

SECULARIZATION, RE-ENCHANTMENT, OR SOMETHING  
IN BETWEEN? METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND EMPIRICAL  
OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING A CONTROVERSIAL HISTORICAL IDEA

Volkhard Krech

*Säkularisierung—ein moderner Mythos?* (2003), this title of a book on the religious situation in Germany published by Detlef Pollack<sup>1</sup> describes in a nutshell the actual state of the ongoing and constantly re-emerging debate on secularization. Some scholars describe the theory of secularization as a ‘myth’—despite the question whether the use of the term myth is adequate here—, with which modern society reflects on itself without regard to the ‘facts’. Others—the abovementioned Detlef Pollack amongst them—do not share this sceptical view and try to strengthen the notion of secularization in various modifications. However, from the perspective of conceptual history there are no pure facts as such; rather, they are constructed and dealt with in order to describe and evaluate the world we live in.

In his book on the secular Talal Asad<sup>2</sup> presents a genealogy of the secular and of secularism rather than a history of social and societal processes which are generally thought of as ‘modern’. He did not want to write a history of secularization, not even a history of it as an idea. Rather, his book intends to be “an exploration of epistemological assumptions of the secular that might help us to be a little clearer about what is involved in the anthropology of secularism”.<sup>3</sup> While the secular is “an epistemic category”, secularism is a “political doctrine”.<sup>4</sup> Asad understands the secular as “a concept that brings together certain behaviours, forms of knowledge, and sensibilities in modern life,”<sup>5</sup> i.e. a notion which has a certain impact on the individual’s conduct of life, perceptions and feelings—even on the body. Secularism is a derivative from the secular and is based on the

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Pollack, *Säkularisierung—ein moderner Mythos?*; Aubrey, *Secularism*; Comblin, “Säkularisierung.”

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Asad, *Formation of the Secular*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

secularization thesis that “in its entirety has always been at once descriptive and normative”.<sup>6</sup>

Following Asad’s genealogy, one might assume that there is a more complex history of religious development than the secularization thesis suggests, and maybe even a preconception inherent in empirical research on secularization. The secular “is neither continuous with the religious that supposedly preceded it (that is, it is not the latest phase of sacred origin) nor a simple break from it (that is, it is not the opposite, an essence that excludes the sacred).”<sup>7</sup> From this perspective the ambiguity of the secular and of secularism arises—whether or not one accepts secularization as a given ‘fact’ or tries to substitute it by confronting ideas such as ‘re-sacralization’ or ‘re-enchantment’<sup>8</sup> or the idea of a post-secular society.<sup>9</sup> These notions are still just negative affirmations of the idea of secularization.

On the one hand, the epistemic concept of the secular and the derived doctrine of secularism are contingent social constructions which—once they are in the world—have influence on our behaviour, feelings and cognitions. But on the other hand, there is no doubt that analytical notions of process are necessary within social sciences in general and religious studies in particular to grasp larger historical developments. If the socio-cultural reality were just to be recognized as a continuum, there would be no change and as such no history and *ergo* no historical consciousness. In consequence: If everything were just in flow, we could not perceive anything in its historic dimension. Notions and concepts—including the ideas of process—are necessary for perception and knowledge; this is a philosophical commonplace. A notion—if it is not to be understood as a scientific positivism—represents the condensation of a question at hand. Thus, concepts structure the empirical reality as well as research-programs provisionally and have to be modified or replaced, if different questions emerge. Even if they are basic ideas, fundamental terms, they represent a question which only arose in its historical setting. This historicity of questions urges us to recognize that “the history of phenomena is foremost a history of the controversial explanation of these phenomena”.<sup>10</sup> This

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.; Berman, *Reenchantment of the world*; Isenberg, “Konsum als Religion?”

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Habermas, *Glauben und Wissen*; Eder, “Europäische Säkularisierung.”

<sup>10</sup> Graf, “Dechristianisierung,” 33.

statement is true of all phenomena, but especially so of religious ones and as such of the idea of secularization and the questions inherent in it.

Herrmann Lübbe presented in detail the politics of ideas concerning the notion of secularization,<sup>11</sup> while Herrmann Zabel and Ulrich Ruth described secularization as a “category of interpretation”.<sup>12</sup> Numerous sociologists of religion, first among them Thomas Luckmann in the 1960s and many social scientists and historians with him, doubt the concept of secularization in part or generally—to name just a few: Sarah Williams, Stephen Yeo, Jeffrey Cox and Linda Woodhead. Other historians like Hugh McLeod<sup>13</sup> and sociologists like Bryan Wilson, Steve Bruce<sup>14</sup> and, in Germany, Detlef Pollack, for example, still think of secularization as a productive idea. In the French-speaking area the word *déchristianisation* (dechristianization) is used instead of secularization, and Hartmut Lehmann suggested analyzing the interactions between the ideas of processes of secularization, dechristianization and rechristianization.<sup>15</sup> The ideas of the de-institutionalization of religion and the processes of diffusion of religion would have to be added to Lehmann’s advice.

