements of the late Middle Ages had a lasting effect on the political and ideological development of modern Europe. The relationship between religion and politics was newly defined. It distanced politics from the religion. Politics became "dereligionized" <sup>A16</sup> ["entreligionisiert"] and in this meaning "secular(ized)".

To make peace it was necessary to remove politics from the struggle for truth. The European state under the rule of secular law could develop. Immanuel Kant has distinguished legality and morality without separating them totally. There could be different moral legitimations for one legality. Morals and religion of course play a role when constitution and laws are drawn up. But the power of laws does not any more depend on the moral or religious options of those who are under the law once decided.

In 1555 and then definitely in 1648 peace-making was made possible by a "secularization of politics". I call this kind of "secularization" a "benign secularization". I borrow this term from psychoanalysis.

The Hungarian psychoanalyst Michael Balint distinguishes two forms of regression: a malignant one and a benign one. The malignant regression works destructively. It destroys the inner life of a human being. The benign regression, however, is a moment at a healing process. Similarly, "secularization" also can be a valuable step towards the political cure of

a conflict and therefore the con-word "benign secularization" is appropriate.

This was also in 1555 and then in 1648 the case for some decades. The confessions fought a bitter fight for truth. As the history of the world religions teaches, there is always the danger that **the fight for truth can lead to violence**. The heretic **Jan Hus died in 1415** at the stake, because he did not revoke his heresy, which was dangerous for both the Church and the Empire. In **1428** the remains of his predecessor and teacher **John Wyclif** were excavated and posthumously burned. Religion bears in it a potential for violence which was activated in the history of man and could be activated even now. This became possible because the fight for truth coincided with the concern to sustain the secular power. So the quarrel over truth did not proceed peacefully but got out of control in a bloody war.

To destroy the new confession was the religious aim and to preserve the unity of the Empire was the political aim of this war for truth. The Pope and the Emperor fought for the preservation of the "status quo" of truth and power together.

The **Protestants** fought in religious regard for such a weakening of the old Catholic Church, that the existence of a new Christian Confession had to be accepted by the weakened Church; the princes and free cities wanted to get more political rights than the Emperor. Some princes had become Protestant because they expected support in their fight for more power from the members of the new confession.

For the elimination of the Protestant opponents, however, the Emperor was militarily and financially too weak. The fight against the Turks and for dominance in Europe against France needed too many resources. The Emperor was dependent on the money of the Protestants for his war against the Ottoman Empire whose army in 1529 stood before the walls of Vienna and threatened the Christian Empire. **The Emperor had only the chance to make a Peace Agreement with the Protestants giving them the right to build a new confession.** They got full liberty to practice their reformed Christian religion. The modern human right of religious freedom was born. In addition, the Emperor lost much of his power to the princes and free cities.



## winners of the benign secularization

- ☐ The peace was no longer dependent on the outcome of the never ending struggle for truth.
- ☐ Struggling for truth had to be carried out peacefully.
- ☐ Possibility for peaceful ecumenism (20<sup>th</sup> century).

The "benign secularization", that is the secularization of the **peace** policy with the aim to guarantee peace for Europe, was very important for the history of this old continent. **Peace was no longer dependent on the outcome of the struggle for truth.**<sup>A17</sup> The fighting religious parties were obliged by the secular political power to maintain peace.

The new two **Christian confessions also won** through this "benign secularization". The physical destruction of people who think in another theological way was no longer possible. The warlike mode of fighting for truth was stopped politically. Struggling for truth had to be carried out peacefully. This was made possible because the politicians decreed religious tolerance. A prerequisite for a peaceful and fertile **ecumenical movement** was created. This happened at first among Christian confessions. In the long term this experience was a model for dialogue among the world religions and not least between believers and atheists.

This "benign secularization" was the prelude to very different models of relations between religion and politics, between Church and state. On the one side there is the complex model of cooperation between state and Church to address issues of mixed interest like education, marriage or criminal law. This model is preferred in Germany or Austria today. On the other side we find the model of radical separation in France which was put in force in 1905.

**Could one of them be in future a model even for Islam? In this growing world-religion church and state are not separated at all. Like in premodern**

times in Europe some Muslims are prone to make war in the name of Allah. Could secularization of the state be a prerequisite for a peaceful Islam modern countries?

## Territorializing of the alliances between religion und power

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### Territorializing

- ❓ In the Empire: Territorializing of the alliances between religion und power.

Holy Roman Empire

principalities princ princ princ principal

- ❓ In Austria: The monocoloured Roman Catholic mainland shrivelled to a Christian Social Party.

party

- ❓ The last step: As social basis for the church individuals were remaining.

individuals

However, the way to such different models like tense separation or peaceful cooperation was long and caused many conflicts. Even after the Peace Agreement of 1555 and 1648 there existed strong alliances between the two confessions and the political rulers, the Emperor, the prince, the free cities of the Empire. The only difference to the situation before Ausburg was, that these alliances were now "territorialized".<sup>A18</sup> The respective confessional colouring was the same as before. The interweaving became merely pluralized, in some territories it was even more intensive.

This alliance between religious and political power was dissolved within the European countries only in a slow process with many conflicts. At the end of 19th century political parties were formed. For example in the revolutions of 1848 and 1867 constitutional monarchy was founded in Austria. This was the time, when political parties were established. One of these parties was very close to the Catholic Church. To use an analogy it can be said, that the monocoloured Roman Catholic Austrian mainland shrivelled to a Christian social party. In this party Roman Catholic prelates were responsible. One of these famous prelates was Ignaz Seipel, a

Chancellor in the First Republic. In 1945 the Christian-Social Party was opened for members of other Christian Churches and for people of good will. Even the name was changed from Christian-Social-Party to Peoples Party (Volkspartei). So the process of the disconnection of the narrow relation between religion and politics continued. This process began in 1555 and is going on even in our times. It has not ended yet. Recent surveys from Austria show that the Roman Catholics actually still tend to choose the Peoples Party. And many people say, that this former Christian Party represents the political interests of the Roman Catholic Church in many areas. Others say this should no longer be the case: Religion and Politics should be clearly separated.

### Confessional cleansing

The "benign secularization" is based on the "ius reformandi". However, in the Augsburg Peace Agreement (the "Reichsabschiedt") we find also the "ius emigrandi".



## Confessional cleansing

- ▣ The guarantee for personal religious freedom became an instrument to safeguard the power of the rulers.
- ▣ Peace made by separation
- ▣ Orthodox churches: "canonical territory"
- ▣ Balkan – Krajina (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia)
- ▣ Abraham and Lot as forerunners, premodel

One surely remembers, that the "ius emigrandi" should guarantee the religious freedom of the individual without negative consequences for life and properties. This looks like modern religious freedom. But the price for this right was high at that time. Whoever emigrated lost his homeland. However, in practice in the course of few decades this guarantee for liberty was transformed in an instrument of violent expulsion.

The guarantee for personal religious freedom became an instrument to safeguard the power of the rulers.<sup>A19</sup>

The aim of "ius emigrandi" was not only the free religious practice of the individual citizens. It also should make possible a **peaceful living together** of the people. To create a solid basis for peace, the conflicting parties were not only appealing for tolerance. Wherever it was possible, the confessions were separated from each other. So one hoped, that there would not arise local conflict between the confessions. The members of the confessions kept to themselves. At the same time the ruling ones were sure of their power because it was based on the one religion of their subjects. This policy of peace counts on the assumption, that peace is more established, if the area is "confessionally pure", cleansed, homogeneous.

**Biconfessional areas** like some free cities were an exception. In these cities religious tolerance was highly valued by educated citizens. Independently of their own confessional orientation, the politicians responsible for the towns ensured that the confessions lived peacefully with each other. **In these European towns first experiences were made to handle peacefully an ideological pluralism.**

The idea of the "confessional purity" of territories was not foreign to Christianity. In the Orthodox Churches it was important from their beginning. According to the canonical law, all residents of a territory belong to the respective Orthodox Church. The Orthodox theologians call it **"canonical territory"**. So the Russian population belongs to the Russian Orthodox Church, the Greeks to the Greek Orthodox Church and so on.

The emigration of many Orthodox Christians from different **patriarchies** to the USA or to Canada was a great problem for the Orthodox Churches. The attempt to found an "Orthodox Church of America" failed. The Orthodox Patriarchies still expect that other Patriarchies respect their "canonical territory". This is claimed from the Roman Catholic Church as well: When Roman Catholic dioceses were established under Pope John Paul II in Siberia, this led to heavy frictions between Roman Catholic Church and Russian Orthodox Church. The peace formula is therefore an in 1555: peace through separation.

Few years ago, the politicians in the **Balkans** have applied the same principles of this peace strategy. Croatia wanted to safeguard peace in the so-called province Krajina by "confessional cleansing". Croatia is a country with a Roman Catholic culture. However, in the Krajina Orthodox Serbians and Muslims cohabited with the Roman Catholics. The tension between the ethnic and religious groups were suppressed over years by communism. When the Yugoslavia of Tito broke down then they

exploded. Roman Catholic Croatia, Orthodox Serbia as well as Muslims mostly living in Bosnia were for nationalistic reasons in the state of war. Croatia wanted to win back the province Krajina which was lost to Serbia. This turned out well militarily. And to protect the military victory, the Orthodox Serbians and the Muslims were expelled and some of them murdered.

Peace by a **spatial separation** of the conflicting parties has a remarkable **biblical parallel**. Abraham and Lot were away in the Valley of Jordan with their flocks. Fertile pastureland and waters for the flocks were precious. There were only few wells. Because of this the shepherds frequently quarrelled. Abraham solved the conflict in the same way like the mediaeval Peace Agreement from Augsburg many centuries later. Abraham suggested to Lot to separate their flocks and the pastureland for peace's sake. Lot could choose, on which side of the Jordan he wanted to live in future. A durable peace was agreed in that way between Abraham and Lot.

## Confessionally coloured cultures



### Confessional cultures

- For Europe, this policy to establish "confessional purity" was very important. Different confessional coloured cultures have developed.

For Europe, this policy to establish "confessional purity" was very important. Different **confessional coloured cultures have developed**.<sup>A20</sup> A sensory lifestyle emerged in Roman Catholic countries. The Viennese baroque with its positive attitude to life is an example of it. The cultural development proceeded in the Protestant countries differently. Civil education and creative entrepreneurship grew here. Max Weber associated

the Calvinism with the spirit of capitalism. Typical for the Victorian age is a strained puritanism. The Roman Catholics had their carnival in Cologne, in Mainz or in Constance as a prelude in the forty-day period of fasting. Protestants, however, do not fast, therefore do not have any carnival either. The Roman Catholics live more communitarian and networked while the Protestants keep the individual in the centre.

## Malignant secularization



### Malignant secularization

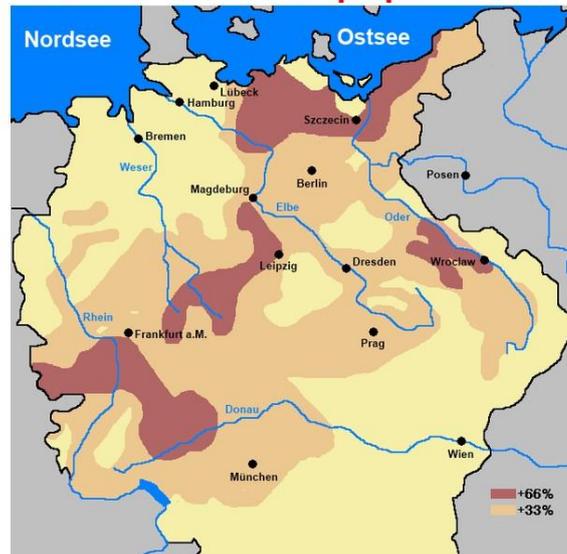
- ⊟ This does not lead to religious peace, but to transformation of religion or to its disappearance.
- ⊟ The result of that "malignant secularization" could be either
  - religious pluralization
  - or complex atheization.

Psychoanalysis knows not only a benign regression, but also a malignant. Similarly it seems there is also a "malignant secularization"<sup>A21</sup> (even from the view of Christianity). This does not lead to religious peace, but to transformation of religion or to its disappearance. The result of that "malignant secularization" could be either a religious pluralization or a complex atheization.

## Decimation of the population



Religion together with political and military force for many meant death, expulsion, loss of the means of livelihood.



The **infinite suffering** <sup>A22</sup> which the religious wars caused in the population was one of the driving forces for this "malignant secularization". Religion together with political and military force for many meant death, expulsion, loss of the means of livelihood. The reputation of the religious leaders and the reputation of the religion itself was negatively impacted in the light of such sufferings. **Church lost her credibility.** This was not only a problem for the Catholics, but also for the Protestants. Martin Luther cooperated with the prince, when the revolting farmers were violently defeated.

**This harmed the image of the Churches, confessions and the Christian religion and led to two different developments in Europe.**



## Agressive Anticlericalism

- ⌘ aggressive Anticlericalismus: to disempower the Confessions/Churches
- ⌘ Voltaire: Ecrasez l'infame!
- ⌘ Not against religion: but "dechurching" of religion
- ⌘ Enlightenment: universal religion of the philosophers

The one was marked by an aggressive "Anticlericalism"<sup>A23</sup>. Its declared aim was: The power of the Church which had allied itself to the secular power should be broken. Voltaire wanted to wipe out the infamous Church (Écrasez l'infame!). The liberal revolution in France realized Voltaire's incitement. The Marxist revolution had the fight against a politicised Church on its program. The Church was deprived of power. Confessing believers and priests were killed or jailed; many fled out of their country or went underground.

### Privatization and pluralization of the religion

However, the fight against the powerful Church was not at all - even not in the beginning - a fight against the religion. Even Voltaire dreamt of a "religion without Church". A "DeChurching" of the Christian religion started. Religion should become a private matter. One aim was overcoming the variety of religions and with that the bloody and violent fight between these. No one single religion shall appear with the dangerous claim to own the only truth. Gottfried Ephraim Lessing in "Nathan the Wise" told the famous ring parable. In the time of Enlightenment, one was looking for the reasonable religion of the philosophers. This should be a kind of universal religion for all people in the world.

The privatization of the religion had been spread in the European culture because it was supported politically as in former times. The young Liberal Parties in Europe did not only ask for separation from Church and state

but also included the "declaration of the religion as a private matter" in their party programme. To win religious workers for their movement, the Socialist Party Convention in the German Gotha in 1875 followed this liberal religious policy. Karl Marx protested intensely against this decision. Since then the liberals and the socialists in Europe worked closely together in matters concerning religion and culture, **even so they were not in agreement over economic matters.**

Such a universal religion does not need a Church. But this is not an advantage for this kind of privatized religion. It lacks that authority which could standardize the individual beliefs and bring believers to common actions together. Privatization individualizes religion and therefore weakens it politically. In the end there could be so many "religions" like religious people. To unite all people in one single universal religion seems to be a **quadrature** of the circle.

### Atheization

However, privatization and pluralization represent not all variations of the ideological development after the bloody War of religions. Another one is the "Atheization".<sup>A24</sup>



## Atheization

- ❑ In the time of the early modern Peace Agreements there were no atheists in Europe.
- ❑ 1770 Holbach in Paris
- ❑ 1859 Darwin – Engels
- ❑ Atheism was spread by the political power (Freethinker, Marxists)
- ❑ A result: atheizing cultures in Eastern Europe (Eastern Germany, Czech Republic, Estonia)
- ❑ This happened to protestant cultures, non to catholic ones: not easy to explain

**In the time of the medieval Peace Agreements there were no atheists in Europe.** And if there were any, they couldn't have confessed it publicly. Like heretics they would have been burned: still atheists would have ended at the stake.

Atheism could arise in Europe only after the Churches were deprived of their power. It was the French member of Enlightenment Paul Henri Thiry d'Holbach, who published anonymously in 1770 his plea for a "materialistic atheism" ("system de la nature"). It does not need God as a creator. The living nature has developed from the matter. Friedrich Engels thought that Darwin with his epochal work of 1859 (The Origin of species) has provided the scientific evidence for this materialistic atheism.

This put believers into spiritual unrest. The wife of a Scottish bishop might have prayed: "Dear God, let it not be true. And if it is true, let it not get around!" However, it did get around.

This elitist atheism was not spread until it was adopted by political forces again. The English freethinker movement which arose in England at the end of the 17th century, propagated the liberty from Church dogma and represented a deism. In the German freethinker movement (founded 1881) deism developed into atheism and was spread. Karl Marx installed it in the programme of the proletarian revolution. He explained God like Feuerbach as a product of human imagination. Religion is the opium of the people. Consequently, religious workers don't fight against exploitation and oppression. Some Liberals and most Communists combined atheism with politics. Both atheistic movements with that liaison relapsed to the time before the Augsburg Peace Agreement. There was again an alliance between the political power and "religion". Atheismus took the place of "religion". And this is really a premodern concept.

Both the fight of communism against the Church and also against the religion were very successful in some European countries. In the midst of the formerly Christian continent arose atheizing cultures: In Eastern Germany, Estonia and Czech Republic. The aggressive religion policy of the communist dictators, however, led in other countries to the strengthening of the belief in God within a considerable part of the population.

It cannot be easily explained why these different countries have come through the aggressive religion and Church policy of the atheistic communism with a completely different result. The countries with a Catholic coloured culture are Roman Catholic in a high extent today; like Poland, Croatia and Slovakia. Protestant cultures fared differently in the time of communism. Estonia, Eastern Germany and Czech Republic are atheizing cultures. Could one explanation be, however, that Roman Catholic cultures are communitarian, Protestant cultures individualistic? For this clues are found in the theology of the respective confession: Catholicism puts the accent on the Church, its sacraments, the commonly celebrated services. In Protestantism, however, every person asks like Luther how a merciful God can be found. This makes Protestantism more modern than Catholicism. The community seems, however, to protect the

Roman Catholics well in hostile times. The Protestant, because single, is exposed to the adverse powers unprotected. Were Protestants perhaps therefore less resistant to the communist repression? And do they suffer more from the liberal "modernity stress" than the Roman Catholics? **Is the most modern type of Christianity the most prominent victim of the modern age?** Do Protestant Free Churches or the enormously successful Pentecostal Movement remove from their members the burden of the religious individuality in a Catholic way?

## From the medieval Peace Agreements to the ideological situation in modern Europe. A Summary. <sup>A25</sup>

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# Summary

The analysis of the medieval religion Peace Agreements and its effects on the ideological development of Europe contribute to understand the ideological situation of the modernized Europe. What has the uniformly Christian Europe of the late Middle Ages turned to? And why did Europe become what it is nowadays?

## Secularization of Europe?

The common hypothesis is: Europe is on the way to a continent without God. This happens due to the Enlightenment, industrialization and connected with it the Social Revolution and the advancement of modern sciences. The core of the hypothesis is: The (European) modernization has secularized Europe. Christianity is going to disappear silently. A subtle enlightened atheism is taking (its) place. The more modern the continent is the more secularized it will be.



### A continent without God?

- ▣ 68% call themselves religious, 22% not religious, 5% are convinced atheists;
- ▣ 76% are a member of a religious community and 23% define themselves as non-members;
- ▣ 68% wish a religious ritual at birth, 70% at marriage, 80% at death.

Until this hypothesis is realized, much time would be needed, because nowadays the European continent is not secularized at all. According to the European Value System Study of 2008 <sup>A26</sup>

- 68% call themselves religious, 22% not religious, only 5% are convinced atheists;
- 76% are a member of a religious community and 23% define themselves as non-members;
- 68% wish a religious ritual at birth, 70% at marriage, 80% at death.

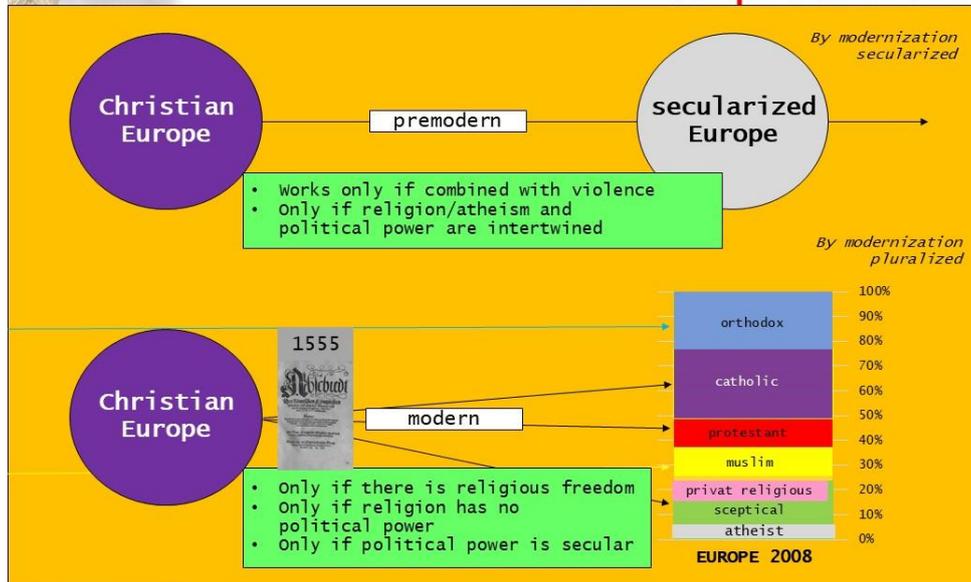
## Ideological colorization (pluralization)

In the light of this and more empirical data one cannot characterize today's Europe as unreligious. God is not dead in Europe, as Friedrich Nietzsche claimed. What we find in Europe is not that "malignant secularization". There is of course an "atheizing" dynamic. But it is not the only dynamic, because there is an enormous ideological colorization under the roof of the ideological house of Europe. We find a spiritual search in the modern towns of Europe. The number of the spiritual pilgrims is increasing. For example more pilgrims than ever before are going to Santiago di Compostella. The exclusive Christian continent has not turned to an exclusive secularized continent until now.

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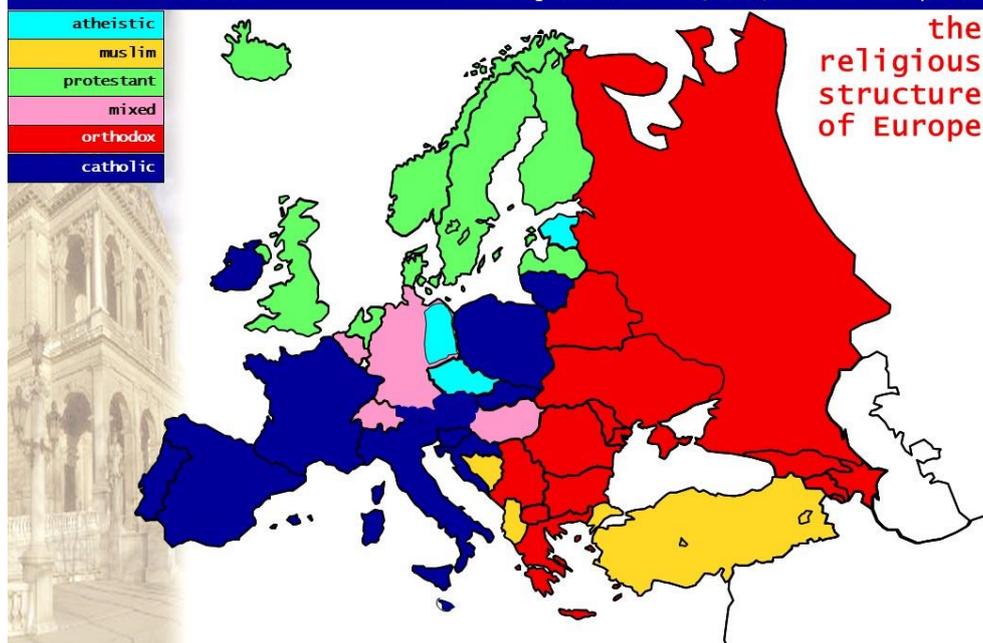
### Two interpretations



Whoever claims that the change is just from Christian to secular(ized) – and that in the name of modernization – , is in fact making a totally premodern interpretation which reflects the mentality of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>A27</sup> To impose the atheism by power in the time of Communism in Eastern Europe is very much like the policy after 1555, when Catholicisms or Protestantism were imposed by the political power.

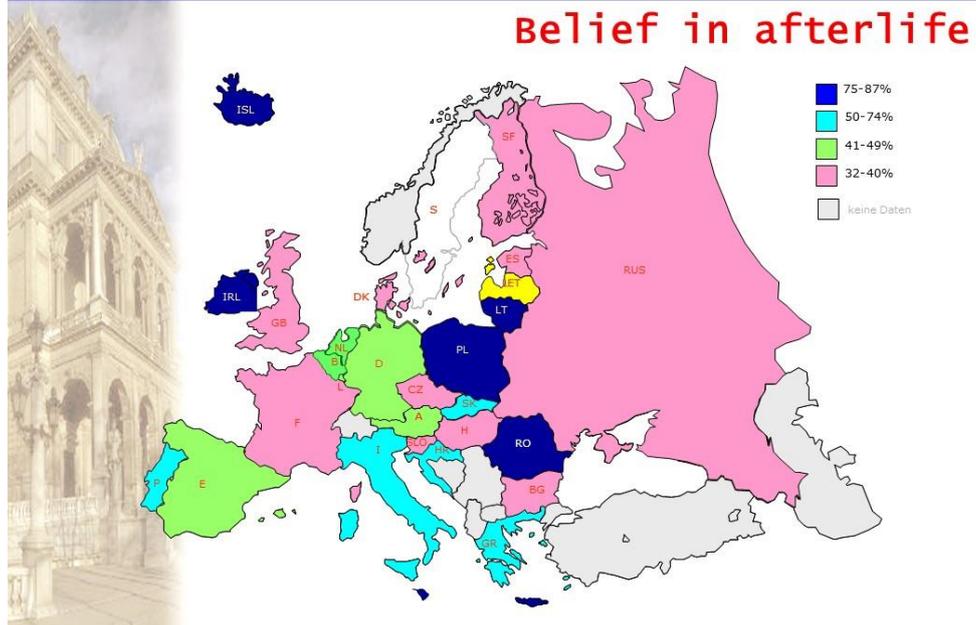
The ideological landscape in Europe isn't simply changing from Christian to secular(ized) but from Christian to many different ideological options. Europe is getting rather more coloured, more pluralistic.





the  
religious  
structure  
of Europe

After 1555 at first two Christian confessions emerged. A Confessionalization of the two cultures started. In the Enlightenment, the **Christian religion was firstly “deconfessionalized”, “deChurched”**. The number of religious people outside the Church grew. The weakening of the Christian Churches in Europe began. In a second step religion was “deChristianized”. The **“atheizing” movement started very late**. Today, people in Europe belong to all these different ideological groups which have emerged since 1555 (and some of them before).<sup>A29</sup>



Also the imaginations about life after death are colourful.<sup>A30</sup> There are cultures (like in Poland or in Malta) where most people hope for a life after death. They feel immortal. But in other European countries (like Estonia or the Czech Republic) the majority does not believe in such a life. This belief or unbelief has many degrees and pictures. For example more than 20% in Europe think that they will be reincarnated. Others think there could be or will certainly be a resurrection.

Europe  
2000Europe  
1500

for your attention!

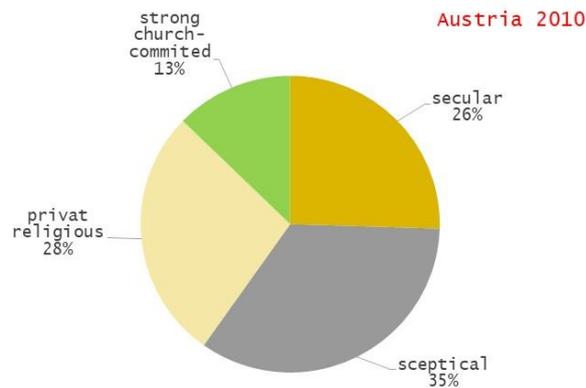
The result of the cultural development of Europe since the medieval Peace Agreements is therefore not an ideologically monocoloured sports lawn but a colourful flowery meadow.<sup>A31</sup> Europe will still keep this colourfulness for a long time because this is deeply rooted in its history. This is what I tried to point out.

(End)

## Ideological types

This statement is based only on the formal membership or non-membership. Some researches go more deeply. They show that even the members of one single Church are realizing their belief in a very different way.

## Different types to believe



- In a study in Austria in 2010 26% were assigned to the type of the “secular”, 35% to the “scepticals”, 28% live their faith “privately”, 13% have a strong “commitment” to a Christian Church.<sup>A32</sup>
- The “secular” and the “sceptics” are mostly not a member of a Church. But some of them are.
- It seems to be strange: 45% among the “secular” people believe in a higher being and are therefore deists. At least 87% of the “sceptic” people are deistic. “Secular” atheists are a small minority in Austria. From this local case study in Austria we can learn that being secular does not necessarily mean being atheistic. Secularization is not in any case atheization. This makes a “benign secularization” possible.

### Two important Separations

The process of the colorization started with the religious Peace Agreement of 1555. It became possible, because there were several creative separations:<sup>A33</sup>

- To make peace in the Empire, it was necessary to separate the political power from the search for the truth. We have termed this process "benign secularization".
- Then religion was separated from Church. The Christian confessions took part in this separation. The violent way by which the quarrel about the truth was carried out has the Churches damaged heavily. Of course this violence was executed by the politicians. But the Church leaders were co-players.
- The Churches loss little by little their control of the private religion. This made it finally possible, that in midst of the once uniform Christian continent "atheizing" countries came into being. The premodern alliance between atheism and communist power accelerated this process in many Eastern European countries. These politically pre-modern systems have meanwhile collapsed. So people are free to choose atheism as well as belief in God. People enjoy this religious freedom.

The result is – according to empirical studies – not an ideologically uniform sports lawn but a coloured flower meadow.<sup>A34</sup> Europe will still keep this colourfulness for a long time because this is deeply rooted in its history. This is what I tried to point out.

## Summary

The historical consequences of the medieval Peace Agreements are considerable:

- They have brought Europe the secular state under the rule of law, it is the "legal state" ("Rechtsstaat"). Morality and legality were distinguished but not totally separated.
- Secularized politics can enforce ideological peace.
- The concept of religious freedom came about.
- People can live their philosophy of life and their belief without social disadvantages.
- At least the religious communities won. Their search for truth can develop freely without influence by power and interests. The Roman Catholic Church in Austria claimed in 1952 to be a "free Church in the free state". Both were free now, not only the state.
- These advantages are the fruit of the "benign secularization" which took place after 1555 and brought (confessional) peace to Europe. It laid the

foundation stone on which different ideologies with respect and tolerance can live together. The ecumenical movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was made possible. Is it realistic to hope that this European experience can help even other non-European countries to find the way to justice and peace?

## 2014 Religion and violence 1

Introduction to in Session III (Virtues of tolerance - challenges from religions and respect for other peoples and nations). Kreisky-Forum

Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen!

After these two impressive introductions, I would like to draw your attention to a dimension of our topic that is mostly overlooked. Normally, when we discuss the theme of tolerance, we are arguing politically or theologically. In my short intervention, I would like to focus on the socio-[p]sychological dimension to this topic.

The opposite of tolerance is violence. In many discussions among average people you hear, that religions are intrinsically intolerant and prone to violence. The Thirty-Years-War, which followed the Reformation in the 17th century, shows, so many argue, that there is intolerance and violence within Christianity. Even within the Islamic tradition we find violence and intolerance. It was Islamic emperors who besieged my hometown Vienna twice.

However, it is not acceptable that one religion accuses another one of being violent. This often happens nowadays. The religious elders (the mullahs) of Islam – according to the accusation – do not really do enough to condemn Islamistic terror. !However, !Christianity has had phases in its history where it was prone to violence too: the crusades, the persecution of the witches, the enslavement of the Incas! The best way to overcome violence would be for every religion to promote an internal dialogue about its own dark side.

Nevertheless, we have to dig deeper. If one studies the holy books of the religions, than you will find many texts, which show, that most religions stand for peace. In addition, important representatives of the religions made peace not war: for example Francis of Assisi or Ghandi, the Sufis or many from the Buddhist tradition and Jesus of course in the Sermon on the Mount.

So the question is: Why are some members of a religion prone to violence but others to peace? The answer: That depends from the personality of the respective person/people, not their faith. I have conducted a survey analysing authoritarianism. The concept is from the famous German sociologist Theodor Adorno. He questioned why so many people supported totalitarian systems in Europe in the last century. He found that they subjected themselves willingly to authority with the simple idea that he who is above must be right. When they were put on trial, Eichmann, Hess or Höss defended themselves by saying they were only doing their duty.

The authoritarian personality, according to my own surveys, is weak in itself. Therefore, it is violent against others. It cannot accept plurality. They have no ability for „Pluralitätstoleranz“. (tolerance of pluralism). The Other is always seen as a threat. The Other is seen as an enemy. Therefore, he tries to extinguish Others through various forms of violence: at the stake (in our time at the media stake), or by terrorism.

Anyone who is interested in getting rid of the liaison [liaison] between religion and violence and to open a real peaceful and constructive dialogue has to reduce authoritarianism. The best way to reduce it is education and upbringing. Theological arguments may help. However, violence in combination with religion is not a theological problem, but a socio-psychological one.

The Lesson of the Peace-Agreements after reformation

One internal source of intolerance and violence is the personality of the individual. In addition there is an external source for intolerance and violence coloured by religion: political interest and political power.

When Martin Luther in 1517 published his 95 theses on the door of a church in Wittenberg, there started a veritable conflict within Christianity. How this conflict was managed could be a good lesson for the religion-sparked conflict in our time.

Firstly, the interests of political power and religious Confessions (it means the catholic and the protestant Confession after Reformation) were deeply intertwined. The confessions needed the political power to exist, even to survive. The catholic confession was allied with the Roman Emperor. The Protestants were defended by different princes. These tended to be more independent from the Emperor. To have the support of the population in their principality they made a coalition with the new protestant confession. Therefore, there had mutual interests. A win-win-situation for both. The political power defended and supported their confession and got support and legitimacy in return through religion.

Secondly, this worked only, when the own population belonged to the supported Confession. Adherents of the hostile confession were killed or forced to leave the country. Confessional cleansing took place: and this for the sake of peace.

Nowadays for example, we have the same situation on the Balkans. In the post-Yugoslavian war, for example, Croatia expelled the Orthodox Serbs and The Bosnian Muslims from the Krajina. In Bosnia-Herzegovina there is until now a religious coloured conflict between three religions: the catholic Croatians, the Orthodox Serbs and the Islamic Bosnians.

Thirdly, the peace through confessional cleansing brought no peace but the 17th Century Thirty-Year War. The way to lasting peace was not open

until political power and religion were separated from each other. A „benign secularization“ was a necessary step to peace in Europe. This was in the long term good even for religion or confessions. The struggle for truth lost political power as an instrument. The confessions had to make a peaceful dialogue. This was the beginning of the ecumenical interfaith-dialogue.

What could religions together give the world to be more just and peaceful

Hans Küng promotes the idea of a “World-Ethos”. The basis of it is the “golden rule”: „So in everything, do onto others what you would have them do onto you.” (Mt 7.12)

Johann B. Metz takes another approach. He remembers a sentence formulated when Yassir Arafat and Yizak Rabin made their famous peace-agreement. They promised: In future, we will always remember the suffering of the others, the opposite party.

The source for a “World-Ethos” now is not the golden rule, but the authority of those who suffer. The real aim of every ethic is to prevent further suffering by the others.

The precondition for this attitude can be found at the heart of the major world-religions. It is compassion.

Compassion is characteristic for Allah, the „ the Most Merciful”. Every Sura begins with “In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. “

Compassion is the heart of Jahwe and of the God of Jesus Christ. He is a compassionate God.

Finally: Among the three Buddha’s (one for protection, the second for wisdom) is one for compassion. The Dalai Lama is the reincarnation of the Buddha of compassion.

On that basis, the religions of the world would be able to cooperate intensively for a just and peaceful universe.

Preventing suffering in the future would be the best way to peace.

„Kulturchristen” (Cultural Christians)

The interfaith dialogue is not only a challenge for the religious leaders and their theological brain trusts. The result depends on the attitudes of the people. In a survey in Austria in 2010 we tested what the images of Islam are in the minds of Austrians. In the analysis of our representative data, we found three clusters/types.

The first type are those, who wish a free and open dialogue between Christianity and Islam.

The second and the third type postulate that Christianity should be the ideological basis of Europe even in the future.

These two types differ in their politics how to achieve this aim of a Christianity-based modern European culture. It necessary to define the role of Islam in such a context.

One of these types is peaceful. They say, that Islam can be modernised. It is not per se bound to violence. An Islam in modern Europe, or a European Islam could be possible and should be promoted.

Nevertheless, there is a type of Christian which is frightening and very aggressive. We call them „kämpferische Kulturchristen“ (aggressive Cultural Christians). Their position is: Islam is always per se violent and pre-modern. Therefore, there is no place for Muslims in Europe. This concerns of course the question of whether Turkey should become a member of the European Union. This type of Cultural Christian says: No!

We also asked respondents about their political preferences. It is very interesting to observe which political party the three types prefer. The (in its main tendency left-wing) Austrian Green Party has many members who are for a peaceful dialogue. The right-wing Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) houses mostly aggressive Cultural Christians. Members of the two governing Austria political parties, the Socialist SPÖ and the conservative ÖVP are between the two poles.

Two main political parties, the Socialist SPÖ and the Conservative ÖVP again: the more authoritarian a person is the more he or she is prone to be an aggressive Cultural Christian.



There are very intensive academic discussions for example at the universities of Vienna (Ednan Aslan) and Munster in Westphalia (Mouhanad Khorchide) with the aim to promote a European Islam.

Traditional Islam, they observe, contradicts some fundamental [fundamentl] European values. Look for example at the relationships between men and women. Women in Anatolia (Turkey) are subserviant to men. In Europe, we demand equality between the sexes. Our surveys in Austria show that Muslim women are very quickly assuming a modern role for themselves and they are doing it much quicker than the Anatolian men in Austria. Among second generation Anatolian Turks, there are many young men who are dissatisfied with the young women living in Austria. Therefore, some of these young men go to Anatolia in search of a wife for themselves.

The question is: Are the traditional roles for men and women in Islamic cultures a fundamental part of the religion? Or are these roles accidental – stemming from a culture of the time of Mohammed: therefore, changeable, when culture changes?

Aslan and Khorchide dig deeper: Are modern values like equality between women and men added to a European Islam, coming from outside

Islam? Or is that equality coming from the core of the Koran? Aslan and Khorchide say yes: Equality is an indispensable part of the Islamic religion.

For teaching this idea, both authors were heavily criticised by Mullahs in Islamic communities in Europa. They objected to such a modernisation within Islam. As a consequence, the Islamic world in Europe is deeply polarized.

We have the same situation in the Christian Churches in Europe. There are heavy tensions (for example surrounding the question of homosexuality) between the teaching of the official Church leaders in the Catholic Church and that which modern citizens believe. We find such tensions even within the Church itself.

The main issue for the religions is to clarify the relation between their own values and modern values in society. This creates stress for the religions. Some religious people react with an aggressive fundamentalism. They cannot accept modern values. They fight against them.

For a modern theology, not everything that happens in modern societies is acceptable. Religion has to play a prophetic role. Take the example of the exploitation of the poor, or the destruction of the environment. Religion has to protest against the demolition of the Creation. Religion is fighting for human life from womb to tomb. Abortion and euthanasia (<juthanésia>) are anathema to religion.

Therefore, religions need a theology of the modern world to discern what is a good and what is an evil. Religious leaders who have only friends among the politicians, are not undertaking their duties properly.

## 2014 Religion and violence 2

Introduction to in Session III (Virtues of tolerance - challenges from religions and respect for other peoples and nations). Kreisky-Forum

Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen!

After these two impressive introductions,

1

In a first step

I would like to draw your attention to a dimension of our topic that is mostly overlooked. Normally, when we discuss the theme of tolerance, we are arguing politically or theologically. In my short intervention, I would like to focus on the socio-[p]sychological dimension to this topic.

The opposite of tolerance is violence. In many discussions among average people you hear, that religions are intrinsically intolerant and prone to violence. The Thirty-Years-War, which followed the Reformation in the 17th century, shows, so many argue, that there is intolerance and violence within Christianity. Even within the Islamic tradition we find violence and intolerance. It was Islamic emperors who besieged my hometown Vienna twice.

However, it is not acceptable that one religion accuses another one of being violent. This often happens nowadays. The religious elders (the mullahs) of Islam do not really do enough to condemn Islamistic terror. However, Christianity has had phases in its history where it was prone to violence too: the crusades, the persecution of the witches, the enslavement of the Incas! The best way to overcome violence would be for every religion to promote an internal dialogue about its own dark side.

Nevertheless, we have to dig deeper. If one studies the holy books of the religions, than you will find many texts, which show, that most religions stand for peace. In addition, important representatives of the religions made peace not war: for example Francis of Assisi or Ghandi, the Sufis or many from the Buddhist tradition and Jesus of course in the Sermon on the Mount.

So the question is: Why are some members of a religion prone to violence but others to peace? The answer: That is rooted in the personality of the respective person/people, not in their faith. I have conducted a survey analysing (the so called) authoritarianism. The concept is from the famous German sociologist Theodor Adorno. He questioned why so many people supported totalitarian systems in Europe in the last century. He found that they subjected themselves willingly to authority with the simple idea that he who is above must be right. When they were put on trial,

Eichmann, Hess or Höss defended themselves by saying they were only doing their duty.

The authoritarian personality, according to my own surveys, is weak (and anxious) in itself. Therefore, it is violent against others. It cannot accept plurality. They have no ability for „Pluralitätstoleranz“. (tolerance of pluralism). The Other is always seen as a threat. The Other is seen as an enemy. Therefore, he tries to extinguish Others through various forms of violence: at the stake (in our time at the media stake), or by terrorism.

Anyone who is interested in getting rid of the liaison [liaison] between religion and violence and to open a real peaceful and constructive dialogue has to reduce authoritarianism. The best way to reduce it is education and upbringing. Theological arguments may help. However, violence in combination with religion is not a theological problem, but a socio-psychological one.

2

In a second part of my very short intervention I'll ask the question:

What could religions together give the world to be more just and peaceful

Hans Küng promotes since many years with much success the idea of a "World-Ethos". The basis of it is the "golden rule": „So in everything, do unto others what you would have them do unto you.“ (Mt 7.12)

His colleague Johann B. Metz takes another approach. He remembers a sentence formulated when Yassir Arafat and Yizak Rabin made in 1994 their famous peace-agreement. They promised: In future, we will always remember the suffering of the others, the opposite party.

The source for a "World-Ethos" by Metz now is not the golden rule, but the authority of those who suffer. The real aim of every ethic is to prevent further suffering by the others.

The precondition for this attitude can be found at the heart of the major world-religions. It is compassion.

Compassion is characteristic for Allah, the „ the Most Merciful“. Every Sura begins with "In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. "

Compassion is the heart of Jahwe and of the God of Jesus Christ. He is a compassionate God.

Finally: Among the three Buddha's (one for protection, the second for wisdom) is one for compassion. The Dalai Lama is the reincarnation of the Buddha of compassion.

On that basis, the religions of the world would be able to cooperate intensively for a just and peaceful universe.

Preventing suffering in the future would be the best way to peace.

## 2014 Religion and Violence 3

Interfaith Dialogue, Vienna,

Session III Virtue of Tolerance – Challenges from Religions and Respect for Others

Introducer: Prof. Dr. Paul M. Zulehner, Chair of Pastoral Theology in Vienna

Since 1992 I have taken part in the European Value System Study. We have found out that most Europeans appreciate tolerance very highly. However, if we ask whether people live and act tolerantly, the value data are very low. The question therefore arises „Why can people in Europe not be as tolerant as they would wish?”

This should be a primary question of this conference, „How can you enable populations and even more leaders to be more tolerant?” I think this has been the most political question of the conference. .

I would like to explain my position in regard to this very briefly. If one studies the Holy Books of all religions, which are represented here, then you will find many texts showing that most religions stand for peace, justice, compassion and mercy. I think these are the main positive features of all religions.

Important representatives of religions do not promote war. They stand for peace. For example, Francis of Assisi, or Gandhi, the Sufis, or many from the Buddhist traditions, and of course Jesus through the Sermon on the Mount. So, the question is, why are some members of religions prone to violence and others to peace? The answer is rooted in the personality of individuals, not in their faith.

I have conducted a survey, analyzing „authoritarianism” in Europe. The concept comes from a famous German sociologist, Theodor W. Adorno. He questioned why so many people supported the totalitarian systems in Europe in the last century. He found that they subjected themselves willingly to authority with the simple idea that he „who is above must be right”. When they were put on a trial, for example Eichmann, Hess, or Höss, they defended themselves by saying „We were only doing our duty.”

The authoritarian personality, according to my own surveys, is weak and anxious. Furthermore, because it is weak, it is very violent towards others. This inner weakness is the real reason for violence against others. And an authoritarian personality cannot accept plurality. They have no ability, as we say in German, for „tolerance for plurality” („Pluralitätstoleranz”). „The Others” may be Jews, or Muslims, or even women, or Roma or foreigners. The Others are always seen as a threat. The Others are

seen as an enemy. Therefore, an authoritarian person tries to extinguish Others through various forms of violence, for example at the stake in the Middle Ages, today, by „Media stakes”, by terrorism or by war. Therefore, anyone who is interested in getting rid of religious violence and to open a real, peaceful, constructive dialogue, has to reduce this tendency towards authoritarianism, to change his personality.

Now, you have to ask what are the means? Some of you have said education, information or global ethics. I mistrust the ethical imperative. Because ethics is not enough for people who are anxious, and authoritarianism is itself a kind of anxiousness. You can't say to an anxious person „Don't be anxious.”

What other means do you have? I think you have to heal such people. But what are the means for the healing? In my Catholic tradition for many years the message has changed from the mystical to the moral. How can religions heal anxious people? When people are healed, they are tolerant and prone to solidarity. I am not telling you what my opinion of healing is, but I am leaving you with this main question, because in speeches before me, nobody has said one word about anxiety. We are always speaking of power and ethics but you have to consider the consequences of anxiety within people and modern society.

Let me make a brief remark on the important speech by our colleague, Dr. Schlenzog.

Hans Küng has promoted the idea of a World Ethic based on the Golden Rule. But I am not sure if another approach couldn't be more helpful. I learned this alternative approach from my teacher Johann Baptist Metz. He remembers a sentence from Jassir Arafat and Yizak Rabin in 1994, when they made their famous peace agreement. They promised that, „In future, we will always remember the suffering of the others, the opposite party.” To remember the sufferings of the others. The source for Metz for World Ethos is therefore not a Golden Rule, but the authority of those who suffer. The real aim of every ethic is to prevent the further suffering of others.

The pre-condition for this attitude can be found at the heart of all of the world's major religions. It is compassion or mercy. Compassion is a characteristic of Allah, the most, most merciful. Every Sure begins with name of Allah, compassion is at the heart of Yahweh in the Jewish tradition. And the God of Jesus Christ is a compassionate God. Finally, among the three Buddhas, one is for protection, the second is for wisdom and the third is for compassion. The Dalai Lama is the reincarnation of the Buddha of Compassion.

On the basis of compassion, the world's major religions would be able to cooperate intensively for a just and peaceful universe. This, I would propose, because I think religion is very capable of healing. This is the mission of all religions.

KREISKY-Forum

## 2015 Religion in Austria Revisited

Sociology of religion in Austria is in good condition. A survey that stretches back over forty years is available. The long-term project was started in 1970 and is entitled “Religion in the “Life of Austrians”. The survey has been conducted every ten years.<sup>18</sup> The five waves together show a dramatic development from a predominantly Catholic to a pluralistic country. In addition, there are three gender studies from 1992, 2002 and 2012. Their main topic was not religion, but types of gender roles and their development over twenty years.<sup>19</sup> Among the personal data, there is a lot related to religion and Church. Furthermore, the results of the European Value System Study are helpful. Austria took part in this longitudinal project in 1991, then in 1999 and 2008.<sup>20</sup> Hermann Denz, who unfortunately died much too early in 2008, belonged to the Austrian research board in all three waves. The sociological Research Community and I miss him very much.

In 2010, it was a time-sensitive decision to analyse Muslims in Austria within a special sample. This analysis made it possible to have a look at the growing cultural tensions between a part of Austria’s population and Muslims immigrants, who came in the last decades to Austria from, for instance, Anatolia in Turkey. Demonstrations of anti-Islamic groups in all European countries are signs of these tensions. In the newest study, we wanted to know better the different migrant-generations of Muslims: Are there changes in their belief system and lifestyle from the first to the following generations?

The aim of this contribution is to clarify whether the situation of religion in Austria, presented in Volume XIII of Contemporary Austrian Studies, is the same as in 2005. Alternatively, are there new developments, embedded in a more and more inestimable evolution of the globalized world?

### “Colorization” (“Verbuntung”) Continues

The ideological scene in Austria is in transition. The era in which Christianity in its Catholic variation was the only permitted religion is definitively over. The end of the Constantine era has come. In the past,

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<sup>18</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, *Verbuntung. Kirchen im weltanschaulichen Pluralismus: Religion im Leben der Menschen 1970-2010* (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 2011).

<sup>19</sup> Petra Steinmair-Pösel and Paul M. Zulehner, *Gleichstellung in der Sackgasse? Frauen, Männer und die erschöpfte Familie von heute* (Wien: Styria Premium, 2014).

<sup>20</sup> The data of all studies and the questionnaires are available at <<http://www.zulehner.org/site/forschung>>.

Christianity was the religion of the state. Whoever wanted to be a citizen in that “christentümlichen” culture had to be a Christian. To belong to the Church and to be a Christian was “fate”. That situation was sharpened in the time after the Reformation in 1517, when the Emperor decided to which Christian confession to which the subjects had to belong.

In a long historical process with enormous fights and tensions, religious freedom was won. To belong to a religion is no longer a cultural fate, but a personal choice. The ability to choose increases religious mobility. Citizens decide whether to stay in the Church into which they are christened as children by their parents. They can also leave their Church without any social restraints and disadvantages. Therefore, it is to be expected that every year Church members leave their community without causing a stir. Mostly this is not sparked by failures of the Church. It is part of the historical transition from “fate to choice” (Peter L. Berger).<sup>21</sup> Some members leave their Church because of severe irritations like the abuse of children by priests and monks, the discrimination of women in some Christian Churches and the premodern language of some preachers. In addition, leaving the Church can mean saving money. Nevertheless, the much more important reason is the lack of gratifications: those who do not know “for what” they remain a Church member leave the Church.

**Graph 35: A constant number of members leave the Church every year**

**Graph 36: The percentage of Church members and Sunday Mass attendance decrease continuously**

For many years, above all in the 1970s, the leading experts of sociology of religion interpreted this development as secularization. Their principle was the more modern the more secularized, the less religious society is. Our survey data over forty years shows that not even in Europe does modernization secularize the culture. The result of modernization is not a secularized culture, but a culture with a colorful variety of religions, worldviews and lifestyles.

## Four Types

Here are empirical data documenting this process of colorization or pluralization of the modern Austrian culture in the last four decades. Based on several socio-religious items we formed four types.