The heuristical power of the secularization concept depends on what is to be understood by its idea. In its strongest version the concept of secularization suggests nothing less than the unilinear, irresistible and irreversible process of religion losing all of its significance—from marginalization to complete annihilation. Responsible for this is the universal and equally irresistible and irreversible process of rationalization, according to which everything is reduced to being just a question of (intentional) accountability. Or to phrase this in accordance with the history of semantics: The complex and historically speaking rather dynamic relation between divine forethought and individual trial has changed into matter-of-fact appreciation of risks. The most radical concept of secularization combines this idea with a strong optimism toward progress, according to which the rational world view means nothing less than total emancipation from religious dependency. Another notion in this radical concept is the idea of the deterioration of good morals and social cohesion due to

<sup>11</sup> Lübbe, *Säkularisierung*.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Zabel, *Verweltlichung/Säkularisierung*; Ruh, *Säkularisierung als Interpretationskategorie*; As far as the philosophical view in general is concerned: cf. Jaeschke, *Wurzeln der Geschichtsphilosophie*; Jaeschke and Laeyendecker, “Säkularisierung/Säkularismus”; Jaeschke, “Säkularisierung.”

<sup>13</sup> Cf. McLeod, “Comparing Secularisations: Germany and Britain.”

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Bruce, *God is Dead*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Lehmann, *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung*.

religion's loss of significance in modernity. In both assumptions modernity and religion are considered incompatible. Thus, religion functions as the negative blueprint for the concept of modernity.

Even if there is some empirical evidence of this characterization during the intellectual history of modern times, it still seems an exaggeration. If such a strong concept of secularization is purported dogmatically, it becomes mere ideology. Accordingly, this narrow concept has been softened in several modifications. The outcome of this modification process, however, is secularization describing the development of religion in modern times as (a) an ongoing process and not as seasonal fluctuations during the course of which (b) religion no longer has the importance which was formerly ascribed to it (not taking into account the question if religion really had more significance in earlier times).<sup>16</sup> José Casanova has presented perhaps the most severely analytical considerations on the secularization thesis.<sup>17</sup> He points to three elements in that thesis, all of which have been taken to be essential to the development of modernity: (1) increasing structural (functional) societal differentiation,<sup>18</sup> (2) the privatization of religion, and (3) the declining social significance of religious belief. Casanova holds that only the first and third elements are viable.

I do not plan to add another definition of secularization. Instead I would like to take up Asad's definition of the secular as an "epistemic concept" and in the same instant to present some empirical observations on the social and societal history of religions—being aware of Asad's examination of the role statistical representation has played in creating the world of modern power that social scientists inhabit.<sup>19</sup> On the one hand, I agree with Asad's methodology of genealogy: We have to sharpen the scientific understanding of the problem of handling the idea of secularization within scientific and public discourses. Thus, I will point out some dimensions that have to be distinguished when dealing with the question of secularization and present some considerations concerning the interaction between the history of religions, social history, and the history of semantics. On the other hand, just reflecting on the constructions and conducting discourse analysis might be insufficient. If epistemic

---

<sup>16</sup> With Lucian Hölscher one should rather assume that the European societies of the 18th century had an ideational affiliation with religion; cf. Hölscher, "Religion des Bürgers," 597.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Casanova, *Public Religions*.

<sup>18</sup> According to David Martin the concept of social differentiation has been its "most useful element" (Martin, *On Secularization*, 20).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Asad, "Ethnographic Representation."

concepts—and as such the secular—have impacts upon people’s behavior—this is what Asad states—, we have to look for quantitative indicators in order to be able to measure them und thus evaluate their relevance. We certainly cannot take quantitative data as a simple copy of reality, since quantitative as well as qualitative data, such as texts, are much less complex than the social practice they represent. However, we need a heuristic epistemology of the “empirical reality” behind or followed by the epistemic concept of the secular. Therefore, in a second step I use the methodical considerations to generate some indicators for measuring secularization, which will then lead to some empirical observations. The data stem from the history of religious development in Germany—with some insight into the twentieth century as far as the empirical data permits such an endeavour.

*The Interaction between the History of Religions, Social History,  
and the History of Semantics*

In the beginning there was the history of religions. At least this is what the nineteenth century theory of pansacrality argues, according to which the entire societal and cultural development stems from religion. This theory is still in effect today but is becoming more and more problematic. Whatever one’s position in regard to the question of the chronological origin of society and culture, one cannot deny that the history of religions can no longer be looked at from an inside perspective, as the phenomenology of religion has done for so long.<sup>20</sup> The idea that religion is based on culture and society goes back to ancient Greece. The social and political function of religion is referred to in the “Fragment des Kritias”,<sup>21</sup> by Polybios in his *Historiae*,<sup>22</sup> by Cicero in *De natura deorum*<sup>23</sup> and by Livius in his *Ab Urbe Condita*.<sup>24</sup> All these texts were used in the seventeenth and eighteenth century as basis for a controversy which tried to establish philosophical atheism with just these abovementioned arguments.<sup>25</sup> Religion was understood and denoted as an element of oppression. The

---

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Lanczkowski, *Einführung in die Religionswissenschaft*, 77, who describes religion as a phenomenon resting in itself, *sui generis*.