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<sup>21</sup> Peter L. Berger and Anton C. Zijderveld, *In Praise of Doubt: How to Have Convictions Without Becoming a Fanatic* (New York: Harper One, 2010); [Peter L. Berger, \*The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age\* \(Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2014\).](#)

To elucidate the four types, we correlate them with central socio-religious items.

#### **TABLE 1: Correlations**

The table shows that the churchly persons have high percentages not only in relation to the religious items, but also on Church commitment. They attend Sunday mass and think that without going to Mass on Sunday you cannot be a good Christian. These persons are the devoted Church members. The socio-religious level is extremely high.

The religious type finds that Church commitment is not necessary. Those people do not go to Church on Sundays. They are convinced that you can be a good Christian without going to Sunday mass.

The so-called secular type tends to be atheistic. They do not care if there is a god. Conducting a meaningful life for them has no relation to a god. They do not pray or go to Sunday service. They do not accept the Church's doctrine about Jesus Christ.

The sceptical type differs from the secular. Most of the sceptical feel they are religious. A third of them pray often. Half of them accept the Church's teaching about Jesus Christ.

#### **TABLE 2: Consent of the four types to Christian positions**

The following table shows a creeping shift over the last forty years from the religious and the churchly type not only to the sceptical, but also in part to the secular type. Nevertheless, no single type disappears. A modern citizen's beliefs are now deinstitutionalized and de-churched; instead, these beliefs are personalized. For many, this personalization does not lead to atheism or secularity: this is the case only for a quarter of individual belief-stories. Only 37% of respondents do not care if there is a God.

Deinstitutionalization produces destabilization, and therefore skepticism. If one of the types should be defined as modern, then we have to choose the sceptical type. To be modern is to be sceptical. Alternatively, in a positive sense: to be a seeker. Danièle Hervieu-Léger coined the term *pèlerins*, pilgrims, for them.<sup>22</sup> In this sense, spirituality is "in" – it is a megatrend of our times. But this spirituality is a highly privatized spirituality without Church; sometimes, it forms short-term communities with rituals and gurus.

#### **TABLE 3: Shift in the last forty years**

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<sup>22</sup> Danièle Hervieu-Léger, *La religion en mouvement, le pèlerin et le converti* (Paris: Editions Flammarion, 1999).

Mobility characterises modern religiosity/spirituality. In religious terms, we can say that it is a time for conversions. People change their religious orientation more often during their lifetime than in times before. Some leave the Church; later on, some enter again. Others approach Buddhism or Islam, or they look around for spiritual rituals, like healing services or esoteric wisdom.

## **Muslims in Austria**

For many centuries in Europe, in order to avoid religious and politically violence, religion was a private matter. It seems that nowadays religion is returning to the public stage. A re-politicization of religion is happening.

One reason is that the Islamic community in many countries of Europe – in Austria too – is increasing rapidly. Therefore, in the last survey in 2010 about “Religion in the Life of the Austrians,” we implemented a special sample for first, second, or third generation Muslims living in Austria. We wanted to know about Muslims, whose roots are in the premodern culture of Anatolia, or those who immigrated from the Balkans or Africa, and how they live and believe. Another important question was if lifestyle and belief systems of Muslims changed from the first to the following generations. Of high interest was a look at the gender roles of male and female Muslims in the different generations. In addition, we analysed the relation between the native Austrians and the migrant Muslims.

Here follow some highlights of our research, which help us to understand some aspects of the recent politics in relation to religion in Austria and Europe in the last years.

### **Types of Islamic Practice in Austria**

The commitment of Muslims in their religious community differs very much. To form a typology, we took a series of items:

about belief: the five pillars of Islam – declaration of faith, obligatory prayer, fasting in the month of Ramadan, compulsory giving, pilgrimage to Mecca;

about practice: services in the Holy Nights, go to the Mosque on Fridays, and;

about the possession of holy things: the holy book of Quran, holy stone, prayer mat, lucky charm.

Based on these items, we identified three types of Muslims: the practising (48%), the open (27%), and the secular (25%).

#### **Graph 37: Three types of Muslims**

The distribution of these three types in the various social strata is different: more men than women are practicing, school education generally reduces the percentage, and from the first to the second generation the percent practicing is cut in half. Therefore, the older the Muslims are, the more they belong to the practicing type.

#### **Graph 38: The practicing type according to social items**

Authoritarianism has a major impact. Authoritarianism is a personality characteristic: an authoritarian person is submissive. They feel that those who are above them in the hierarchy are right. They do not build their own stable identity, but they borrow it from strong leaders or structured groups. There are many authoritarian persons in premodern cultures, as in Anatolia, where many of the Muslims in Austria come from.

The religiosity, which they bring with them as migrants from their homeland to Austria, is characterised by an authoritarian manner. The correlation between the Islamic belief system and authoritarianism is very strong. This is the case with the first generation: when Muslims live for a longer time in Austria's modern culture, authoritarianism decreases quickly. The percentage of those who are religious and authoritarian together falls from 61% in the first generation to 39% in the second one.

#### **Table 4: Religiosity and authoritarianism of Muslims in the first and the second generation**

The modern culture of Austria is changing the inner structure of Islamic religiosity gradually. The Muslims who live in Austria are creating in their own life a modern version of Islam. It is a change within the Islamic religious culture from bottom up, long before the religious leaders of the Islamic community modernise the official teaching. Are the grassroots Muslims in Austria forming a "European Islam," which is compatible with the modern values of Europe such as freedom or gender roles?

That seems to be the case and we can bring good empirical arguments for it. We own data about the gender roles of Muslims in Austria, and this data again describes the different generations. Muslims of the first generation have a very traditional concept of the role of man and woman (43%). Contrarily, the Muslim women of the second generation tend more and more overall to a modern gender role, more than their male counterparts do. Muslim women are the forerunners in this development. That is understandable, because women are the winners of modernization of the lifestyle.

## Graph 39: Gender roles according to sex and generation of migration

### “Cultural Christians”

In European countries, an anti-Islamic mood has emerged in the last years. Demonstrations against an Islamization of Europe were organized. The hub of that movement was Eastern Germany. The organisation is named PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident). Historically, for them Europe is a Christian continent. This should not be changed by migration of Muslims from different Islamic regions of the world.

In the 2010 study “Religion in the Life of Austrians,” we focused on this topic. How do Austrians perceive the growing Islamic population in Europe – and in Austria? For Austrians, how compatible is modern European culture with Quran-based Islamic values?

With a series of items, we could identify three types of relationships between Christianity and Islam. The first type opts for a peaceful and productive dialogue between both religions, their leaders and their members in the local communities (31%). Then there are the so-called “Cultural Christians” (“Kulturchristen”). They are convinced that, “a self-aware Christianity is important for Europe.” On average 56% of Austrians think so. Within the “Cultural Christians,” there are two subtypes. The one is peaceful (40%), the other militant (29%).

#### Table 5: Three types in respect of the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Europe

In 2010 in Austria we found 31% who stand for a peaceful religious dialogue, 29% were militant and 40% peaceful “Cultural Christians.” The distribution varies corresponding to the political preference. Those who are prone to the Freedom Party (FPÖ) tend to be militant “Cultural Christians.” Those who sympathise with The Greens (Die Grünen) opt for peaceful religious dialogue. This explains the politics in relation to migration and integration of these two parties. The Freedom Party takes an extremely xenophobic stance, while The Green Party stands for welcome and integration. However, this is only the mainstream among the voters of these two parties. The following table shows that the sympathizers of all political parties are split, even polarized. Half of the sympathizers with the People’s Party (ÖVP), which has historically a proximity to the Catholic Church, stands for a peaceful relation to Islam while supporting the dominance of Christianity in Europe.

#### Table 6: Relationship between Islam and Christianity according to the political preference

Summarizing, we see that the transformation of the ideological landscape of Austria continues noiselessly. Churches, religions and atheistic organizations have to learn dialogue. Tolerance will be more and more a needed virtue in the society. Otherwise, ideological tensions and fights could arise. In addition: The privatization of religion is over. Religion is back on the political stage.

## 2017 Spiritual Dynamics?

A Comparison of Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Some observers believe that religion is losing its importance in modern life, and that modern life is increasingly founded on the assumption that God does not exist. In fact, a number of European cultures, including those found in eastern Germany, the Czech Republic, and Latvia, have become increasingly atheistic. Other observers, by contrast, believe that a new religious renaissance and return to spirituality is underway. Which of these observations is correct?

### Methodological considerations

Until recently, empirical religious research has focused on assessing the fulfillment of religious obligations by church members within different countries and communities. This question regarding “churchliness” remains an interesting one. However, in modern cultures over the past several decades, the individual has become increasingly divorced from institutions. Indeed, today the relationship between individuals and institutions is characterized by selectivity and distance. Religion is no longer destiny, but rather has become a site of complex personal choice. In this respect, the key focus of research is no longer the objective dimension of religion, but rather its subjective one. Contemporary scholarship in the field thus investigates religiosity as well as religion.

Inasmuch as religious choice is primarily a decision made by the individual, modern religious research must consider individual religiosity and its inner force. This in turn becomes the springboard for an examination of the religious experiences, rituals and practices linked to personal religiosity. The central issue then becomes an assessment of the specific configuration of individual belief structures established by modern individuals by means of their own personal religious capacities and desires. One of the key moments of choice is the relationship an individual elects to initiate with a new or established religious community. This choice also encompasses the belief content or creed professed by the religious community, and the religious rituals and practices which the community makes available to its members. Most religious communities also establish guidelines for individual existence and communal coexistence.

In this essay, I will consider these issues via a comparison of data obtained from Germany (both east and west, meaning the areas of the former German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of

Germany), Switzerland and Austria. After establishing a religious and spiritual typology, I will then consider the effect of religiosity and spirituality on issues of daily life.

## Religiosity

The quality of research is of course highly dependent on what research subjects are willing to reveal. This can lead to substantial imprecision, especially on topics that are difficult to capture in language, as is the case with the topic of religion. In spite of these concerns, it is important to ask the subjects about their own self-perception. Indeed, this perception underlies one of the Religion Monitor's framing questions: "All in all, how religious would you consider yourselves to be? Not at all, not very, moderately, quite, or very religious?"

Table 1: Religiosity (self-assessment)

Country	Not at all religious	Not very religious	Moderately religious	Quite religious	Very religious	n.a.
Austria	19	20	37	15	8	1
Switzerland	18	23	36	14	6	3
Germany	24	26	35	9	6	1
Germany (west)	16	26	40	10	7	1
Germany (east)	53	26	16	3	1	0

All data in percent

In identifying their own level of religiosity, the majority of respondents tend to cluster in the middle of the scale. The percentage of respondents who describe themselves as not religious is 79 percent in eastern Germany, 42 percent in western Germany, 39 percent in Austria, and 41 percent in Switzerland. The countries also display a polarized pattern of response, as will become apparent in many of the remaining findings.

The term "spiritual" has increasingly taken hold alongside the concept of the "religious" since the mid-1990s. At that time, Matthias Horx identified what he termed the megatrend of "respiritualization" (Horx 1995). Only a modest percentage of respondents from the countries in question here identify as spiritual. This percentage is lowest in eastern Germany (16 %), followed by western Germany (35 %), Austria (41 %) and Switzerland (54 %).

**Table 2: Spirituality (self-assessment)**

	Not at all spiritual	Not very spiritual	Moderately spiritual	Quite spiritual	Very spiritual
Germany (west)	36	29	23	7	5
Germany (east)	54	30	12	3	1
Austria	33	26	27	10	4
Switzerland	23	23	32	15	7

All data in percent

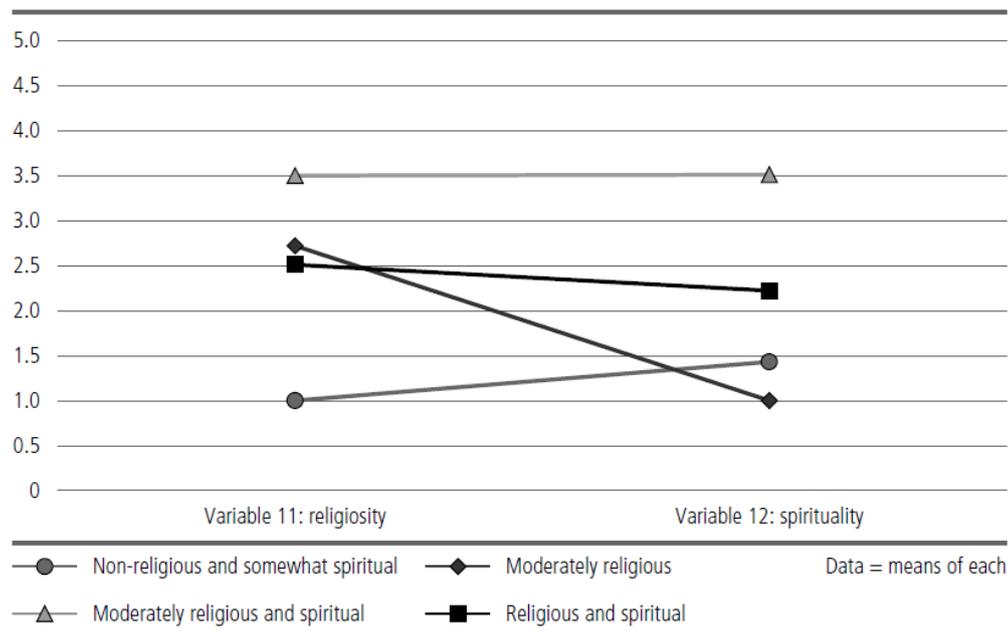
**Table 3: Religiosity and spirituality (self-assessment)**

	Not at all spiritual	Not very spiritual	Moderately spiritual	Quite spiritual	Very spiritual
Not at all religious	13	4	2	1	1
Not very religious	8	10	4	1	0
Moderately religious	8	10	15	3	1
Quite religious	2	2	4	4	1
Very religious	1	0	2	1	2

All data in percent

Taking these findings both into account, it is apparent that that some individuals identify as both highly religious and highly spiritual (Type 1). Next comes a category of individuals who identify as moderately religious and moderately spiritual (Type 2). A third and very interesting category is comprised of individuals who describe themselves as religious but not at all spiritual (moderately religious but not spiritual: Type 3). A final category of respondents identify as not at all religious, but as somewhat spiritual (non-religious, somewhat spiritual: Type 4). Among the non-religious, 9 percent identify as at least moderately spiritual.

Figure 1: Typologies—religiosity and spirituality



As the social distribution in Table 4 demonstrates, younger respondents tend to be nonreligious. Moreover, the percentage of younger respondents who identify as both religious and spiritual is markedly lower than among older respondents. Women, persons with three or more children, the unemployed and persons with a high level of educational attainment are most likely to be both religious and spiritual.

## Prayer and meditation

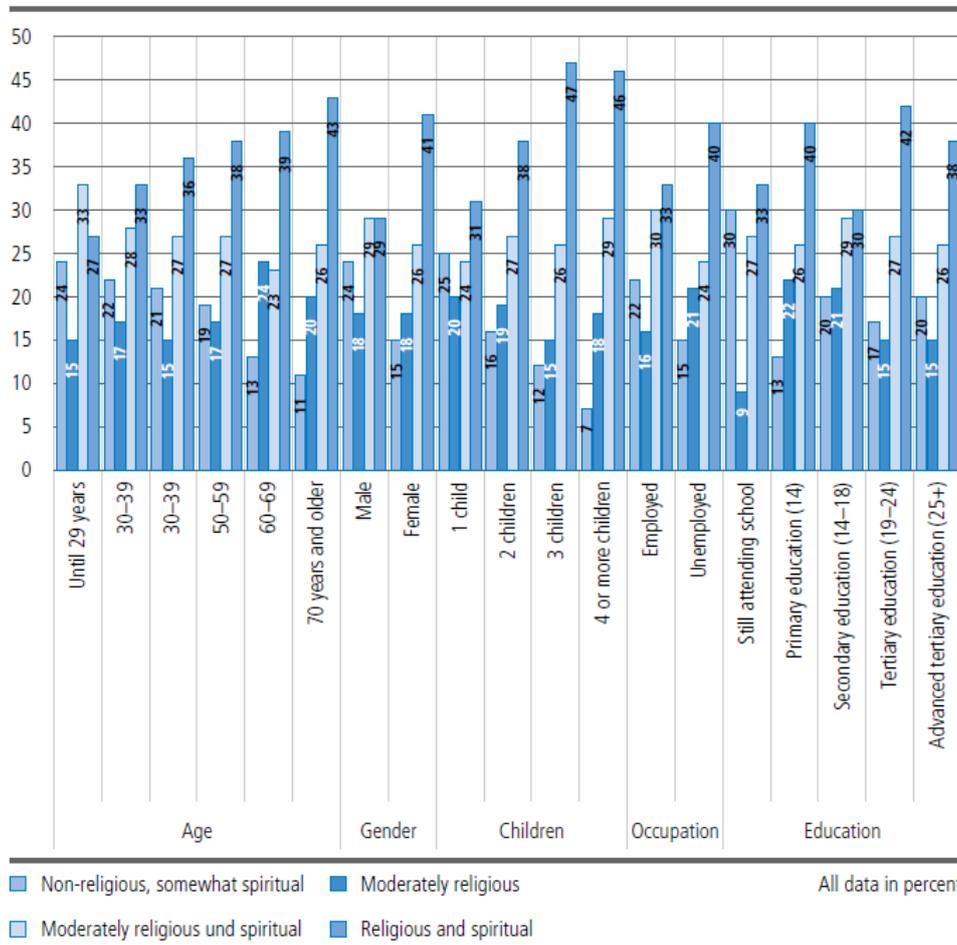
In recent years there has been a shift in private religious practice. Just as spirituality has become a counterpoint to religion, meditation has emerged as an addition or counterpoint to prayer. The practice of meditation is not as common as prayer. However, when meditation and prayer are considered as two factors, an interesting four-way constellation emerges (Figure 3), with individuals who practice both meditation and prayer (18 %) at one end of the spectrum, and individuals who practice neither at the other (50 %). Individuals who pray but do not meditate (22 %), and those who meditate but do not pray (10 %) comprise the two remaining groups.

**Table 4: Social distribution for each of the four religiosity/spirituality types**

	Religious and spiritual	Moderately religious and spiritual	Moderately religious	Non-religious, somewhat spiritual	Total
Up to 29 years old	27	33	15	24	18
30–39	33	28	17	22	19
40–49	36	27	15	21	20
50–59	38	27	17	19	16
60–69	39	23	24	13	15
70 years and older	43	26	20	11	13
Men	29	29	18	24	47
Women	41	26	18	15	53
1 child	31	24	20	25	28
2 children	38	27	19	16	43
3 children	47	26	15	12	20
4 or more children	46	29	18	7	9
Employed	33	30	16	22	62
Unemployed	40	24	21	15	37
Still attending school	33	27	19	30	3
Primary education (14)	40	26	22	13	8
Secondary education (14–18)	30	29	21	20	43
Tertiary education (19–24)	42	27	15	17	31
Advanced tertiary education (25+)	38	26	15	20	14

All data in percent

**Figure 2: Social distribution of religiosity/spirituality types**



When the variables of “religiosity” and “spirituality” are overlaid on this constellation, it becomes apparent that a subsection of the religious-spiritual group practices both meditation and prayer, another large subset only prays, while a third subset only meditates. Spirituality and meditation tend to occur in combination. On the other hand, as religiosity declines, so too does prayer. One surprising finding is that contained in the category of the non-religious who are somewhat spiritual, there is a small but distinct group (over 12 %) of individuals who meditate (and may or may not also pray).

Prayer has always been regarded as the essential expression of personal religiosity. Indeed, the analysis here clearly confirms this assumption. The more

Figure 3: Prayer and meditation

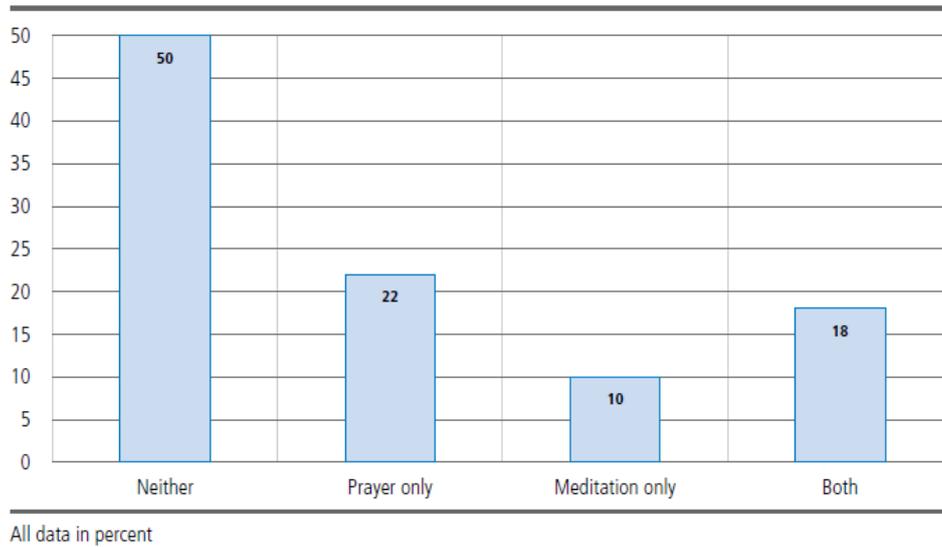
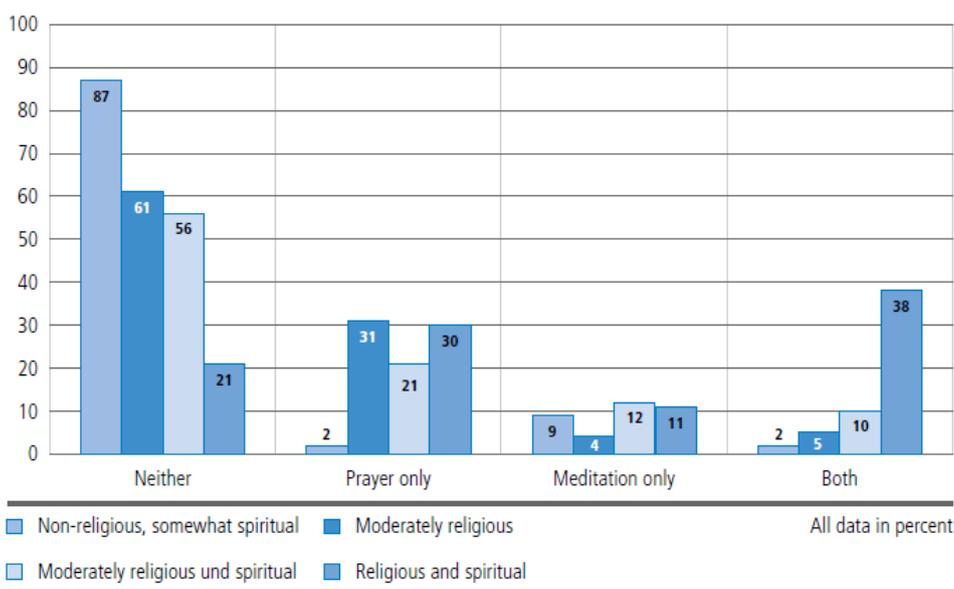


Figure 4: Prayer and meditation by type



religious the individual, the more frequent the practice of prayer. This holds true for individuals who identify as both religious and spiritual (Type 1). Of the members of this group, 70 percent pray at least once a week, while 20 percent pray several times a day. On the other hand, 35 percent of this group's members state that they never *meditate*. Among the other three types, prayer is practiced less frequently. Meditation is also not as common, although more than 40 percent of the

religious-spiritual category's members meditate at least once a week. Among members of the non-religious but somewhat spiritual category (Type 4), 10 percent meditate at least once a week but hardly ever pray.

As the analysis again demonstrates, personal religious practice, both in the form of prayer and meditation, declines in the younger age groups. This is a clear indication of the weakening of religiosity among younger people. The percentage of respondents who do not engage in any form of personal religious practice increases from 28 percent in the over-70 age group to 67 percent in the under-30 age group. When this youngest age group engages in personal religious practice, it is more likely to be prayer than meditation.

## Rituals

Rituals are an important element of personal religiosity. The stronger an individual's religiosity, the more intensely it influences the desire for familial rituals to mark the life-cycle events of marriage, birth and death (72 % among the religious-spiritual, and 10 % even for the non-religious). Even atheistic individuals appear to desire religious rituals in certain situations, perhaps attributing a kind of archaic and therapeutic power to them.

## Belief structures

The two key aspects in the belief structure of modern individuals remain the overarching concerns with the issues of God and death. Among religious-spiritual respondents, 80 percent believe strongly in God. Two-thirds of religious-spiritual individuals (65 %) also display a strong belief in the afterlife. Members of the religious-spiritual category thus display a powerful belief in personal immortality, which is linked to a powerful belief in God.

At the other end of the spectrum is the category of the non-religious who are somewhat spiritual. In this category, 7 percent of respondents are atheistic,

[Figure 5a: Frequency of prayer and meditation by type](#)

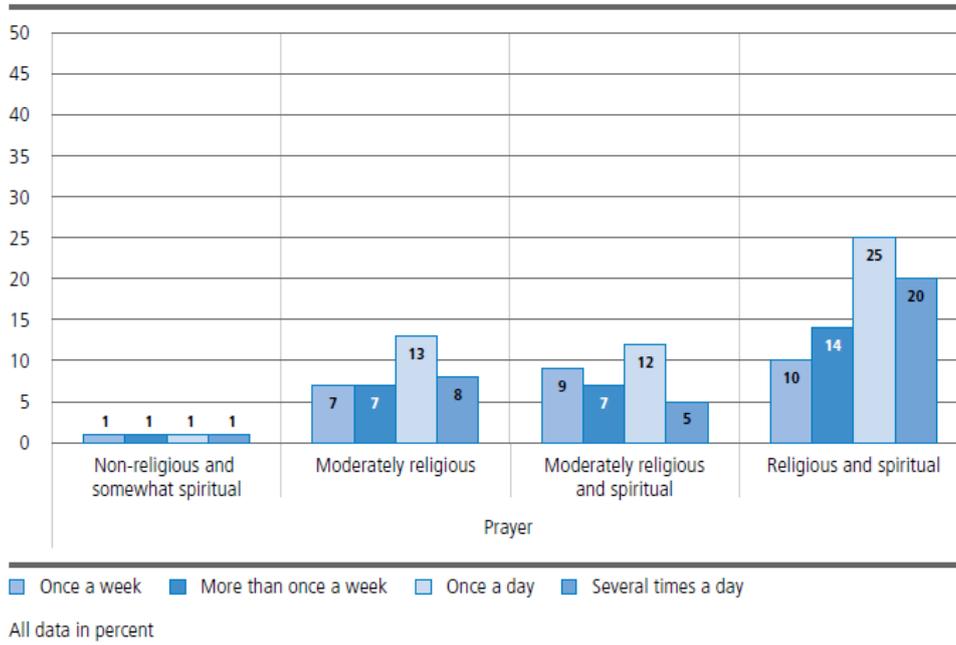


Figure 5b: Frequency of meditation by type

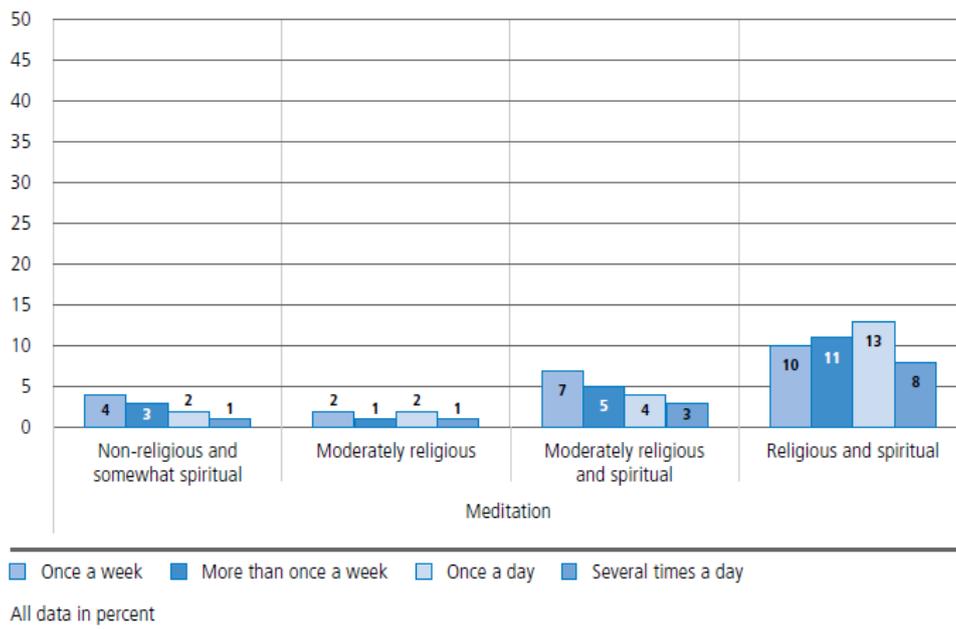


Figure 6: Prayer and meditation by age

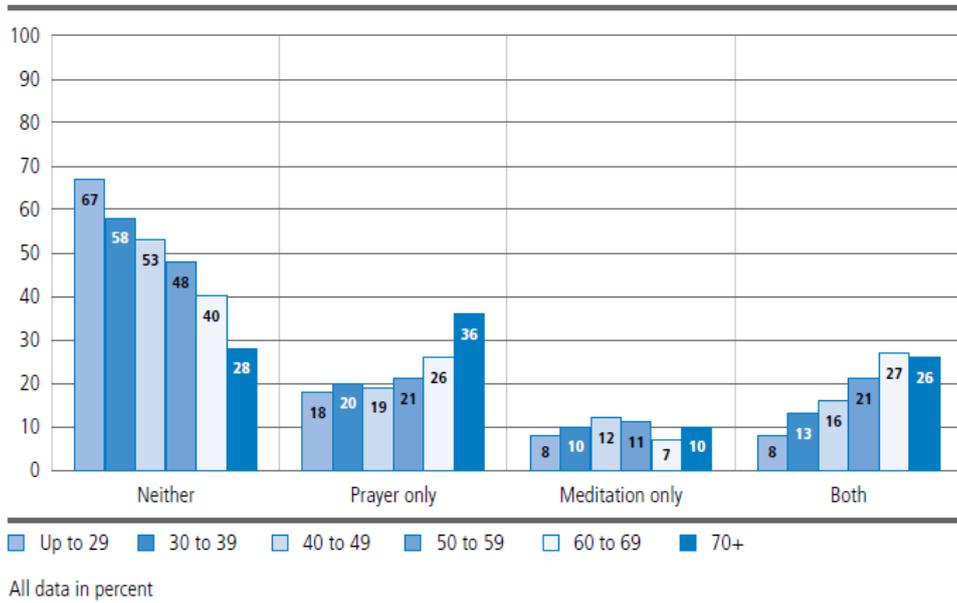
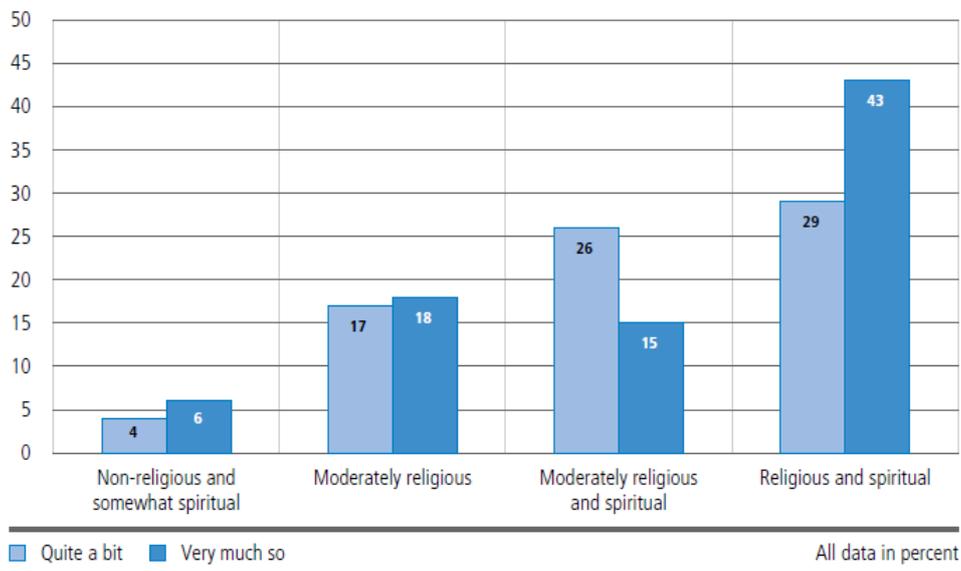


Figure 7: Extent to which religiosity influences life-cycle events in family



while 8 percent believe in the possibility of an afterlife—a marked contrast to the religious-spiritual category. Two intermediate categories lie between these two extremes: the group of people who display moderate levels of religiosity and spirituality, and the category of

moderately religious (but not spiritual) individuals. Overall, the belief in God is stronger than the firm belief in the afterlife ( $r = .54$ ).

**Table 5: Belief in God and in an afterlife**

	To what extent do you believe in an afterlife?	To what extent do you believe in God, deities or something divine?
Religious and spiritual	65	80
Moderately religious and spiritual	32	44
Moderately religious	28	37
Non-religious and somewhat spiritual	8	7

Response categories “very much so” and “quite a bit”

All data in percent

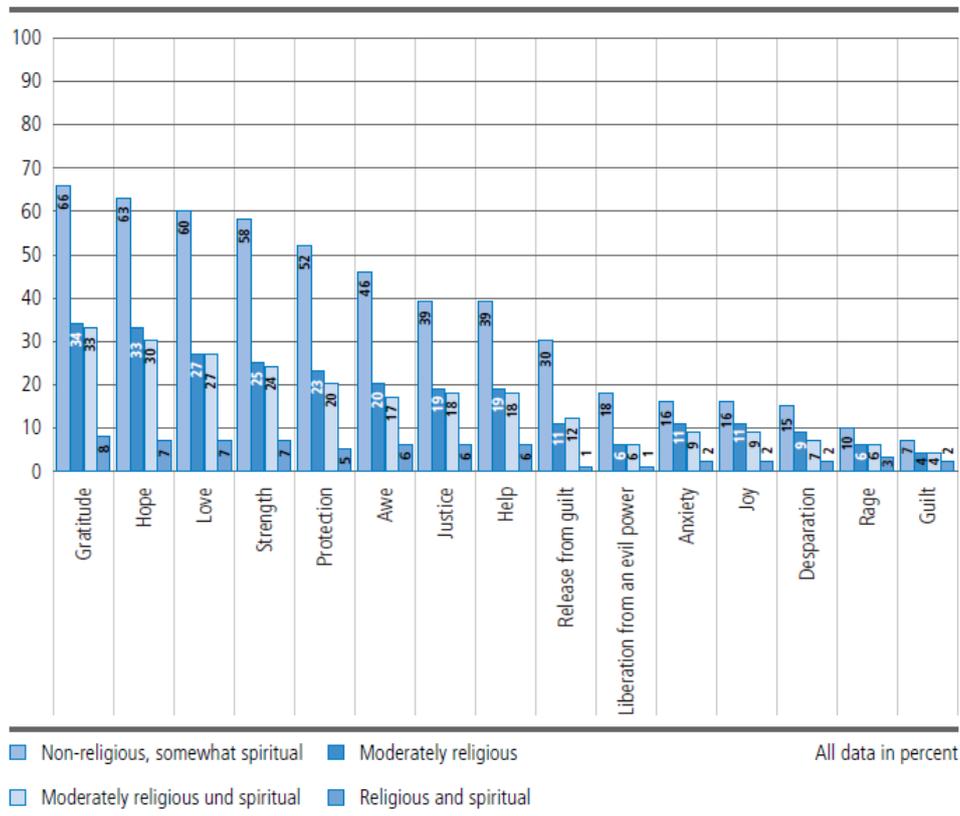
## God or the divine

Among individuals who cite a personal experience of God or the divine, the majority tend to describe this in positive terms, with gratitude, hope, love, strength, protection and awe heading the list of associations. Even for members of the religious-spiritual category, negative associations such as evil powers, anxiety, desperation, rage and guilt play a small role. However, joy is only rarely mentioned as one of the positive dimensions of personal experiences of God.

The respondents associate a diverse range of images and conceptions with God. Supposedly impersonal conceptions (including power, energy, eternal law, nature) appear to seamlessly accompany personal images (that God is like a person you can speak to, or that God cares about every human being personally). Religious-spiritual individuals are especially likely to link these powerful images with their attribution of meaning to life.

The conception of “nature” in the findings is highly complex. Even among non-religious but somewhat spiritual individuals, more than two-thirds cite “nature” as a kind of “experience of God.” However, members of this group of non-religious but somewhat spiritual respondents also link their belief in the religious dimension of nature with a belief that God is a product of the human imagination with no reality in itself.

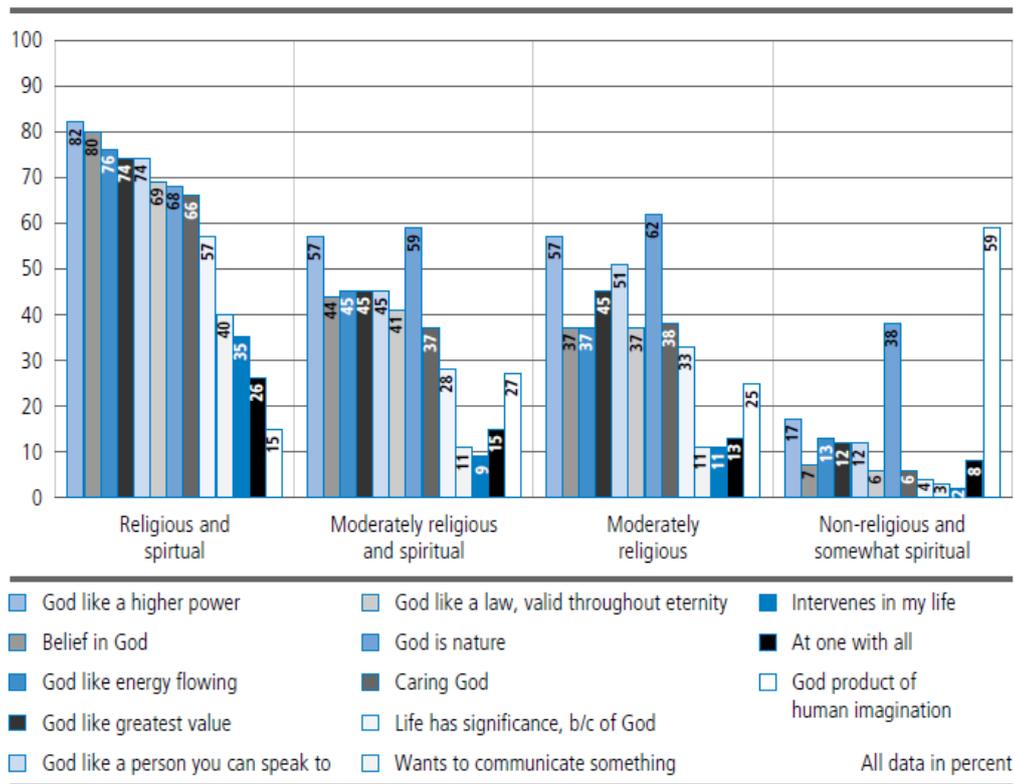
Figure 8: Experiencing God



A comparatively small number of respondents cite conceptions of God that are linked to pantheistic experiences of unity. This sense of unity can be imbued with a non-religious and naturalistic connotation, or it can be imbued with religious and spiritual meaning (as in medieval German mysticism).

A factor analysis of the theistic and pantheistic conceptions of God demonstrates that the sense of being “one with all” does not correlate directly with either the factor of “meditation” (in either importance or frequency) or the factor of “prayer.” This finding suggests that although it may be theoretically possible to distinguish between a pantheistic and a theistic conception of God, in practice this distinction nearly disappears within our current data. This is also logical from a theological perspective, as the conception of a personal God does not preclude a mystical conception of the profound unity of humanity with the divine.

Figure 9: Conceptions of God



## The theme of death

The belief in an afterlife is characteristic of the religious-spiritual category. Two thirds of this group's members believe strongly in an afterlife, and regard this belief as a source of meaning for their lives on earth (64 %). Among the non-religious (but somewhat spiritual), fewer than 10 percent of individuals believe in an afterlife.

The responses are very similar in questions assessing life-cycle events. For members of the religious-spiritual category, the events of marriage, birth and death are generally imbued with religious significance (71 %). However, even among the non-religious, 10 percent of individuals believe religion is important in the context of these critical events, suggesting the influence of an unspoken remnant of religiosity. The desire for religious ritual thus appears more widespread than the awareness of religiosity. Many other studies have also found a widespread desire for religious rituals to accompany marriage, birth and death, even among atheistic segments of the population.

Figure 10: Factor analysis of theistic and pantheistic conceptions of God

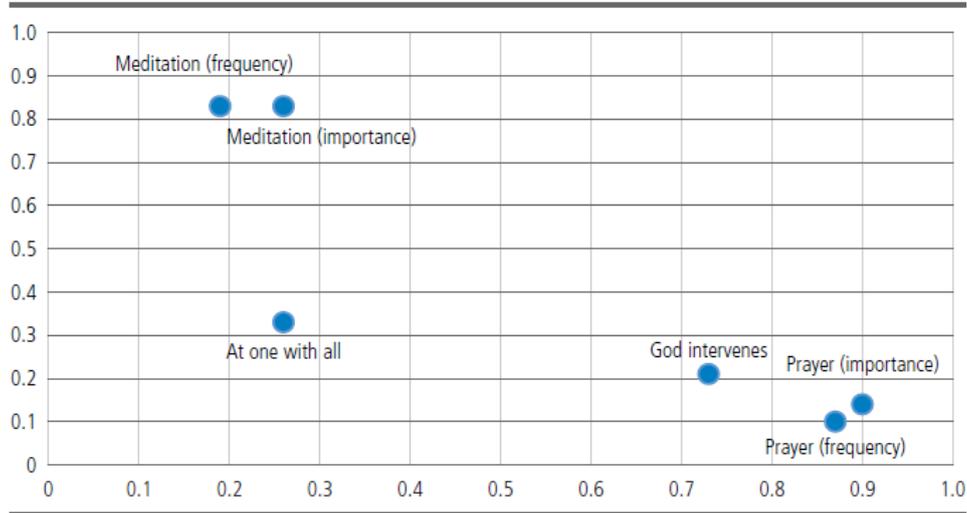


Table 6: Attitudes toward death

	To what extent do you believe in an afterlife?	Life has significance because there is something after death.	Extent to which religiosity influences life-cycle events in family (e.g., birth, marriage, death)
Religious and spiritual	65	64	71
Moderately religious and spiritual	32	37	41
Moderately religious	28	37	35
Non-religious and somewhat spiritual	8	9	10

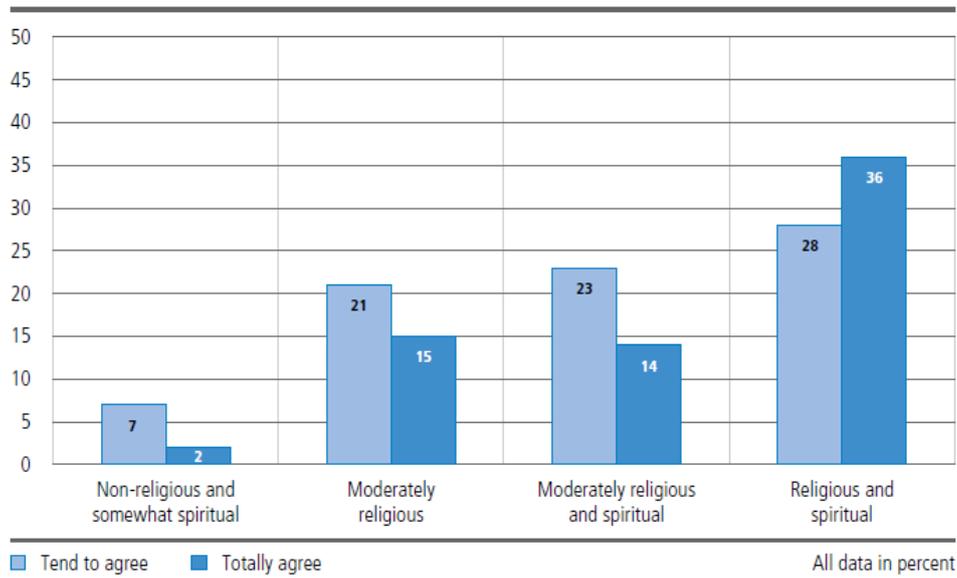
Response categories "very much so" and "quite a bit"

All data in percent

## Church affiliation

Of the surveyed respondents, 19 percent state that they are not a member of a religious community, while 77 percent state that they are members of a Christian church. The countries in question are thus predominantly Christian cultures (with the exception of eastern Germany, where individuals without religious affiliation predominate). In the three predominantly Christian regions, one (Austria) is predominantly Catholic, while the two others (western Germany and Switzerland) are confessionally mixed.

Figure 11: Extent of belief in life after death



**Table 7: Religious affiliation**

	Christians	of which Catholic	of which Protestant	of which other Christians*	Non-Christians**	None
Austria	82	91	7	3	3	15
Switzerland	81	50	44	5	4	15
Germany	69	43	49	7	5	26
Germany (west)	79	45	47	6	6	15
Germany (east)	32	20	72	9	0	68

"of which" refers to "Christians = 100 percent."

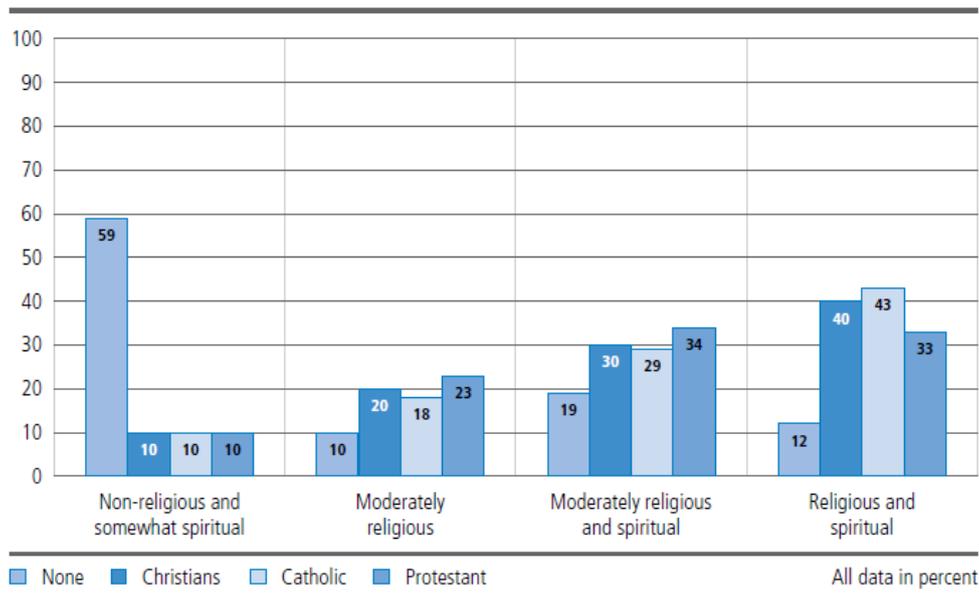
\* = Orthodox, Anglican-Free Church, Pentecostal, Charismatic

\*\* = Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists

All data in percent

The two major Christian confessions differ somewhat in the percentage of their members who identify as religious and/or spiritual. In the religious-spiritual category, confessional affiliation varies by 10 percentage points. In the specific breakdown, the confessional variation within the religious-spiritual category is 12 percentage points in Austria, 13 percentage points in Switzerland, 13 percent-

Figure 12: Religious-spiritual differences by affiliation

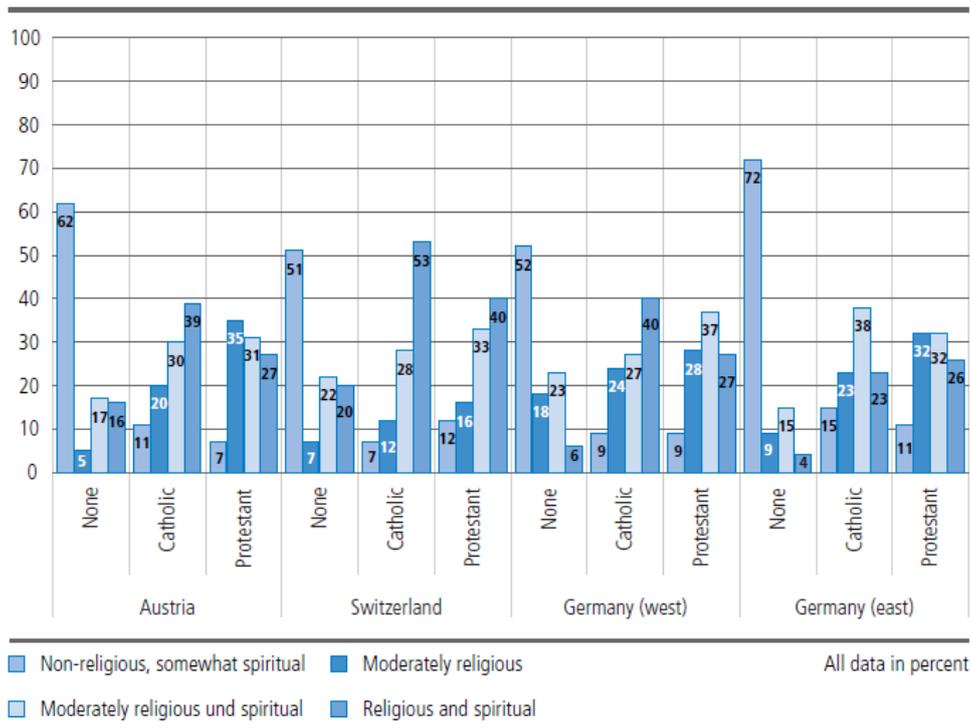


age points in western Germany, and minus 3 percentage points in eastern Germany.

Despite these differences, one common factor is that the religious-spiritual type correlates clearly with church membership. However, a subset of the religious-spiritual type comprises respondents who are not members of a religious community. Among the 41 percent of respondents who are not members of any religious community, there are small differences in individual religiosity and spirituality, with 12 percent identifying as strongly spiritual and religious, 19 percent as moderately spiritual and religious, and 10 percent as religious but not spiritual.

Thus, even among some religious believers, the decision to affiliate with a religious community appears to be a matter of personal choice. Some choose not to belong to a religious community. Nonetheless, even individuals without a formal church affiliation can have informal relationships to churches or other religious communities. Moreover, even individuals who are formally affiliated with a church can partake of the new forms of religious and spiritual community.

Figure 13: Religious-spiritual differences by country



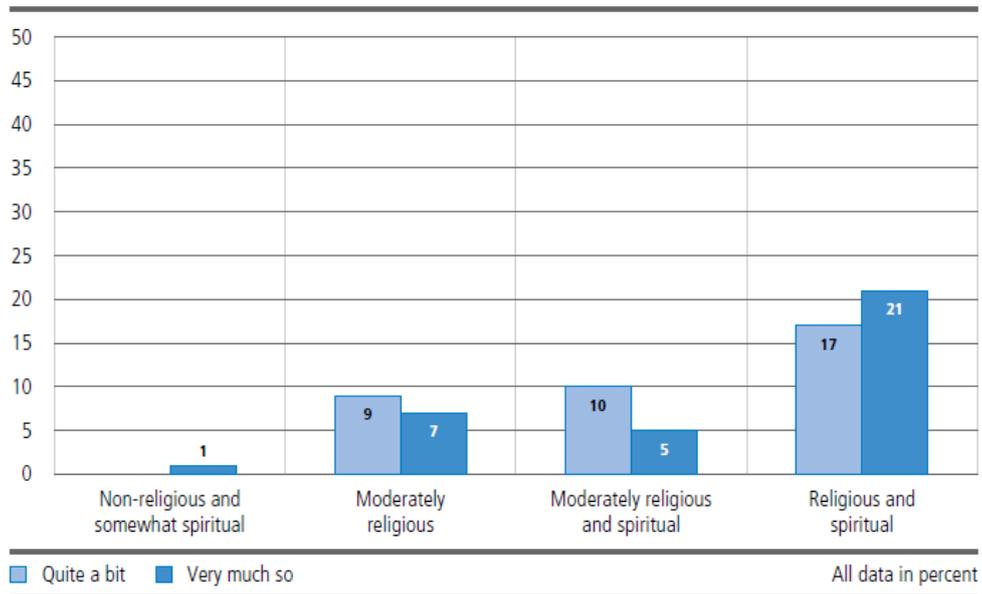
## Church attendance

The element of choice in the relationship of the individual to the church is also highlighted by the factor of interest and participation in church attendance. As the findings demonstrate, the attribution of importance to church attendance and the frequency with which this attendance in fact takes place are closely linked.

Among religious-spiritual individuals, 38 percent believe that church attendance is very important, while only 18 percent believe that church attendance is not at all important. Among non-religious at the other end of the response scale, the pattern is markedly different, with 99 percent responding that church attendance is not at all important.

With some minor exceptions, the importance attributed to church attendance correlates highly with actual frequency of attendance, displaying a correlation factor of  $r=.68$ . (The correlation between the attributed importance of prayer and

Figure 14: "How important is it to you to take part in religious services, spiritual rituals or other religious acts?"



the frequency of prayer is even higher at  $r=.75$ , which again suggests that subjective assessments of importance translate into action.) Of the respondents who state that church attendance is not important, 61 percent do not attend church. By contrast, among those who say that church attendance is important, only 1 percent never attend church.

## Typology

This data may be used to derive a typology based on the following factors:

- religiosity
- spirituality
- frequency of prayer
- frequency of meditation
- strength of belief in God
- strength of belief in an afterlife
- importance of family rituals regarding marriage, birth and death
- church attendance

**Table 8: “How often do you take part in religious services?”**

	More than once a week	Once a week	1–3 times a month	Few times a year	Less often	Never
Religious and spiritual	8	18	18	26	18	12
Moderately religious and spiritual	1	8	12	27	33	18
Moderately religious	2	8	10	31	31	19
Non-religious and somewhat spiritual	0	0	0	4	20	75
Catholic	5	15	15	27	25	13
Protestant	1	5	12	31	36	14
All	3	10	11	23	25	27
Not at all important	0	0	0	11	28	61
Not very important	0	1	5	37	44	12
Moderately important	1	7	28	43	18	3
Quite important	3	35	35	19	6	1
Very important	24	46	17	8	3	1

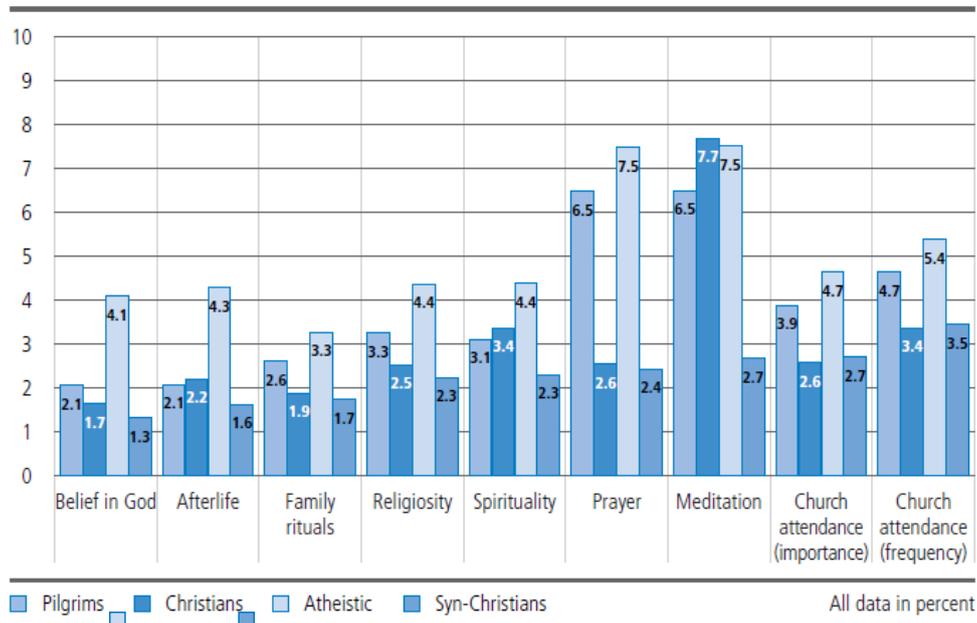
All data in percent

When these factors are taken into account, four broad typologies emerge: the atheistic, the Christians, the syn-Christians and the “pilgrims.”

## The Atheistic

Members of this category display a low level of religiosity in all specific areas. They do not believe in God or an afterlife, do not regard themselves as religious or spiritual, do not pray, and do not attend church. In the three countries com-

Figure 15: Key socio-religious types



bined, this category comprises 34 percent of respondents. While the atheistic are not religious, they tend to be tolerant of religion, with 51 percent stating that every religion has a core of truth, and 74 percent agreeing that it is important to have an open mind to all religions (Table 9).

## The Christians

At the other end of the scale, the Christians display higher than average values for the indicators of Christian religiosity. They believe in God, and to a slightly lesser degree also believe in an afterlife. They believe familial rituals are important. They are more religious than spiritual. They pray, but do not meditate. Church attendance is important to them both in principle and in practice. The Christians also appear as traditionalists in their cultivation of piety, with lower levels of participation in the “newer” forms of religiosity, particularly spirituality and meditation. The Christians make up 23 percent of respondents.

**Table 9: Open or exclusive?**

	Syn-Christians	Christians	Pilgrims	Atheistic	Mode
For me every religion has a core of truth.	83	76	75	51	Open
I believe that one should have an open mind to all religions.	86	76	82	74	Open
For myself I rely on teachings from several different religious traditions.	41	27	34	14	Open
How important is it for you to consider religious issues from different perspectives?	63	40	41	18	Open
I am convinced that in questions of religion, my own religion is right while other religions tend to be wrong.	19	22	11	7	Exclusive
I am convinced that primarily members of my religion will be saved.	22	26	11	5	Exclusive
I try to convert as many people to my religion as possible.	21	21	6	3	Missionary

All data in percent

## The syn-Christians

The syn-Christians differ somewhat from the Christians. The syn-Christians also display high levels of Christian religiosity (belief in God, the afterlife, and familial ritual). However, in contrast to the Christians, their religiosity has been expanded to include spirituality, and they have added meditation to the practice of prayer. Syn-Christians make up 18 percent of respondents.

The syn-Christians are relatively open to other religious experiences (somewhat more so than the Christians). This is apparent in the syn-Christians' responses to the questions about the core of truth to all religions, their openness to other religions and their willingness to rely on teachings from several different religious traditions. Here the pilgrims score even higher than the (traditionally pious) Christians, particularly with respect to incorporating non-Christian elements into their own religious life (with 41 % of syn-Christians expressing agreement with this question).

Exclusivist concepts of religion are no longer common in the three countries in question today. Exclusivist concepts appear to be limited

to a relatively small percentage of syn-Christians and Christians (19 %-26 %). This correlates with the relatively low level of missionary tendencies, even among Christians (21 %). The trend is toward the acceptance of the validity of all religions.

Openness means openness toward religious issues that are not solely or entirely the province of the Christian belief system, but are also elements of other or all religions. This includes the topics of super-natural powers, angels and demons. The survey also assesses belief in astrology, which has historically existed both in a popular and “high” form. Indeed, in the past, religious scholars of many affiliations have shown an interest in “high” astrology. Syn-Christians again demonstrate more “openness” to this side of religion than do the (traditionally pious) Christians. Interestingly, the pilgrims display greater openness to these religious issues than do members of the atheistic group. Not unexpectedly, the atheistic group also largely rejects these aspects of religion, remaining consistent on matters of religious belief.

The majority of syn-Christians (63 %) also believe it important to “consider religious issues from different perspectives.” In contrast, 40 percent of Christians agree with this statement, as do 41 percent of pilgrims. Among atheistic respondents, 18 percent agree.

Another key element of religious openness can be located in the statement, “I believe there is something divine in myself.” Although different religious traditions interpret this statement differently, these differences are again revealing. The “divine in me” can be an element of either pantheistic or theistic concepts of religion.

Table 10: Openness toward “religious” issues

Table 10: Openness toward “religious” issues

	Seeking something	Super-natural	Astrology	Demons	Angels	“I believe there is something divine in myself.”
Syn-Christians	31	48	18	18	49	69
Christians	18	32	12	13	37	53
Pilgrims	11	22	14	4	19	36
Atheistic	1	5	5	1	3	10

All data in percent

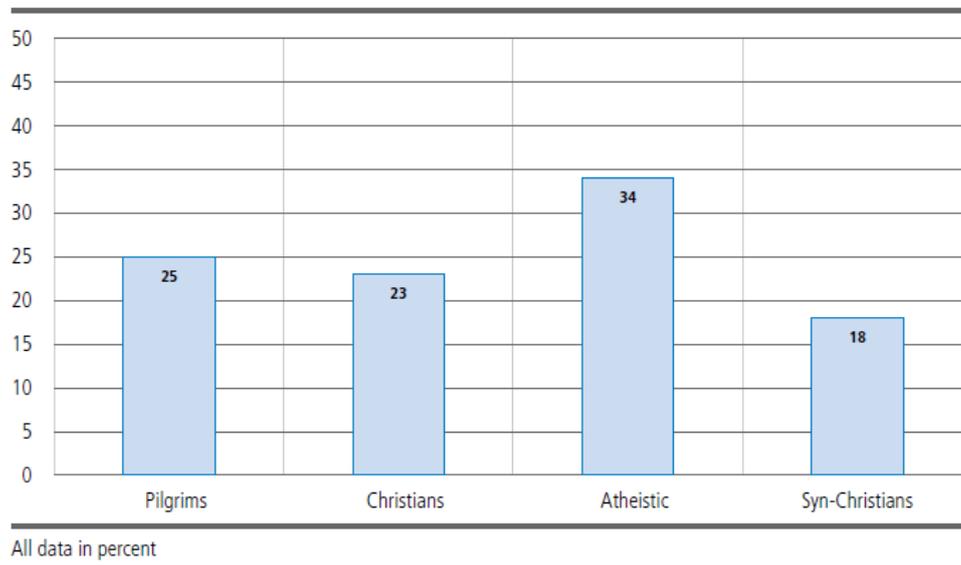
## The Pilgrims

For the time being, I will call the fourth type of respondent the “pilgrims.” The pilgrims' responses to questions of religiosity are lower than those of the Christians and the syn-Christians. However, the pilgrims do display moderate religiosity and spirituality, as well as moderate engagement in the practice of prayer and church attendance. The pilgrims make up 25 percent of respondents (Figure 16).

Table 11 outlines additional findings about these four socio-religious types:

- The syn-Christians display a high level of religious and spiritual belief and practice, and appear to have integrated the “modern forms” of spirituality and meditation completely into their Christian religiosity.
- By contrast, the Christians are less open to “modern” spiritual practices.
- Their religiosity takes a traditional and “moderate” form.
- The pilgrims are a very diverse group. They include a subset of religious-spirituals, whose preferred religious practice—when they have one—is meditation.
- Finally, the atheistic have no religious practices, with one small exception—7 percent of the atheistic meditate.

Figure 16: Distribution of types in all three countries combined



**Table 11: Personal religiosity and spirituality, religious practice**

	Religious and spiritual	Moderately religious and spiritual	Moderately religious	Non-religious and somewhat spiritual
Syn-Christians	80	14	4	2
Christians	48	28	23	1
Pilgrims	37	41	15	6
Atheistic	3	25	22	50
	Both	Prayer	Meditation	Neither
Syn-Christians	92	0	8	0
Christians	2	91	0	7
Pilgrims	3	2	25	70
Atheistic	0	1	7	91

All data in percent

## Religious curiosity

The syn-Christians are actively engaged with religious questions. They think about religious questions far more often than the other types, including questions of suffering and injustice (80 %). They think about general religious issues (67%), are critical of religious teachings (80 %), rethink aspects of their own religious views (41 %), and read religious or spiritual books (37%). Their sum total on these questions is 268 percentage points. Forty percent of syn-Christians are also interested in learning more about religious issues (compared to 27% of Christians, 13 % of pilgrims and 5 % of the atheistic).

The values for Christians are lower on these questions (totalling 194 percentage points), followed relatively closely by the pilgrims (136 percentage points), of whom one-quarter often reflect upon religious issues. Among the atheistic, the topic of “suffering and injustice in the world” is a high priority, with 55 percent of this group citing the issue as a key concern.

**Table 12: Religious curiosity (frequency)**

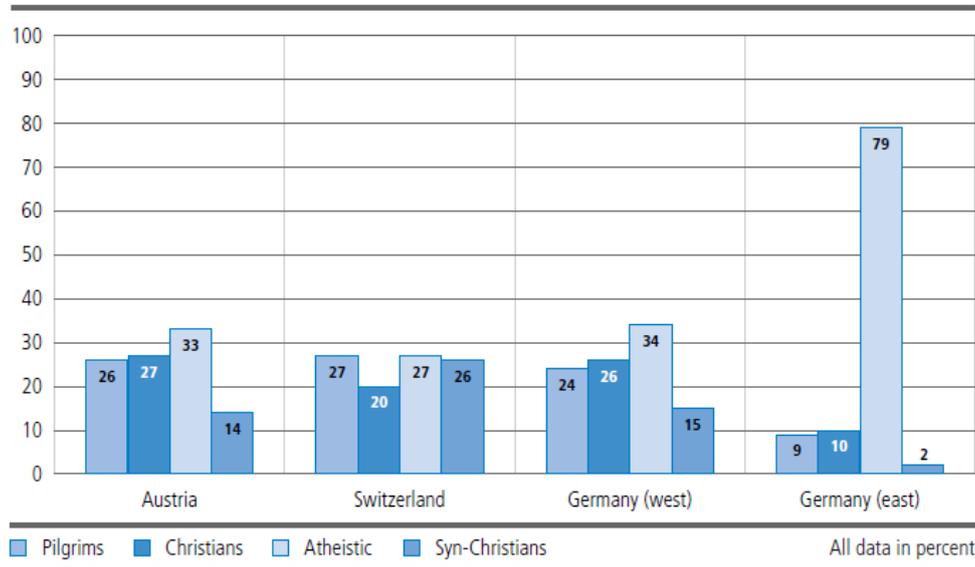
	How often do you think about suffering and injustice in this world?	How often do you think about religious issues?	How often are you critical towards religious teachings you in principle agree with?	How often do you rethink certain aspects of your religious views?	How often do you read religious or spiritual books?	Total
Syn-Christians	80	67	43	41	37	268
Christians	71	52	29	26	16	194
Pilgrims	67	24	22	17	6	136
Atheistic	55	10	8	5	1	79
All	66	34	23	19	12	154

All data in percent

## Distribution in the four socio-religious types

The distribution of the four socio-religious types varies slightly according to country and confession. As expected, eastern Germany is a special case, with 79 percent atheistic respondents and only 10 percent Christian respondents. Eastern

**Figure 17: Distribution of the four socio-religious types by country**



Germany has very few syn-Christians, and a slightly larger percentage of respondents who might be classified as pilgrims.

There are fewer Christians and syn-Christians among members of Protestant churches (37% combined) than among Catholics (51 % combined). Among Protestant church members, the atheistic and the pilgrim groups are the largest.

Of the respondents who are not members of a religious community, 16 percent are Christian, 7 percent are pilgrims, and 3 percent are syn-Christians. The majority are atheistic (74 %).

**Table 13: Socio-religious types by confession**

	Christians	Syn-Christians	Pilgrims	Atheistic
Catholic	30	21	25	24
Protestant	22	15	32	30
None	16	3	7	74

All data in percent

**Table 14: Distribution of the four socio-religious types by country and confession**

		Christians	Syn-Christians	Pilgrims	Atheistic
Austria	Catholic	32	16	26	26
	Protestant	22	11	44	24
	<i>All</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>33</i>
Switzerland	Catholic	22	32	26	20
	Protestant	24	21	30	25
	<i>All</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>27</i>
Germany	Catholic	37	18	19	25
	Protestant	21	10	32	37
	<i>All</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>43</i>
Western Germany	<i>Catholic</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>25</i>
	<i>Protestant</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>34</i>
	<i>All</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>34</i>
Eastern Germany	<i>Catholic</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>38</i>
	<i>Protestant</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>55</i>
	<i>All</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>79</i>

All data in percent

## Distribution according to social characteristics

As a regression analysis of social characteristics demonstrates, only the factor of age ( $r = .14$ , or highly significant) has a noticeable effect

on the distribution. In other words, the younger the respondents, the more likely they are to be atheistic.

**Table 15: Distribution of the four socio-religious types by age**

Age	Christians	Syn-Christians	Pilgrims	Atheistic	Total
Up to 29	20	7	32	41	18
30–39	19	13	29	39	19
40–49	19	17	29	36	20
50–59	23	21	22	34	16
60–69	27	27	16	30	15
70+	37	26	15	22	13

All data in percent

A similar correlation can be found in the breakdown by country. Especially in Austria, but also in western Germany and (less evenly) in Switzerland, the percentage of atheistic individuals increases in the younger age groups. The atheistic category's share declines in younger age groups only in eastern Germany, where the percentage of Christians is higher in the youngest age group than in any of that region's other age cohorts.

## Additional correlations

**Figure 18a: Distribution of the four socio-religious types by country and age**

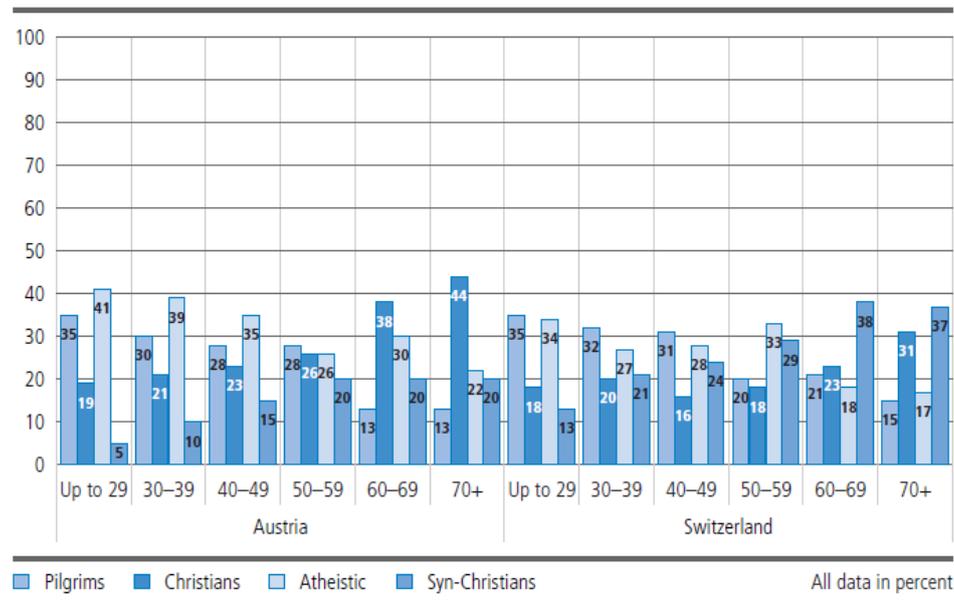


Figure 18b: Distribution of the four socio-religious types by country and age

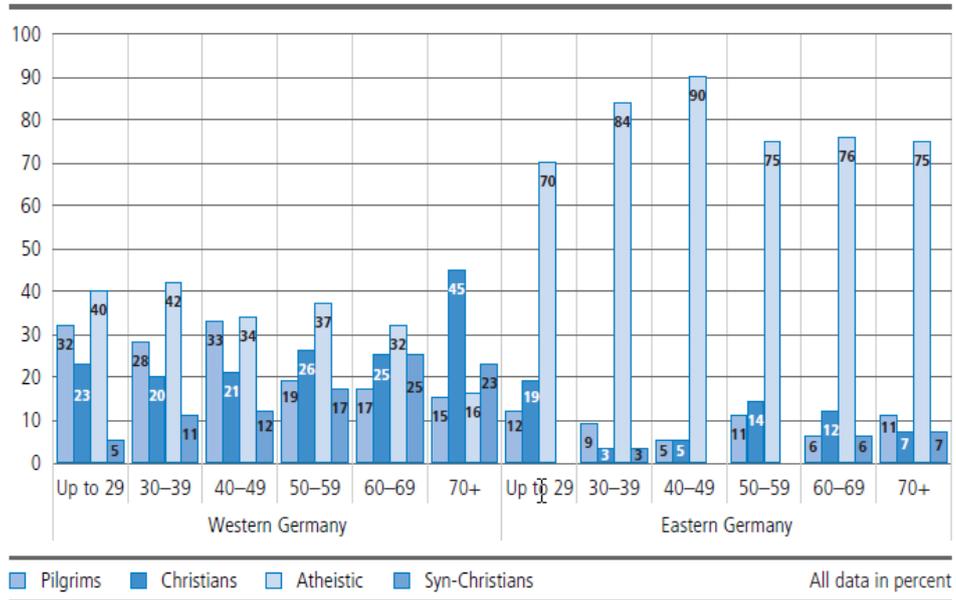
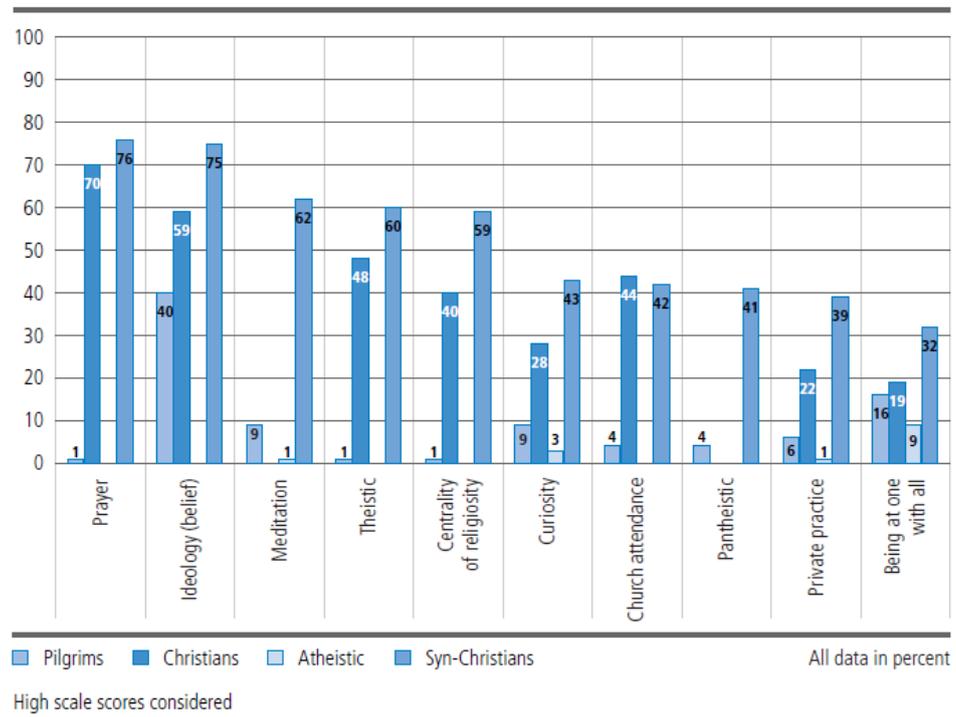


Figure 19: Religion Monitor indices and the four socio-religious types



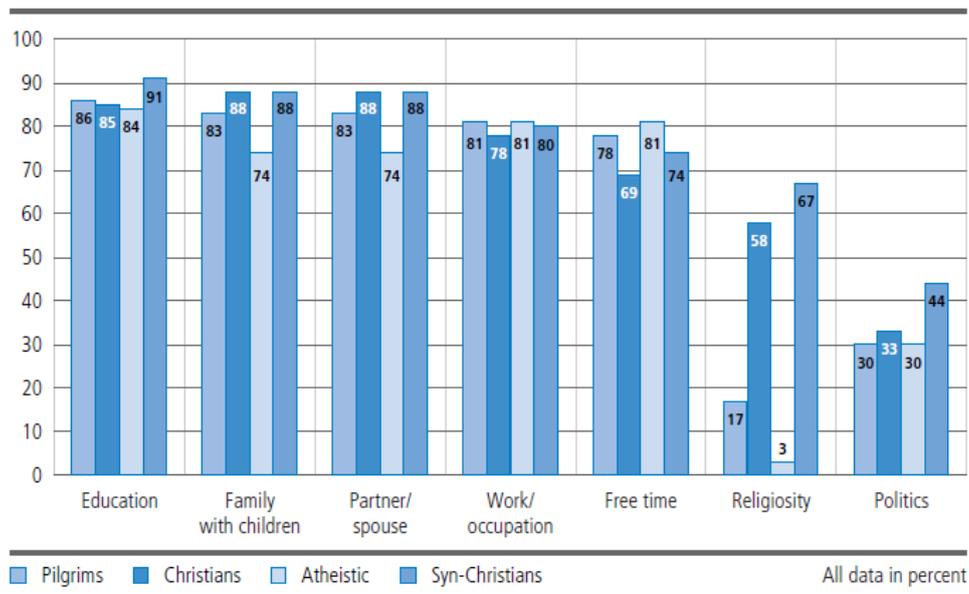
## Indices

A number of indices have been derived for this study. The indices were designed to help illuminate the psychological centrality of religiosity, an aspect of religious psychology that many studies have failed to adequately consider. When measured by this central index, the syn-Christians are very religious, followed by the Christians. There are no pilgrims or atheistic respondents among the very religious.

## Areas of life

The different constellations of religiosity and spirituality, as evident within the four types, generally have little effect on the respondents' attributions of importance to the different areas of life. The syn-Christians and Christians place a

Figure 20: Areas of life (importance)



higher value on the familial areas of life (including children or partners), second only to education, than do pilgrims or atheistic respondents. This pattern is reversed in the question on the importance of free time. The respondents differ in their attribution of importance to religiosity as an area of life, with 67 percent of the syn-Christians classifying religiosity as important or very important, as compared to 58 percent of Christians. In contrast, 13 percent of pilgrims state that religiosity is important or very important, while only 3 percent of the atheistic agree with this statement. Interestingly, the syn-Christians

also attribute a higher than average value to the importance of politics (44 % versus an average of 34 %).

## Meaning of life

Religion has an effect on the attribution of meaning to life. Today, it is taken for granted that individuals control their own lives. Indeed, 86 percent of respondents in the countries analyzed here agree with the statement, “Life only has significance if you make it significant yourself.” Thus, the question of individual attribution of meaning to life, and the role that religion plays in this attribution, has become all the more important.

In the culture of the three countries in question, nature plays an important role in the attribution of meaning. Indeed, a large percentage of respondents (62 %) agree that nature itself is a metaphor for the divine.

The Christians and syn-Christians define the significance of life through religiosity (respectively 64 % and 62 %). Within these two groups, a large percentage (respectively 69 % and 71 %) also agree that there is a God who cares about every human being personally. A lower percentage of pilgrims (39 %) agree with this latter statement, as do a small number of the atheistic (9 %).

A minority of Christians (12 %) and the atheistic (10 %) believe that life has little significance.

Table 16: Conceptions of the meaning of life

	Life only has significance if you make it significant yourself.	Ultimately our life is determined by the laws of nature.	There is a God who cares about every human being personally.	Life has only significance because there is a God.	Life is just part of the natural evolution.	In my opinion life has little significance.
Christians	83	83	69	64	63	12
Syn-Christians	83	83	71	62	63	8
Pilgrims	85	85	39	27	70	8
Atheistic	90	90	9	6	79	10
All	86	86	41	35	70	9

All data in percent

## Ethics

One of the meanings of the word “religion” is “reconnection.” The idea of reconnection implies the joining of the earthly and the heavenly worlds, and the orientation of earthly life toward God. Union with God was one of the central goals of religious mysticism, and of medieval German religiosity (as practiced by Meister Eckehart, Tauler, Jakob Böhme or Theresa von Avila). As the founders of Christianity taught: The love of God is central to religion.

But as in all times in the past, different forms of religiosity are expressed in different ways of life. One tenet common to many if not most religions is that neighborly love emerges from the love of God. However, what concretely constitutes neighborly love is a matter of debate. In this sense, there is always a gap and a non-equivalence between the love of God experienced in the context of religiosity and its effect on actual life. The “situative valence” of belief, meaning its practical effect on daily life as well as its effect under exceptional circumstances, is never complete. Thus it is essential to examine how individually experienced religiosity affects daily life. Indeed, the Religion Monitor findings provide a basis for the analysis of these questions.

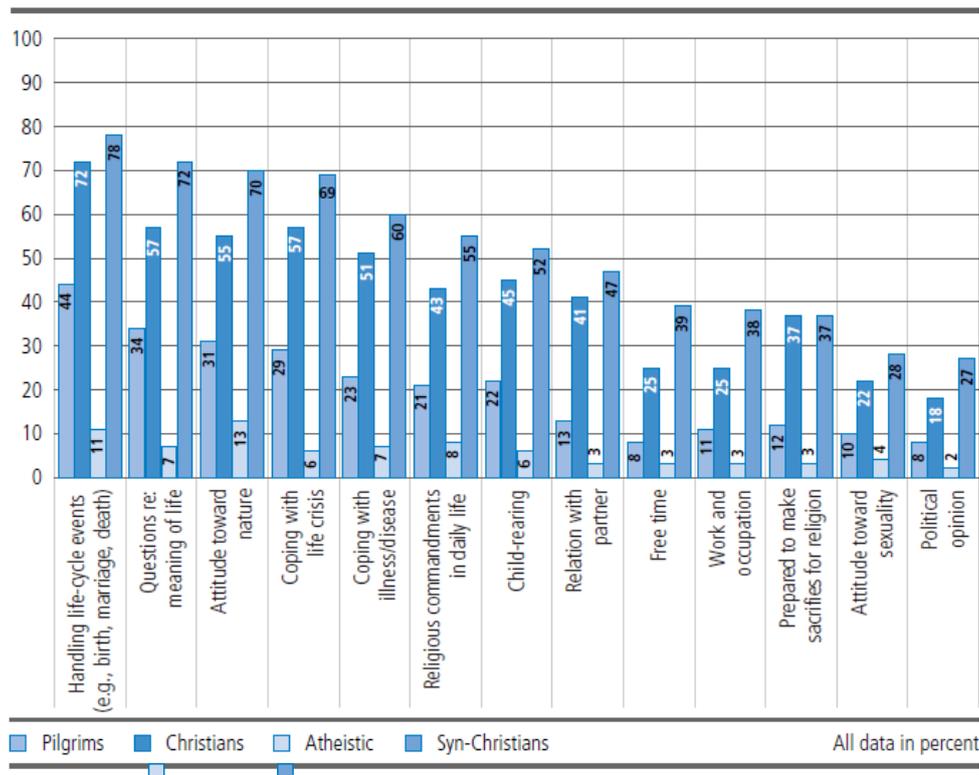
**Table 17: Situative valence of religiosity and spirituality**

	Syn-Christians	Christians	Pilgrims	Atheistic	All
Handling life-cycle events (e.g., birth, marriage, death)	78	72	44	11	50
Questions re: meaning of life	72	57	34	7	41
Attitude toward nature	70	55	31	13	41
Coping with life crises	69	57	29	6	39
Coping with illness/disease	60	51	23	7	34
Religious commandments in daily life	55	43	21	8	28
Child-rearing	52	45	22	6	30
Relation with partner	47	41	13	3	25
Free time	39	25	8	3	17
Work and occupation	38	25	11	3	18
Prepared to make sacrifices for religion	37	37	12	3	23
Attitude toward sexuality	28	22	10	4	15
Political opinion	27	18	8	2	13

All data in percent

In this analysis, 53 percent of syn-Christians and 48 percent of Christians believe it is important to be “constantly on guard against evil.” A lower percentage of pilgrims agree with this statement (25 %), while the percentage of the atheistic who agree is lower still (15 %). Findings are similar for the question relating to fighting against evil. The majority of the population does not believe that the end of the world is near (10 %), with little difference of opinion among the four types. By contrast, the four types do differ in their responses to the question of whether they want to live an extraordinary life. Here the Christians give the lowest positive response (24 %), followed by the atheistic (35 %). The pilgrims (41 %) and the syn-Christians (40 %), by contrast, respond more positively to this

**Figure 21: Influence of religiosity and spirituality in daily life**



statement. This finding is not surprising given that the Christians tend to adhere more closely to tradition, while the syn-Christians and the pilgrims tend to be more flexible in this respect.

Religiosity has little effect on attitudes towards law and order, or on responses to foreigners. However, the responses on these issues reflect larger normative cultural beliefs, with the rate of positive responses to the survey statements approaching 85 percent.

## Preliminary conclusions

Some preliminary conclusions can be reached regarding the development of religion in these three German-speaking countries. First, a silent process of atheization is taking place in modern cultures. Although the presumption of secularization is not the sum total of “modernity,” secularization is undeniably a feature of contemporary life. Indeed, a substantial number of people live comfortably with-

**Table 18: Additional consequences of religiosity and spirituality**

	I try to respect law and order under all circumstances.	I think that foreigners should adapt their lifestyle to that prevailing in their host country.	For my religiosity it is important that I resolutely fight against evil.	For my religiosity it is important to be constantly on guard against evil.	I would like to live an extraordinary life.	I believe that the end of the world is near.
Syn-Christians	84	82	53	53	40	14
Christians	89	84	52	48	24	15
Pilgrims	83	83	29	25	41	8
Atheistic	83	86	17	15	35	5
All	85	84	38	36	35	10

All data in percent

out religion and are becoming increasingly atheistic (34 %). This atheistic group includes a significant number of individuals who are formally members of a church (24 % of the members of the Catholic Church in Germany's survey sample, and 30 % of the members of the Protestant church).

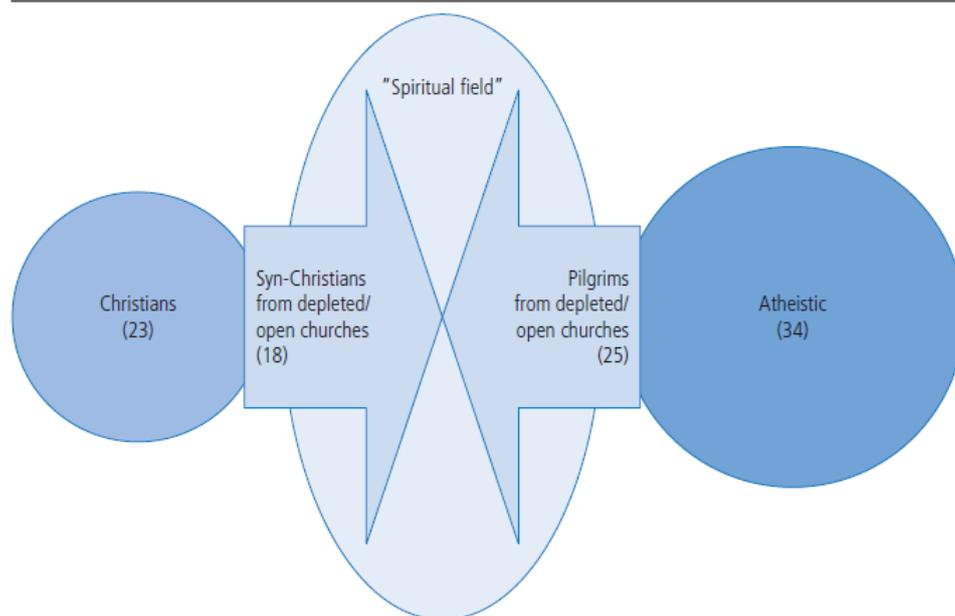
Second, the tendency toward increasing atheization is counterposed by a trend toward increasing religiosity. Indeed, strong church affiliation is not incompatible with modernity. Among the Christian type (23 %), religious life is moderate in expression, tending toward private observation rather than communal forms. The mode of belief among members of this group is reminiscent of the traditional “folk” or “national” church. Here the space left by the decline in the definitional power of the church allows its members to define their own level of incorporation within it. These Christians may appear “lukewarm” and “halfhearted” in their religious beliefs and their willingness to take part in the life of the church when measured against church-defined standards. However, this form of Christianity is in fact quintessentially modern, since its emphasis on individual choice places it even more squarely within the modern “heretical imperative” (Berger 1979).

Third, the group that I call the syn-Christians are an interesting Christian variant (18 %). The syn-Christians display a high level of formal observance of church obligations, and thus serve as a counterpoint to the presumption of secularization. The existence of this group implies that some forms of modernity are indeed compatible with religion, even while others may not be. In this sense, it might be said that there are multiple modernities. The syn-Christians are both

“religiously pluralistic” and integrate components from other religions into their “symphony of belief.” The syn-Christians thus might be termed “composers of religion” (Zulehner, Polak and Hager 2002). They participate in an open spiritual terrain while remaining under the protective aegis of their church (see Martin 2005). Although their form of belief is almost typically modern (meaning open and pluralistic), the syn-Christians are highly religious, and indeed 74 percent identify as very religious.

Fourth, a final category of individuals are also active on this same spiritual terrain. However, some of them have no formal church affiliation (7%). These individuals are curious about religion. They are religious believers, but also express doubts, and are engaged in a search for answers. They appear to reject the strictures of modern individualism while yearning for the experience of merging with a numinous oneness. Following the French sociologist of religion Danièle Hervieu-Léger, I have termed this group the “pilgrims” (“pèlerin”; Hervieu-Léger 1993, 1996, 1999). This group constitutes perhaps the most modern form of religion (25 %).

Figure 22: Spiritual dynamics in modern cultures within the German-speaking areas



Source: Own compilation

All data in percent

The relationship between these constellations is depicted in schematic form below (Figure 22).

A few concluding observations can be made in light of this overview: First, modern cultures, at least within the German-speaking regions analyzed here, are strongly polarized in their worldview, with the atheistic on one end of the spectrum, and those who identify with Christianity on the other. This polarization in turn can lead to the development of religious camps, which in turn can promote the development of religious conflict, particularly in the realm of ethics and religious politics. For this reason, modern societies require a highly developed capacity for management of conflict among worldviews.

Second, there is a significant “spiritual field” in addition to the two poles of the highly organized Christians and the barely organized category of the atheistic (Marin 2005). The spiritual field is highly diverse, perhaps more so than the typology described above would allow. The spiritual field, perhaps the most modern phenomenon within the ongoing development of modernity, is influenced by two competing impulses. On the one hand, the spiritual field is occupied by church members who retain their church affiliation and in turn reciprocally influence the internal culture of their church. On the other hand, the spiritual field also includes individuals who emerge from the secular realm rather than from the church. Thus it appears that advanced secularity can lead to a dynamic form of religious and spiritual productivity. This is particularly likely to take place in secular societies where there is true pluralism (and thus not in eastern Germany, which for many years was dominated by an atheistically decreed “monopoly church”).

It is difficult to know precisely what triggers the development of these “pilgrimages” (Christoph Bochinger: “pilgrimage”; cited in Hervieu-Lèger 1999). In all likelihood, they derive from a combination of a sense of depletion and a sense of curiosity and openness. On the one hand, church members appear to be suffering from a sense of spiritual weakness within their church. On the other hand, a group of “postmodern secular contemporaries” (many of whom are women), feel trapped by this sense of depletion and spiritual aridity within secular modernity, which they experience as banal, flat, superficial and helpless in the face of death and suffering. However, this spiritual dynamism can be prompted by curiosity and openness as well as by a sense of depletion. This might indeed explain why “modern Christians” are fascinated by other religions and spiritual experiences.

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## 2017 Western Europe: "Secularisation light"?

You asked me to say a few words about the far-reaching issue of secularisation in Western European societies, and this under the title "Secularization light.". I will choose a biographical approach. In the end, backed by my mentor and friend Peter L. Berger, I will defend the position that the theory of secularisation is unsuitable for interpreting the development of the ideological/religious dimension of the liberal cultures of Western Europe. The theory of secularisation is used rather as an instrument: by church leaders who are tormented by the transformation of their church shape in the course of the change from the Constantinian era to today's pluralistic era, but also by ideological warriors who do not want to resign themselves to the fact that the end of religion forced by all means partout does not want to happen.

### **Habilitation studies in Konstanz with Thomas Luckmann**

In 1970, during my postdoctoral studies with Thomas Luckmann in Konstanz, I dealt intensively with the "secularisation assumption", which was much discussed in the seventies. The topic of the work, which was also published, was: "Säkularisierung von Gesellschaft, Person und Religion. Religion und Kirche in Österreich" ("Secularisation of Society, Person and Religion. Religion and Church in Austria" (Freiburg 1973)). During my studies in Konstanz I got to know the complexity of the question. I found different conceptions in the two great sociologists of knowledge, Thomas Luckmann and Peter L. Berger. Berger was of the opinion that the institutions of a modern society are becoming increasingly secularised. Luckmann contradicted him: Of course, the institutions in modern societies understand each other "secularly", but secularisation does not take place. Religion merely becomes "invisible" (The invisible religion, 1969). Religion could not disappear at all. For the end of religious transcendence would mean the end of human beings. Already it becomes clear that the secularisation hypothesis is closely bound to the concept of religion. Whoever understands religion substantively (according to Rudolf Otto for instance), as Berger and religion always understands as community-generating, diagnoses deep changes especially in the position of the religious communities in modern societies. Luckmann, however, understands religion functionally and - what has often been criticized - ultimately identifies it with being human and its ability to transcend space

and time. The sociologist Günter Dux made me think at that time in Konstanz. He regarded secularisation (only) as an interpretation category of a transformation process in the ideological dimension of society. However, interests always play a role in interpretations that "shadow" the knowledge. Who benefits from this interpretation? At that time, I discovered for myself that the secularisation hypothesis is used by those responsible of the Orthodox and Catholic Church. At a symposium in Gniezno, I witnessed how the Archimandrite Hilarion Cardinal Kasper publicly asked to fight secularisation together with the Orthodox Church.

## Meeting of Experts in Berlin

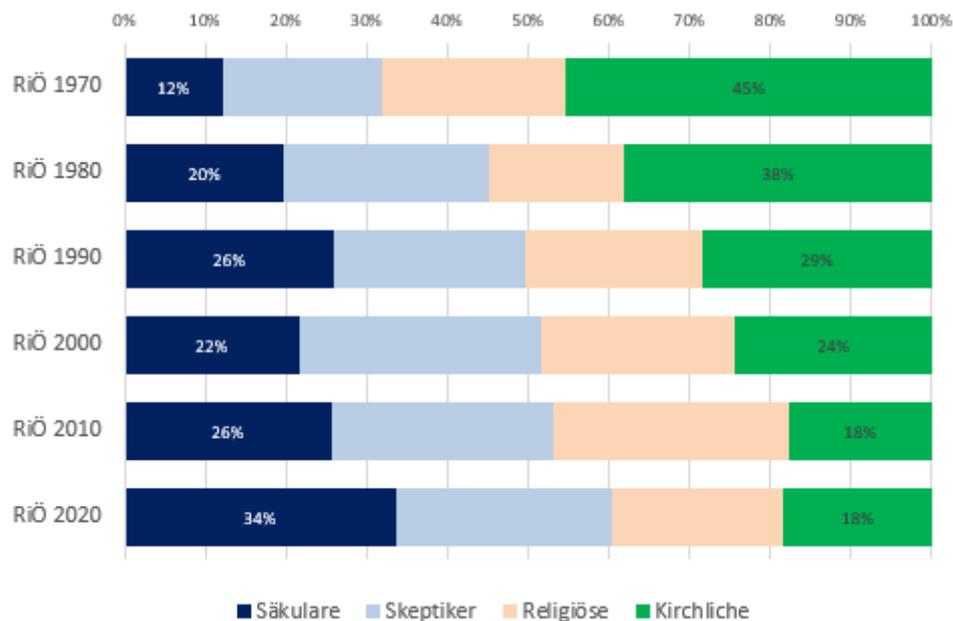
At the end of the seventies I received an invitation from Peter L. Berger to a conference of the world's leading experts in sociology of religion. These extraordinary experts were present:

- From France Danièle Hervieu-Léger. She later published about the modern form of religion: *La religion en mouvement: le pèlerin et le converti* 1999. In her opinion two types stand out: the pilgrim and the convert.

- Grace Davie from Great Britain was also there. She later advocated the hypothesis of a "vicarious religion". It is very important for her to regard Europe as a special case (*Europe - The Exceptional Case: Parameters of Faith in the Modern World*, 2002), because religion is booming worldwide, especially in its evangelical form (Martin, David: *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*, 2002).

- The meeting was marked by the Israeli sociologist Smuel Eisenstadt. He presented his assumption that there are "multiple modernities" – some are compatible with religion and others not. The old formula "the more modern, the more secular" forces one to ask: Which modernity is meant? No one at the Congress showed unreserved sympathy for the secularisation hypothesis which dominated the 1970s.

## Empirical religious research



Early in my life, I came via the Institute for Church Social Research in Vienna to research first the changes in church life, but then the development of the ideological dimension in Europe, especially in Austria. Since 1970 I have researched - in ten-year intervals - Religion in the lives of Austrians. Since 1980 I was invited by Jan Kerkhofs to join the board of the EVSS. The rich data for Europe and especially for Austria fed my scientific doubts about the durability (maintenance) of the secularisation hypothesis also for Europe. I have coined for the long-term development of the ideological dimension in Austrians culture in half a century the pictures "Verbuntung" (2011) and "Wandlung" (2020). The example of Austria shows that there is no simple transition from a catholic to secularized culture. Rather, there is an colourisation, a pluralisation. In all surveys there was a colourful typology of Churchlies, Private-Religious, Skeptics and Atheisings.

## 2013 Seminar in Boston

I presented these insights at a seminar in Boston in 2013. There was an interesting discussion why Europe is developing differently from the other continents. A key was seen in the aftermath of the Reformation, closer to the dirty Thirty Years War. The connection between God and violence through the hostile denominations and their political backers had fatal aftereffects.

Through this war, there happened a serious discrediting of the Christian denominations. The “Landfrieden” did not come. One consequence was drawn by the Enlightenment philosopher Voltaire: He was convinced that there could only be “Landfrieden” without the hostile Christian denominations. The French atheists went a step further and thought that only a society without God could be peaceful. If one looks from this history to today’s findings in the sociology of religion, one sees that all these manifold variants can be found today in Europe: church-bound peoples, private religious, atheisings and above all skeptics.

This seminar triggered a far-reaching consequence for Peter Berger. In his last book "The many Altars of Modernity (2014)" he revoked his earlier secularisation theories.

## Yield

Finally, let me summarise my biographical experiences in a few positions.

1. Ideologically monocolore cultures can only be asserted in authoritarian-totalitarian societies. The medieval princes like the absolutistic Josephinism (in Russia similar to tsarism) enforced a monocoloured Catholicism or the communist totalitarism a monocoloured atheism using all social and state means. Authoritarian-totalitarian systems make the respective world view an inescapable "fate" for the peoples.
2. (Modern) free societies dissolve (often in silent processes) ordered (forced) monopolies of worldview: this applies to Catholicism, this will predictably also be the case with imposed atheism. Berger describes a shift "from fate to choice". If people choose, the probability of ideological diversity increases. Modern liberal cultures are therefore always ideologically pluralistic, they have "many altars". They are "multicolored", a meadow of flowers and not a monotonous sports turf.
3. What is currently interpreted as secularisation is in fact the dissolution of "imposed" fateful ideological monopolies (e.g. the Catholic monopoly in Austria or Bavaria). The result are not monocolored-secular, but ideologically "multicoloured" (pluralistic) societies.
4. It may be that for (still to be researched) reasons the type of the atheisings is currently increasing in some European societies, while the type of consistently believing and practicing Christians is decreasing. But these are typologically fringe groups; the largest groups are the skeptics, the insecure, but also the private religious (Austria 1970-2020).
5. The decrease in the category of consistent Christians probably also has to do with the fact that the Christian churches have for too long relied on a kind of socio-cultural self-evidence. Only with a small number

has it been possible to turn culturally supported Christianity into a personal one. Religion- and church-unfriendly systems (such as Nazis or Communists) have left a valuable side effect in this respect.

## Atheising

6. Little research has until now been done into how atheists (who also exist in the West) interpret the world and themselves in it and what consequences they draw from it for their personal and social lives. The 2020 analyses in Austria show that one of the greatest differences between followers and deniers of God is that they live in realities with different transcendental reachness, range. While the "reality" of those who deny God is narrowly limited in time and space, that of those who believe in God appears infinite and eternal, without spatial-temporal limitation. For some, the boundary of death is the definitive, insurmountable and inescapable end; this makes those who deny God "mortals". Those who believe in God experience themselves (in the great majority) as "immortals". For them death is a transition, not a downfall. The core research question is: Which practical consequences follow from these two contrary definitions of reality? How do they live, shape their relationships, which politics do they vote for, how do they want to die, how do they stand for the protection of human life from the cradle to the grave (abortion, euthanasia)?

7. Berger formulated a still largely unfathomed question in his last book. In recourse to his sociology of knowledge developed with Luckmann, he poses the question whether in pluralistic societies (with secular and religious fields, for example) people in their inner being, their consciousness, must (not) also be pluralistic. Their art of living consists in living with the different relevance structures (Alfred Schutz) of the different "worlds". Since the secular realities and the religious realities are in many aspects not consistent, this creates an inner challenge in modern people to cope with both realities. This is a variant of the question how Christians in National Socialism or Communism succeeded to be Christians. In any case, many people experience in pluralistic cultures a "cognitive dissonance" that generates "cognitive stress". But how do contemporaries live with this? This is where research begins. But some types can be assumed. Some withdraw from the religious realm and break off all communication with a religious community. Others emigrate from the secular world and settle into secular groups. Others remain present in the secular world and risk "cultural martyrdom". Still others demand from their own religious community more aggiornamento and to avoid unnecessary "cognitive stress". And if religious communities are not prepared to do this,

not a few become (as I already published in 1974) "Auswahlchristen".  
And not to be forgotten are the balancers who adapt themselves with  
seismographic precision to the respective relevance structure with which  
they are currently dealing.

Vienna December 2019.

# 2018 Some remarks to a practical Orthodox Ecclesiology

## Theological fundament

1. The starting point is liturgy. It's goal is connection with God, union with the risen Christ and his eternal life. Heaven in coming down to earth.
2. The connected people are by liturgy transformed into the body of Christ. This body is a community – in which the members are united by the Holy Spirit. Eating the body of Christ, they become the body of Christ (S Augustin).
3. The body of Christ is in the Last Supper and on the Cross a “body given for the world” and its salvation, is “blood shed for the life of the world”.
4. People who leave the liturgy are in midst the world this body of Christ. Through them start already the transformation into the Reign of God within history, in this world, in Russia.
5. Last supper is always connected with feet washing. Who is transformed into the body of Christ is enabled to love in the kind as Christ loves us. They are giving their life to others. They become feet washers.
6. Therefore, liturgy (memory of the last supper, cross, resurrection, descent to the Hades, sending of the Holy Spirit) and diakonia can't be separated. (See the picture from the Codex Henry II from 1007).
7. There are different types of practical Ecclesiologies: Here are two examples I have experienced.

The first example is the liturgy centered type, therefore priest centered and male. Laypeople do not play an important role (they enkindle candles, kiss the icons, give money, some confess and take the communion, some build a choir). This type I experienced in St. Tichon. Another example was the liturgy in the monastery of nuns next to the flat. There was liturgy (confession, communion) too, but the Church is surrounded by houses for handicapped... nuns are working for them. They realize institutionalized diakonia, hopefully on high level in respect of professionalism. This realized Ecclesiology holds together liturgy and diakonia, priest and laypeople, and in this model nuns / women play a central role.

## Practical realization

8. The love of the „transformed people“ (who take the communion) and of the community which is formed through the communion can be realized in various forms.

9. There is the everyday love: within the families, on the working place, with friends, with the neighbors...

10. Some members can within a parish organize groups which are supporting (helping) others: who are poor, ill, overstrained, have problems in respect to their marriage or the meaning of live...

11. Some parishes together, a diocese, a monastery can install an organisation: for handicapped, a kindergarten, a nursing house for elderly, a hospice for dying.

12. The more institutionalized caring is the more professional it will be / it has to be.

13. Typical for Church-driven institutions is a double competence: the formation of the heart and (profane high level) professionalism.

pmz 15.7.2018 (Vienna)

## 2019 Pro Pope Francis

Down for the count?

Amoris laetitia, the Apostolic Exhortation on Marriage and Family, was published. Many breathed [a sigh of relief](#). Most of the pastors took a deep breath, who, backed by their bishops, had been already practicing a case-oriented solution regarding divorce and remarriage for a long time. But there was also resistance - and this at a high level. Four cardinals moved that the Pope was close to heresy: He was betraying the Church's teaching on marriage. This process was amplified with the "loudspeakers" of the media. One could get the impression that the Pope was down for the count, he had more opponents than proponents, his resignation was imminent.

In this situation, Tomáš Halík, priest and religious philosopher from Prague, well-known author, Templeton prize winner and member of the Charter 77, asked me if we should not make visible the great number of "invisible" proponents of the Pope, especially among the people of the Church. Not only for the Pope should bit be made visible that many people approve the path he has taken in reforming the Church and its pastoral culture. At the same time those Church members who were unsettled by the attacks on the Pope should be supported in their enjoyment of the courageous Pope.

The attacks on Pope Francis have been intensified in recent month. Concerning the dispute over accusations of abuse against Cardinal McCarrick and their alleged cover-up under the Popes John Paul II (with Angelo Sodano), Benedict XVI (with Tarcisio Bertone) and also Francis, the Pope was advised to leave his office like his predecessor. This recent attack of the Pope's opponents is on the surface because of the abuse scandal. But the resignation demand has deeper reasons. The dispute over the opening of the Catholic Church to the World today, which entered a new phase at the Second Vatican Council, then under the Popes John Paul II and subsequently Benedict XVI was slowed down, is again resolutely continued by Francis. He himself complained that it was not enough "to raise a monument for the Council". "The Holy Spirit cannot be extinguished". To support the Pope, therefore, in our days, also means to wish that the path opened by the Council be continued with great discretion, but also with firmness.

### The Open Letter

This is the background to our action ProPopeFrancis. First of all, we drafted an Open Letter to Pope Francis. At the beginning, this briefly

mentions the obstinate resistance against him as an occasion that led us to write our letter of encouragement to him. Then we write that his pastoral culture is appreciated. This core passage of the letter ends in the Pope's dream of the "Church as mother and shepherdess". The Pope is assured that the supporters of the Open Letter share this dream. Here is the text of the Open Letter, which was set in thirteen languages on our dedicated homepage ([www.pro-pope-francis.com](http://www.pro-pope-francis.com)):

Dear highly esteemed Pope Francis,

Your pastoral initiatives and their theological justification are currently under vehement attack by a group in the church. With this open letter, we wish to express our gratitude for your courageous and theologically sound papal leadership.

In a short time, you have succeeded in reshaping the pastoral culture of the Roman Catholic Church in accordance with its origin in Jesus. Wounded people and wounded nature go straight to your heart. You see the church as a field hospital on the margins of life. Your concern is every single person loved by God. When encountering others, compassion and not the law shall have the last word. God and God's mercy characterize the pastoral culture that you expect from the church. You dream of a "church as mother and shepherdess." We share your dream.

We ask that you would not veer from the path you have taken, and we assure you of our full support and constant prayer.

## The signatories

From November 2017 to September 2018, 74,569 have signed the Open Letter.

### Gallery

As part of the gathering of supporters, we asked some of the public and religious leaders if we could put them in a picture gallery. They were given the opportunity to make a short testimonial. The well-known philosopher Charles Taylor wrote: "Yes, my enthusiasm for Pope Francis comes from his courageous stance, which really puts the gospel at the center of his teaching, and that means he teaches us to reach out to those in need." Or Sr. Lea Ackermann of SOLWODI, who stands up against the worldwide exploitation of women: "I sincerely thank Pope Francis for bringing the Gospel to the people not just through words but through his actions and behaviours." The chair of the Society for European Theology, Marie-Jo Thiel from Paris, testifies: "Par sa triple attention à l'expérience des croyants, à l'intelligence des personnes, au cœur et

aux impact, François ouvre un chemin d'audace et de miséricorde évangéliques que je salue. "

Among these 90 personalities from around the world are

- bishops: including Erwin Kräutler - Xingu in Brazil, Fritz Lobinger - North-Aliwal in South Africa, Franz-Josef Overbeck - Essen, Matthäus Kärner - Rottenburg-Stuttgart, Diamantino Prata de Carvalho - Brazil, Vaclav Maly - Prague, Maximilian Aichern - Linz , Johann Weber - Graz, Ivo Fürer - St. Gallen, Paul Iby - Eisenstadt, Martin Gächter - Basel-Solothurn;
- politicians: former Minister of Europe Rocco Buttiglione, former Hungarian President László Sólyom, Wolfgang Thierse of the German Bundestag, Alois Glück - Bavarian Parliament, Christoph Leitl - European Economic Chamber, Josef Pühringer - Governor of Upper Austria, Daniel Hermann - Czech Minister of Culture, Hans-Joachim Meyer – Minister;
- superiors of Congregations: including Sr. Beatrix Mayerhofer - School Nurse and President of the Austrian Superiors, Abbot Martin Werlen from Einsiedeln;
- spiritual masters: including Anselm Grün, David Steindl-Rast, Christina Bruderek - evangelical spiritual author, Fery Berger and Sr. Ishriya of the Weiz Pentecostal movement;
- pastoral activists: including Sr. Lea Ackermann of SOLWODI, Franz Küberl - Caritas President Austria, Thomas Sternberg - ZdK, Gerda Schafelhofer - Catholic Action of Austria;
- scientists: including the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, Marie Jo-Thiel - chairwoman of the European Society for Catholic Theology, Felix Unger - president of the European Academy of Sciences, the political scientist Werner Weidenfeld.

Intercontinental Network of Theologians

The pool of those who signed the Open Letter turned out to be a rich treasure trove, because among those supporters are theologians from all over the world. We started to operate with this treasure. The Pope should not only receive emotional support, but also theologically argued backing for his path as well as profound criticism. The many theological experts among the supporters were assembled into a kind of informal intercontinental network of theologians.

These experts were solicited by Halík and myself with a request to provide us with expert analyses on the work of the Pope and its sub-aspects from the point of view of their respective discipline and continent. As a loose framework, the following three questions were given, in fact based on the Pastoral Constitution "Gaudium et Spes" (Church in the World

today) and the Church Constitution "Lumen gentium" of the Second Vatican Council:

1. What are the signs of our times challenging the Church in your country, your region, your continent?
2. What can and should the Church contribute to cope with these challenges?
3. Which development within the Church (on your continent) is required that the Church is able to act in the face of the challenges of our times and the Gospel?

On hundred and fifty papers arrived.<sup>23</sup> These will be published in the original languages as an eBook by Patmos publishing house by the end of November with a summarizing introduction by myself. These constitute a small digital theological library of contemporary worldwide theology.

## Online Survey

It is a concern of the Pope to listen to as many people as possible. Therefore, he has conducted a survey among the church members worldwide in preparation for the Family Synod. This encouraged us, in addition to some "closed questions", to open the questions posed to the experts to a larger audience in an online survey. Over 5,200 people participated in it over a short period. The documentation of all answers to the open questions is now accessible on the homepage and covers well over a thousand pages. As expected, supporters of the Pope participated. About 10% of respondents prove to be "Pope critics". It was possible to capture the main positions of the opponents: they do not want synods and decentralisation, reject the pastoral of mercy and thus *Amoris laetitia*, the document on marriage, family and divorce.

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<sup>23</sup> We share this dream. Theologians from all over the world argue *ProPopeFrancis*, ed. Paul M. Zulehner and Tomas Halik, Ostfildern 2018. [German: *Wir teilen diesen Traum. Theologinnen und Theologen aus aller Welt argumentieren ProPopeFrancis*, hg. v. Paul M. Zulehner und Tomas Halik, Ostfildern 2018.] The text collection is like a small library and covers approx. 1,200 pages. Some selected German-language expertises, extended by a conversation with Rita Süßmuth and Bishop Franz-Josef Overbeck has already been published: *Tailwind for the Pope. Why We Are Pro Pope Francis*, Darmstadt 2018, Scientific Book Company. [German: *Rückenwind für den Papst. Warum wir Pro Pope Francis sind*, Darmstadt 2018, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.]

## Results

The entire material (expert opinions, online survey) has now been processed and will be published in several languages.<sup>24</sup> I will now present some of the most important results.

Very revealing is the result about the question of the challenges facing the continent from both the experts and respondents. The analysis of all the texts shows that there are two types of challenges: global as well as continental.

## Global Challenges

To the global challenges belong the concern for peace in the world. The keyword “peace” appears in many texts. Norbert Mette from Munster dedicated a profound essay to this subject.

The world is being challenged by the ecological crisis. For example, Markus Vogt, one of the outstanding experts in this field in Munich, was able to call on the encyclical *Laudato sí*, which is highly valued worldwide.

As in the papal encyclical, the contributions link the topic of ecology with that of economics. We have a broad and differentiated criticism of neo-liberal finance capitalism, which, in addition to its strengths, also has considerable disadvantages for the global world and the local world around us.

A global challenge is the digitisation of all areas of life. This is theologically reflected with different results. While Vincent Shen the Chair of Chinese Thought and Culture at the University of Toronto (Canada) offers a blueprint for a benevolent-optimistic cybertheology, the emeritus professor for Religious Pedagogic Engelbert Groß from Eichstätt (Germany), meditates on a picture of the Last Supper created by young artists under the title “The last SMS”. In this each of the Apostles stares at his mobile device, tablet or laptop, while Jesus without such looks on perplexed. The threatening aspects of digitalisation up to the socio-political concept of “digitalisation losers” are discussed.

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<sup>24</sup> Pro Pope Francis. Worldwide support for the pope from the church people, ed. by Paul M. Zulehner and Tomáš Halík, Ostfildern 2018, Patmos Verlag. [German: Pro Pope Francis. Weltweite Unterstützung für den Papst aus dem Kirchenvolk, hg. von Paul M. Zulehner und Tomáš Halík, Ostfildern 2018, Patmos Verlag.] - English, Czech and Dutch editions are in preparation.

A global challenge is migration. In human history, this has always existed. But right now many - like our ancestors - are not traveling for the hope of a better life, but are fleeing from wars, natural disasters and poverty, whose core feature is hopelessness.

## Continental Challenges

But not all challenges are global. For the continents of Asia, Latin America as well as of Europe or North America their own respective challenges were identified: 25

For Asia, the experts call for a cultural dialogue with the other religions on the continent. This refers, as the Jesuit Louis Gutheinz of the Fujen University in Taipei indicates, to the encounter of Europeanised Christianity with Asian cultures. So he tries to rethink the Trinity using the terms Yin-Yang-He. An important issue for China and India is the relationship between religion and violence. In India there is violence by Hindus against people of other faiths, in Myanmar a violent Buddhism against Muslims. In his contribution, the Indian Jesuit Francis d'Sa recalls that the question of a theology of religions, including the significance of Jesus for other religions, is by no means satisfactorily answered. The answer is sought in discussion with Raimund Panikkar on a "transhistoric path" of "Christophanie".

From Latin America, as expected, contributions were made on the questions of poverty, justice and liberation - and thus about the role of the Church in the coming of the Kingdom of God, which does not replace salvation on the other side of history, but engages in the coming of the Kingdom of God within the history of humanity – in path at least.

The situation of the North Atlantic Area, ie North America and Europe, seems to be extremely complex. Issues addressed here are those that can moved from the continental to the global level but are currently being discussed mainly in "Western societies". This includes the important question of how in the context of modern Natural Sciences or the post-Hellenistic philosophy, the cosmos of the Christian faith can be rethought. It thus faces a similar task as in Asia, namely the challenge of encountering inherited Christianity with other cultures, philosophies and lifestyles. The expert for Religious Pedagogy, Norbert Scholl, takes the

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<sup>25</sup> In the Online-survey some participants were from Africa, but all of them live in Europe. This lack of a whole continent is remarkable. Has European theology lost sight of this Continent of Hope (apart from the times when in the South of Africa a South-African theology of liberation emerged)?

risk of an fascinating consideration of the great theological topics such as how to talk about God, about Jesus the Christ, about the Creation or the Trinity in the context of modern philosophy. Linked to this theological groundwork is the commitment of experts to human rights. The Lucerne theologian Adrian Loretan-Saladin encourages the Church, to follow the path of respecting all human rights to its logical end, which was started by John XXIII.

According to some, in the “respect for human rights by the Church” should include the right of Catholic priests to choose their lifestyle. Even more, a very large number of the expertises are dealing with the questions of women’s rights. A considerable number of renowned female theologians have written professionally on this topic, including Helene Schüngel-Straumann, Margit Eckhold, Margareth Hebblethwaite and Karin Heller. They agree in their diagnosis: It is no longer the duty of women to prove that they, too, should have access to all ecclesiastical tasks and offices, including ordination. In the meantime, this obligation lies with the Church leadership itself, explaining why this should not be possible. In addition, it is unanimously emphasised that without the solution to the question of women's role in the Church, the Church in modern societies cannot retain or regain its credibility. Of course, the abuse scandal has damaged the credibility of Church. But the topic of abuse of children and women's issues differ in that abuse affects all sectors of society, but in women's issues the Church is becoming increasingly isolated in society, and this without any conclusive theological justification. Pope Francis is urged not only by the authors, but also by many participants of the online survey, to think not only about the poor, but also about women in his courageous reforms.

### **Decentralisation, Subsidiarity, Synodality**

These diverse issues and their sometimes global, sometimes continental urgency, give unexpected massive support to the Pope on a very important aspect of his reform strategy. It turns out that the global catholic Church has to act globally on the one hand, that is as a World Church, but on the other hand important topics in the life of the Church regions are continental. This can only mean that the "panic centralism" cannot meet the multidimensionality and "multi-locality" of the challenges of the one but torn world. This is explicitly stated in many texts. The previous attempt to secure the unity of the Catholic Global Church through centralised Uniformism has led to a dramatic stagnation in the development

of the Church. The mentor of Pope Francis, Carlo Maria Martini, with whom – when he was President of the Council of European Bishops - I worked for several years, noted, not without reason, a few weeks before his death, that the Catholic Church was about three hundred years behind the modern World. Martini did not want to adapt and secularise Christianity to the highly ambivalent modernity. Rather, his formula was that the Church learns and teaches, with the consequence that it is open to cultural and social dialogue with all people of goodwill and the challenges of the respective culture. In *Evangelii gaudium*, Pope Francis commits himself precisely to this method.

For the Global Church, this means: to act as a Church globally in respect to the great global challenges (such as environment, migration or digitalization). At the same time, however, the episcopal conferences and their continental alliances must be upgraded. This means that the reforms of the Church must by no means happen in the Worldwide Church in lockstep (an argument with which in the last decades all reform wishes have been paralyzed). Rather, in the future it may happen that an innovation comes from the periphery: thus, a pastoral letter from the Argentine bishops about *Amoris laetitia* can acquire global-church bindingness, or the bishops of Amazonia in 2019 decide the ordination of non-academic and married catechists (perhaps in “Teams of three Elders”) and the Pope gives them this opportunity. Afterwards, the question will be asked what other bishops' conferences will do - in any case it will put them “under a lot of pressure”.

The Munster professor for Church Law, Hubertus Wolf, has systematised these considerations in his expertise. He fastens the due reform of ecclesiastical structures to the concept of subsidiarity. For a long time, in its social teaching the Church has asked society for this. Anxious about its unity, the readiness of the Catholic Church with regard to internal subsidiarity is limited, but Pope Francis courageously transcends these limits based on painful experiences in his time as spokesperson for CELAM (Association of Latin American Episcopal Conferences). It is important, he says, in view of the experiences of the Eastern Church traditions, to extend synodality in Catholic culture without renouncing the ultimate responsibility of the papacy.

## **Pastoral Culture**

However, the Pope is not only interested in structures - in this respect he is too slow, some authors note. His core concern is the renewal of the

pastoral culture within the Catholic Church. <sup>26</sup> Pastoral culture is in the Church, what in profane institutions is the organisational culture. Experts emphasise that this is important for the relationship between an organisation and clients. Good pastoral culture creates and reinforces people's commitment to the Gospel and to a church that is bound to it. The shift of emphasis in the pastoral culture, which the Pope wants, is now clearly recognisable. Francis (both privately and politically) does not talk about sins but about wounds. He does not lead people into a courtroom but into a "field hospital". He does not moralise but wants to heal. He does not place the law at the centre, but individuals and their consciences, which the Church cannot replace, but is able to accompany – sometimes referring to the law. He is not an ideologist but a shepherd. All of this happens in the name of a God in which law and mercy merge and make up God's sanctum, his heart and his lovingness. The gratitude for this change in the pastoral culture not only pervades all existing expertises of the project ProPopeFrancis, but the entire pontificate up until now, which – in respect to all critical proposals - many authors wish will have a long duration.

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<sup>26</sup> Zulehner, Paul M.: Ich träume von einer Kirche als Mutter und Hirtin. Die neue Pastorkultur von Papst Franziskus, [I dream of a Church as Mother and Shepherdess. The new Pastoral Culture of Pope Francis], Ostfildern 2017.

## 2019 Questionnaire Pandemic

1. Experience in the time of the pandemic

What do you think of these statements?

1 = I fully agree, 5 = I totally disagree. You can fine-tune in between.

The pandemic has had a major impact on my attitude towards life. [2]
I was afraid of being infected. [3]
The pandemic has exposed many people's willingness to show empathy and solidarity. [4]
I think the measures taken against the pandemic are exaggerated. [5]
The lockdown should protect older people. But many older people would have died in less time without a pandemic. [6]
It annoys me when people around me don't follow the rules to prevent infection. [7]
For me, the churches and religious communities are "systemically relevant". [8]
The weakening of the economy threatens the health of many people. [9]
In the time of the "lockdown" I thought of death and death more often than usual. [12]

How is it with you: [13]

I personally know someone in my circle of acquaintances and friends who has Covid-19. [13]
I personally know someone in my circle of acquaintances and friends who died of Covid-19. [13]
I don't know anyone in my circle of acquaintances and friends. [13]
I was sick myself. [13]
I have been tested negative [13]

I belong to the risk group:

because of my age [14]
because of a previous illness [15]

I am not a risk group [16]

I work in a "systemically relevant" area

Health area [17]

Basic supply (food supply...) [18]

Public services (transport, post, police, politics ...) [19]

Religious Organization / Churches [20]

Other areas: [21]

Have you seen / heard a religious program on television / radio during the pandemic? [22]

Please choose an option

never

once

multiple times

often

no information

2. Change?

What do you think of these statements?

1 = I fully agree, 5 = I totally disagree. You can fine-tune in between.

The "new normal" will soon look like the "old normal" again. [23]

Not much will change. [24]

Most people will continue to live as before. [25]

OF

OF: If you tend to think that some things will be different after the pandemic is overcome: what do you think will change? [26]

OF: If you tend to think that nothing (not much, hardly anything) will change: what are the reasons for this? [27]

4. Comments on possible changes

Various possible and / or desirable changes are mentioned in contributions to the pandemic. Can you comment on the proposals in two ways:

OPEN QUESTION 3: Do you think there will be such a change? Do you think these changes, which you see coming, are also desirable? [28]

Here is a list of changes that are mentioned in the current discourse on the “time after”.

In a first evaluation process, please comment on whether you believe that this change will occur. Then you evaluate whether you think the change is desirable.

1 = will definitely come; 5 = will certainly not come. You can fine-tune in between.

There will be more home offices. [29]
A growing proportion of church life (church services, prayer groups, educational events) will take place digitally. [30]
Much more conferences and meetings than before will take place online (video conferences). [31]
Occupational air traffic will decline. [32]
The requirements of the economy will come in the second row when it comes to shaping social life. [33]
Cooperation between nations and continents will increase. [34]
The digitalization of all areas of life will accelerate. [35]
The social side effects of digitization will occur more quickly. [36]
Many jobs will be rationalized away. [37]
Through home office, people will spend more time in the family environment. [38]
Working hours will be reduced, which will give people more free time. [39]
People will appreciate and search more for the experience of social distancing encounters. [40]
The increasing digitization of religious-ecclesiastical life will reduce participation in church meetings. [41]
Home office will put a lot of strain on single mothers. [42]
The gender roles will become more traditional. [43]
Home office will cause additional strain on working women. [44]
Domestic violence will increase as family time increases. [45]
People will be more aware of their mortality. [46]
Health policy will remain more important than economic policy. [47]

The pandemic will lead to a lasting crisis of neoliberal capitalism. [48]
The challenge of the climate crisis is far more serious than that of the Covid 19 pandemic. [49]
How society has mastered the pandemic gives hope that the climate crisis can also be mastered. [50]
Spilled values will be estimated again more. [51]
People will stay thoughtful. [52]
The experience of life's vulnerability will make many people enjoy their lives more. [53]
We will take more time for friends and family. [54]
The state will play a bigger role in the future. [55]
Vacation trips to distant regions of the world will decrease. [56]

## 5. Values

During the pandemic, many people became more aware of what is valuable to them. How do you feel about these statements on values:

1 = fully agree; 5 = do not agree at all. You can fine-tune in between.

Health is more important than freedom. [57]
Without a strong economy, there is no effective health policy. [58]
The most important thing that children have to learn is solidarity. [59]
Freedom is more important than security. [60]
The most important thing that children have to learn is obedience. 1 2 3 4 5

OF: Some people say that they have become more grateful for some things in their lives: Do you have any experience in this regard? [61]

OF: What is more important to you for the interpretation and shaping of your life, and what has become less important? [62]

## 6. Range of reality

The pandemic has unmistakably reminded us of the vulnerability of our human life. Some have also thought about death and dying. What do you think of the following statements:

1 = fully agree; 5 = do not agree at all. You can fine-tune in between.

Everything is over with death. [63]
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I hope there is life after death. [64]
People will rise from the dead with body and soul. [65]

7. Lockdown service

The life of religious communities was also badly affected by the lockdown. The following questions explore experiences in this area.

How often do you go to worship? [66]

several times a week
every week
at least once a month
several times a year (on the holidays)
(hardly ever
no information

Here are some possible experiences. What applies to you personally?

1 = fully applies, 5 = does not apply at all. You can fine-tune in between.

In the time of the lockdowns, I missed the Sunday service in a church community. [67]
After the pandemic ends, some of the church members will participate less in Sunday services. [68]
The interruption of worship meetings has given some the feeling that you can go without going to church. [69]
The good experiences with the broadcasting of services will cause some to continue to celebrate a service in this way in the future. [70]
The time of the pandemic has shown how important it is for religious life to come together in a church community. [71]
The churches should continue to offer good digital worship in the future. [72]
During the pandemic, we prayed with one another in the family or in a house community on Sunday. [73]
I think little of the broadcasting of services on social media or on television / radio. [74]
Christian worship lives from coming together in a church community. [75]

## 8. Personal information

Personal information is helpful for a solid social science analysis of the data. This data, like all the information provided so far, will of course remain anonymous. You always have the option of not specifying anything.

Your gender [76]

male
Female
diverse
no information

In which year were you born? [77]

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(four digits please, e.g. 1967)

Please give your marital status. Are you ... [78]

married
living in partnership
single, without partner
widowed, living alone
divorced, living alone
separated, living alone
married again

What was the last school you attended or are you still attending? [79]

Elementary school
Middle school / secondary school / vocational school / business school or similar school types
High school with Matura
(Technical) college / university

Are you employed or not? [80]

yes, all day (30 hours or more)
yes, part-time (less than 30 hours)
yes, independently

Housewife / husband, without other employment
Retired, retired
Widower's / widower's pension after deceased partner
college student
unemployed
other
in vocational training, apprenticeship, classroom service, community service, social year
student
Maternity leave

Which of these terms best describes your residential area? [81]

Big city
Suburb or outskirts of a large city
City or small town
Village
Farm or house in the country

How many children do you have? [82]

0 none
1 1 child
2 2 children
3 3 children
4 4 children
5 5 children and more

How many children live in your household? [83]

0 none
1 1 child
2 2 children
3 3 children
4 4 children

5 5 children and more

Which of the statements comes closest to your beliefs? [84]

There is a personal god.
There is some higher being or spiritual power.
I don't really know what to believe.
I don't think there is a god, any higher being, or a spiritual power.
I do not know.
No information.

Which religious community do you belong to? [85]

Catholic
evangelical
belong to a Free Church
orthodox
Islamic
Jewish
other
none
I left a church / religious community
no information

## 2019 Where is Francis leading our Church in Europe?

26 positions

Paul M. Zulehner

0.1. On November 25th, 2014 Pope Francis visited the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. He wanted to bring encouragement and hope in the context of a rather depressing assessment of Europe's situation.<sup>27</sup>

0.2. The keywords of encouragement are the great themes of freedom, justice, truth and peace. Likewise, the title of a symposium of the Council of European Bishop's Conferences (CCEE: Consilium Conferentiarum Episcoporum Europae) of 1992, after the Fall of the Wall (1989) and the unification of Western and Eastern Europe after four decades of division: "To live the Gospel in freedom and solidarity."<sup>28</sup>

### Freedom

1. Europe is characterised by a constant struggle for freedom. In modern times, great freedom revolutions took place: 1689, 1789, 1848, 1918, 1989.

2. A moment in the history of freedom is the development of human rights and thus of rights of freedom guaranteed by liberal democracies. Ancient discriminations have been overcome. Outcome of the struggle: (individual) liberties for all.

3. However, this achievement oriented European history of freedom has also experienced tragic interruptions: fascism and communism. The project of uniting Europe serves not only peace, but the safeguarding of freedom from further deprivations of liberty.

4. The gained democratic freedom today is being threatened in many ways. There is a trend towards the abolition of liberal democracy by democratic means. An "illiberal democracy" is the goal. This movement is based on the philosophy of the New Right of Alain de Benoist: It is not

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<sup>27</sup> See: Zulehner, Paul M.: Europa beseelen. Das Evangelium im Ringen um ‚Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Wahrheit, Ostfildern 2019.

<sup>28</sup> Fürer, Ivo: Die Entwicklung Europas fordert die Kirchen heraus: Die Tätigkeit des Rates der Europäischen Bischofskonferenzen (CCEE) von seiner Gründung 1971 bis 1996 (The development of Europe challenges the Churches: The activities of the Council of the European Bishop's Conferences (CCEE) from its founding in 1971 to 1996), Ostfildern 2018

the free individual that is the basis of the state, but an ethnically cleansed as well as Christianity-based national community.

5. This development is closely connected with the fact that in the midst of guaranteed freedom the number (even of young) people who want to get rid of the annoying burden of freedom is increasing. There are many reasons for this: lack of ego strength due to overburdened families; new confusion (Jürgen Habermas) (fears of globalisation), risky freedoms (Jürg Willi) through over-individualisation and weakening of institutional relief.

6. How can our Catholic Church be a reliable advocate of freedom? To encourage people towards freedom? Strengthen families? By soft re-institutionalisation? By a clear commitment to democracy and its concept of freedom and human rights? Respect for freedom and conscience in the church! Fostering of human rights above all in the Catholic Church! By ending discriminations (LGBT - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender; women) also in the Church.

## Justice

7. Jean B. Lacordaire (1802-1861): "One must always wring justice from freedom."

8. The Old Social Question caused by the Industrial Revolution has been mastered. The achievement: the welfare state, which of course needs to be further developed.

9. The Challenge of a New Social Question by Computerisation, Digitalisation, Industry 4.0. Destabilisation of many traditional jobs: "Even in rich societies, each of us can become superfluous tomorrow. What to do with him?" (Hans Magnus Enzensberger) - Unculture of Indifference (Pope Francis). In addition, this is exacerbated by global inequity and widespread international injustice in the global distribution of people's chances in life, even though progress has been made (Hans Rosling).

10. To master the New Social Question with democratic means also requires populations with a high degree of solidarity.

11. There is a desire for solidarity. But this desire becomes stifled on the way to action in a jungle of multifaceted fears (biographical, fear of loss, social descent fears, cultural fears about national identity, the fear of being left short in a short life time): Zulehner / Denz: Solidarity. Option for losers by modernisation; Zulehner: Don't have angst!). Angst "desolidarises".###1.4.2019####

12. Human beings experience Fears from the awakening of consciousness in mother's womb (Monika Renz: Primordial angst overlays paradisiac primordial trust: strategies against this angst are violence, greed and

lies). Fears are culturally on the rise in Europe (and America) (Dominique Moïsi, Heinz Bude, Frank Furedi) and are fueled by a policy of fear by political groups and tabloid media (Ruth Wodak, Zygmunt Baumann).

13. Internationally flourishing nationalism is not conducive to solidarity. The "first" (eg. America first) is the expression and aggravation of national egoism in response to the loss of identity (Francis Fukuyama: *identity: How the loss of dignity endangers our democracy*, 2019)

14. The Churches have the opportunity to become the advocates of national, international and global justice, and this in the face of a Europe-wide weakening of political forces advocating social justice. The solidarising power of the Churches is based on their transcendent knowledge of the deep unity of all being: there is only One World House, One Human Family. From there universal solidarity results, and this without upper limit, but with politically responsible steps towards more solidarity and justice for all in the world. The vision for the Churches is that they are oases of overflowing trust in cultures of fear.

15. On his visit to European institutions, the Pope referred to topical issues from which Europe is currently under severe pressure. These are: ecology, migration, unemployment - especially youth-unemployment - and the loneliness of the elderly.

16. Given all these political challenges, the Christian Churches cannot remain silent, even if some politicians - as in Communist times - would like it to. Of course, a church is not a political party. But it is politically inevitably partisan. It must raise its voice in favour of the poor and those who are kept in poverty. Because even today these poor people are crying to heaven. We would not be God's people if we did not hear the cry of the poor that penetrates God's ear: even today.

## Truth

17. Europe has made good progress facing the challenges of freedom and justice because, in addition to Greek, Roman, Germanic and Slavic cultural treasures, it was based on Christianity.

18. Christianity establishes the freedom of the person in the dignity of every human being as the image of God. This re-connecting of every human being to God ("religio" by religare) immunises the human being against all totalitarian grasp: in politics (John Paul II, 1979!), but also in economy, in science, in administration.

19. The essence of the human being is not that of a monad, but is always in relation, in resonance. The connectedness in being is the basis for the responsibility for each other in life.

20. In so far as angst 'desolidarises', it not only endangers justice in the world, but also human development. "When things get really hard, I feel a divine tailwind", said a Christian woman committed to refugee work. The basic attitude of Christians: "We can do that" - at least more and more, as we trust ourselves, because we feel a divine tailwind.

21. Christianity in Europe is currently experiencing a deep transformation. The Constantine era in its post-Reformation form is definitely over. Religion is no longer fate but choice (Peter L. Berger). Furthermore, Christianity has also wounded in many ways: through the interweaving of God and violence during the Thirty Years War, through the sluggish realisation of Gal 3:28 with regard to women, through the inability to develop sexually immature men who are delivered from a familial and in its sexual culture weakened society, and, if necessary, to prevent them from entering the pastoral ministry of children and adolescents.

## Peace

22. An ancient Roman axiom: "Si vis pacem, para bellum". That's no longer possible today. Therefore, the Pope spoke in the Council of Europe massively against the arms trade. Today, "Si vis pacem, para iustitiam!" (Psalm 85:11)

23. Peace (in Europe) also includes mutual respect for peoples and appreciation of cultural and religious diversity. Diversity of European peoples and cultures is no threat, but enrichment. What threatens peace, apart from nationalism, is above all humiliation (e.g. the pre-modern Arab world by the modern West: D. Moisi).

## Soul of Europe

24. An anonymous author of the 2nd century wrote that "Christians in the world are what the soul is to the body."<sup>29</sup> The task of the soul is to uphold the body, to be its conscience and its historical memory (European Parliament).

25. "One would make a mistake and be the victim of a dangerous illusion if one believed that, in order to make Europe, it would be sufficient to create European Institutions. It would be like a body without a soul."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Cf Letter to Diognet, 6.

<sup>30</sup> "Like many defining thoughts in our world of ideas, the call to 'give Europe a soul' is hard to trace back to its roots. It is always associated with the French politician Jacques Delors - for ten years a successful president of the Commission of the European Union. He is supposed to have

26. Francis: "The future of Europe depends on the recovery of the vital connection between these two elements. A Europe which is no longer open to the transcendent dimension of life is a Europe which risks slowly losing its own soul and that 'humanistic spirit' which it still loves and defends. Taking as a starting point this opening to the transcendent, I would like to reaffirm the centrality of the human person, which otherwise is at the mercy of the whims and the powers of the moment. I consider to be fundamental not only the legacy that Christianity has offered in the past to the social and cultural formation of the continent, but above all the contribution which it desires to offer today, and in the future, to Europe's growth. This contribution does not represent a threat to the secularity of states or to the independence of the institutions of the European Union, but rather an enrichment. This is clear from the ideals which shaped Europe from the beginning, such as peace, subsidiarity and reciprocal solidarity, and a humanism centred on respect for the dignity of the human person." (European Parliament)

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brought this request into conversation in the early 1990s." ([https://austria-forum.org/af/Wissenssammlungen/Symbole/Europasymbole/Seele\\_Europas](https://austria-forum.org/af/Wissenssammlungen/Symbole/Europasymbole/Seele_Europas) ; 29.11.2018) - Denz, Hermann: Die europäische Seele. Leben und Glauben in Europa (The European soul. Life and faith in Europe), Vienna 2000.

## 2022 People in Europe live in very different realities

### Images of death and their consequences for ways of life

It is probably the oldest question of mankind, which in the end is stronger: death or love? To answer this question, peoples have narrated myths. They are not "fake news", as one would say today. Rather, they tell of "what is always and everywhere the case".

One of the great myths of humanity we have Greek culture to thank. It is the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice.

Orpheus and Eurydice



Orpheus loves Eurydice. The beloved is bitten by a poisonous snake and she is snatched by death. Eurydice must go down to the netherworld.

This destiny does not let the loving minstrel rest idly. He sets off on his way to the netherworld. Thanks to his song on a lyre he passes Cerberus

safely who refuses the mortal ones access to the netherworld. Charon takes him over the Styx (Acheron), the river of death. He reaches Hades and Persephone who rule the netherworld.



These both are so touched by his love that they allow him to lead Eurydice back to the land of laughter, life and love. But they imposed a seemingly easy condition: He mustn't look back during the long journey up to the world of the living.

Eurydice follows Orpheus. Orpheus obviously goes on his way. Of the silent shadow Eurydice he does not hear any steps. His doubts whether she is following really grow with every step. So the doubting lover finally turns round: And Eurydice he loses forever.

What a tragic message this myth brings! Not love over death, but death over love wins in the end. The dark fears of so many people are nourished. Instead of being reduced, fears are multiplied.

The Christ-Orpheus

Since 175 AD the young Clement, born in 150 AD in Athens, taught at the Catechetical School of Alexandria - that is where the Nile flows into the Mediterranean Sea. In the Eastern Church tradition, he is regarded as a respected Church Father. The myth of the Greek Orpheus was known by the early Christian Church in Rome too. In the Catacombs of Domitilla or following one of the Saints Marcellinus and Peter there are mural paintings of the myth in a Christian variation.



The similarity of the two Orpheuses – the Greek Orpheus and the Christian Orpheus – is captivating. Both wear a Phrygian cap. Both are minstrels. Both are holding a lyre.

The early Christians apparently were convinced that the topic of the Greek myth is also the innermost topic of the Gospel. Whether death is stronger than love: this occupied primarily Eastern theology. Not only does Eurydice as an individual suffers the destiny of being wrested to the netherworld. It is the destiny of everyone who has “human nature”. The whole of humankind suffers from a mortal wound.

Christ, the minstrel of God, loves “Eurydice”, i.e. humankind, which became a slave to death. Love forces Christ, as happened to the Greek Orpheus, to descend to the netherworld: he became a human being and died. In the Eastern Church tradition, the key event of Easter is the

“Descent of Christ into Hades”<sup>31</sup>. What Christ, risen from death, did first was to descend into Hades. In the Apostle’s creed the same is confessed: “He descended to the hell”. It is exactly the same process that is told in the Greek myth.

The Greek Orpheus nevertheless is different from the Christ Orpheus. Christ Orpheus does not look back. Looking back doesn’t fit either with his life or with following him: “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Lk 9:62) Christ-Orpheus goes his way without considering: Without paying attention to himself he is obedient only to the will of his God. Whereas the Greek Orpheus failed, different to this the new Orpheus was able to sing back his beloved Eurydice, i.e. humankind, back to the land of laughter, hope and resurrection: as the Church Father Clement from Alexandria taught.<sup>32</sup>

The Christian churches have been telling the hopeful variant of Christ-Orpheus for two thousand years. It is their kerygma, the core of their message. Their life and work is determined by it: “Christ is risen. Yes, he is truly risen!” (Христос воскрес. Христос воистину воскрес!) is not only the basic melody of Easter. The entire proclamation, every Eucharistic celebration, the celebration of all sacraments are permeated by this melody. And last but not least, our pastoral activities are also guided by this Easter melody. Jesus’ resurrection does not shape only our Christian funeral liturgy, but also all diaconal activities. In this we try to overcome the traces of social death and for small resurrections to happen before death in the care for the sick, refugees, homeless people and sinners.

## Mortals and immortals

A look at recent studies in sociology of religion shows that this central message of the Gospel is by no means believed as a matter of course. This is not only the case with individuals, but also with different cultures, and forms the basis for their way of life. In all countries of Europe shaped by Christianity there are de facto adherents of both the Greek and the Christian interpretation of death.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Alfeyev, Hilarion: Christ the Conqueror of Hell: The Descent into Hades from an Orthodox Perspective, Moscow 2009.

<sup>32</sup> Zerfaß, Rolf: Ein Lied vom Leben. Orpheus und das Evangelium, in: Miteinander sprechen und handeln. Festschrift für Hellmut Geissner, hg. v. E. Slembeck, [A Song of Life. Orpheus und das Evangelium, in: Speak and act together. Festschrift für Hellmut Geissner, ed. by Slembeck]. Frankfurt 1986, 343-350.

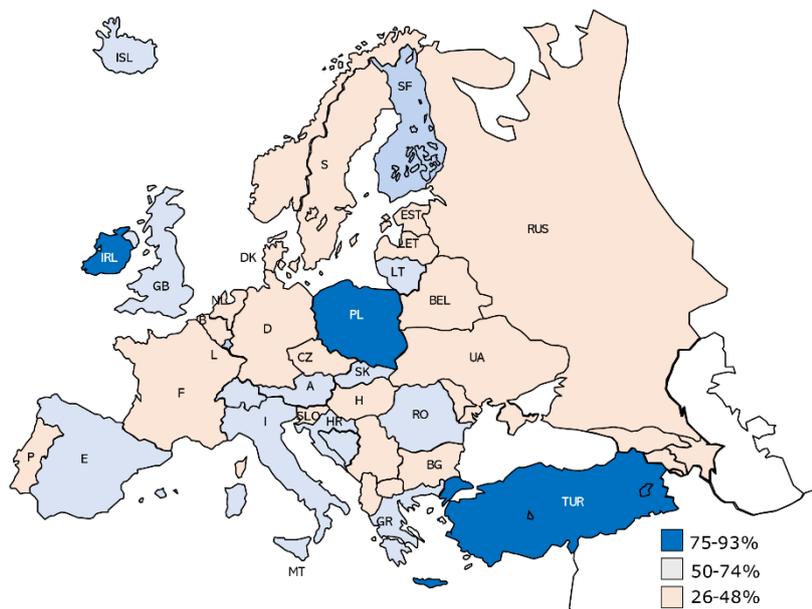
<sup>33</sup> See European Value Studies (EVS): [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/European\\_Values\\_Study](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Values_Study)

For some - I call them the "mortals" - death has the last word. They live in a "reality" whose reach is limited: to eighty years and to this world. They are convinced that "with death everything is over". The reality in which mortals live is narrow and devoid of mystery. They live, as it were, "under a closed heaven".

In addition, there are people in our cultures whose "reality" transcends the boundaries of space and time. For them, death is not the definitive end of their existence. Rather, they interpret death as another birth: their existence is transformed, not ended. The Resurrection is the image for this birth. In it, the bond to space and time and thus to transcendency is overcome. I call these people the "immortals". Over them heaven is open. Their temporal life is already firmly woven into a much greater life, which - because it is beyond space and time - is sung about as "eternal life".

Studies of the last decades now reveal that both, the mortals and the immortals, exist - side by side - in all Christianised countries today. People in our cultures live as in entirely different "realities". There is a fundamental ideological polarisation in our cultures. Moreover, the analyses show that these two "worldview groups" vary greatly in size across cultures. (FIGURE 1) And this is important in our current discussion: The 'values gap' is not between East and West, between Russia and Europa, but within each country. There is for example the same cultural situation in Russia as in France, as reliable data show.

Figure 1: Mortals and immortals in the different (Christian-influenced) cultures of Europe



Source: EVS/WVS 1981-2020

## Realities and ways of life

The reality in which a person lives has a lasting impact on the way he or she leads his or her life. I will illustrate this with three selected examples.<sup>34</sup>

### Outsourcing of suffering

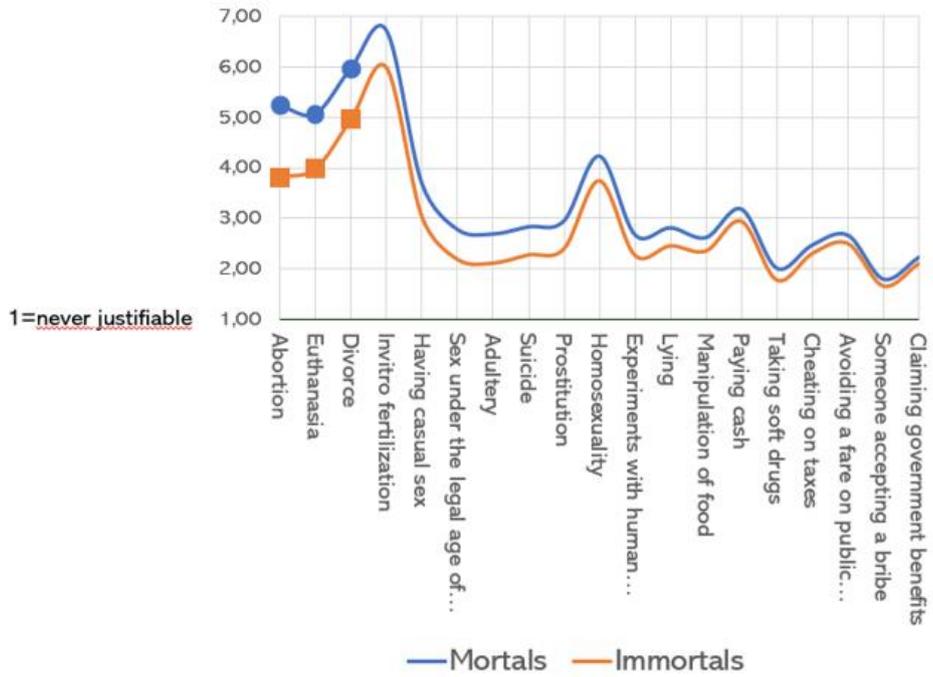
1. Firstly, we find in our data a significant correlation between the scope of reality and attitudes towards moral norms. People who believe in life after death are more reticent about abortion than purely worldly-minded people. The positions of mortals and immortals also differ on other moral norms. This is the case, for example, with euthanasia or divorce. Obviously, worldly people try to "outsource" suffering from life as much as possible, and therefore are more likely to end a relationship or advocate active euthanasia in cases of severe suffering.

Figure 1: Mortals and immortals and their attitude towards abortion, euthanasia and divorce

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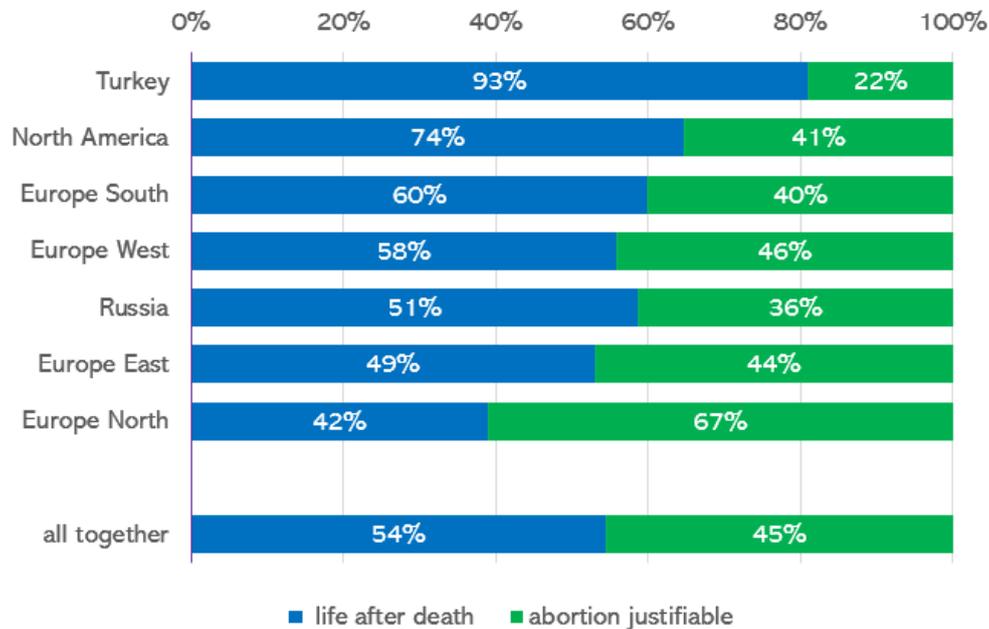
<sup>34</sup> Zulehner, Paul M.: Wandlung. Religionen und Kirchen inmitten kultureller Transformation, Ostfildern 2021.

10=always justifiable



Source: EVS/WVS 1981-2020

Figure 2: Believe in life after death and “abortion is justifiable”



Source: EVS

## Outsourcing of limitless desire

2. A second example. The scope of reality also shapes the basic cultivation of personal life. According to the French psychotherapist Jacques Lacan, all human beings have an unlimited desire (in French: *désir*).<sup>35</sup> We experience this in love, in good work, in play, in recognition, according to the atheist everyday life theorist Henri Lefebvre.<sup>36</sup> Mortals also carry this unlimited desire within them. But they have only a limited amount of time to satisfy it. For them, life is the "last opportunity", according to the sociologist Marianne Gronemeyer. She analyses this way of life, which she believes is dominant in European cultures today. Mortals suffer from a shortage of time (so the subtitle of her book). Characteristics of their lifestyle are therefore quick, overburdening, characterised by the fear of falling short. This fear in turn leads to rivalry and desolidarisation. Of course, more than a few feel that this way of life is not satisfying. They escape into drugs, alcohol, Netflix, social media,

<sup>35</sup> *Desire and its Interpretation: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VI*, Cambridge 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Lefebvre, Henri: *La critique de la vie quotidienne [Critique of Everyday Life]*, Paris 1955.

sectoid groups, some into suicide. Others choose revolutionary spirituality to change this meaningless life.

Immortals on the other hand can cultivate their unlimited desire differently. My devout grandmother, who hoped for a life after death, told me that she could be satisfied with fragments of happiness in her marriage because she could, as it were, outsource the limitless desire to the beyond. The goal of the infinite desire of her heart, she knew to sing with Psalm 63, was for her the infinite God. Moreover, freed from the compulsion to find heaven already on earth, she was able to share generously the scarce goods of life with others. Immortals, in my studies, are clearly more capable of acting in solidarity than mortals in their untamed fear of an ultimately meaningless death, which for them ends in nothingness.

### **They never bow the knee before the Powerful**

3. And thirdly, I focus to another implication of the scope of reality in which one dwells with one's cosmically unhoused soul. It relates to dignity and freedom. When the Polish Pope John Paul II visited Warsaw in 1979 in the midst of martial law, he said in his homily: "He who bows his knee before God never bows it before the Party."

Many immortals have faithfully bound their hearts to God. This makes them free in this world to accept even death - with their heads held high - , when their dignity or that of their sisters and brothers is touched.

Throughout the history of all great religions, this has repeatedly empowered people to resist to the powerful. The protestant Christian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, like countless others, resisted Hitler, Nazism and the military aggression against peace-loving countries in Europe West and East.

The large number of martyrs in the Russian Church, including simple believers, monks, bishops and patriarchs, are admirable proof of this great freedom and power of resistance of the immortals and an encouraging example for us today.

But those martyrs we find not only in Moscow, but also in Kiev, Warsaw, Prague or Budapest. We find them in the Orthodox, Greek-Catholic, Protestant and Roman-Catholic Churches.

All these martyrs lived out of the conviction that it is not death that has the last word for them, but love, which for them is the name of God.

And I am quite sure as theologian and priest, that all these martyrs of all Christian Churches just now bow themselves before the almighty God

asking Him with their spilled blood for peace everywhere in His world.  
Let us join together - deeply connected with them - with their prayer.