<sup>21</sup> Diels, Kranz, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, B25.

<sup>22</sup> Polybios, *Historiae* VI, 56.6–12.

<sup>23</sup> Cicero, *De natura deorum* I, 118.

<sup>24</sup> Livius, *Ab Urbe Condita* I, 19.4.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Schröder, *Ursprünge des Atheismus*.

theory of religion as a fraud perpetuated by deceitful priests—which can be traced back to Herbert of Cherbury (1583–1648), the founder of the concept of ‘natural religion’—belongs to this line of thinking. This normative discourse is to be distinguished from the scholarly research in the field of religious developments from the point of view of social history and sociology. Around 1900, scholars like Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch and Georg Simmel started placing the history of religions in the context of socio-historical developments. Nowadays the idea that religious thought is only self-reliant seems absurd.

The connection between history of religions and social history, however, is not a one-way street as historical materialism suggests. This concept has its followers in the social sciences even nowadays, although it lacks the political verve. Religion is sometimes still looked upon as an ideological superstructure, which is determined by the predominant political and economic motives and at the same time conceals them. All of the classical sociologists of religion had a different view. To paraphrase Georg Simmel, their idea was to build a floor just underneath historical materialism.<sup>26</sup> To measure up to the complexity of socio-cultural reality, one has to determine the interconnections between the history of religions and social history: “Without an understanding of religious change in modern society . . . there can be no reliable social history.”<sup>27</sup> Max Weber determined the relationship between ideas and interests, whereby the ideas are the basis for successfully attending to ones interests while interests are the historically significant forces;<sup>28</sup> both can be dependent or independent variables in a research setting. In the same way the history of religions is connected with social history and vice versa.

---

<sup>26</sup> It is the intention of Georg Simmel's *Philosophie des Geldes*, “dem historischen Materialismus ein Stockwerk unterzubauen, derart, daß der Einbeziehung des wirtschaftlichen Lebens in die Ursachen der geistigen Kultur ihr Erklärungswert gewahrt wird, aber eben jene wirtschaftlichen Formen selbst als das Ergebnis tieferer Wertungen und Strömungen, psychologischer, ja, metaphysischer Voraussetzungen erkannt werden” (Frisby and Köhnke, *Simmel. Philosophie des Geldes*, 13).

<sup>27</sup> “Ohne das Verständnis des religiösen Wandels in der modernen Gesellschaft ist . . . eine verlässliche Sozialgeschichte nicht möglich.” Schieder, “Religion in der Sozialgeschichte,” 25.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, 252: “Interessen (materielle und ideelle) nicht: Ideen, beherrschen unmittelbar das Handeln der Menschen. Aber: die ‘Weltbilder’, welche durch ‘Ideen’ geschaffen werden, haben sehr oft als Weichensteller die Bahnen bestimmt, in denen die Dynamik der Interessen das Handeln fortbewegte.” (interests (material and ideal) not ideas rule men's acting? / actions? But the world views which are created by these ideas have very often led the way for the dynamics of interests which finally ruled men's acting? / actions?)

Beyond the relationship between the history of religions and social history there is the history of semantics with its inner- and outer-religious aspects. In historical research this dimension is pursued by approaches like history of ideas, notions, and concepts as well as by discourse analysis.<sup>29</sup> A possible complement to this arsenal of methods is Klaus Heinrich's concept of *Faszinationsgeschichte* (the history of fascinations). The history of semantics recognizes that religious ideas and concepts change, that the meaning of religious notions varies in different contexts and that even the concept of religion itself is constantly changing. Religion and related notions such as religiosity, piety, faith, asceticism, mysticism, and ritual are part of an ongoing process of reflection—both from outside the religious field and from an inside perspective.

Many parts of the societal self-description and reflection have been taken over by the social sciences during the course of modernity. Our world views have been shaped by them, and this has had an impact on the history of religions as well. But, as the connection between social history and the history of religions has shown, there is no linear or even one-way effect. Modern practice of reflection stems from and has been stimulated by the history of religions. Thus, in the relation between the history of semantics in general and the history of religions there are strong interactions (see fig. 1).

From the perspective of the social sciences all three dimensions can be described as a relation according to the sociology of knowledge: Religious semantics and processes of reflection on the one hand and socio-structural and societal developments on the other hand influence each other. In sociology the question of the temporal succession of semantic and socio-structural developments is being discussed.<sup>30</sup> This can be understood as a follow-up to the dispute concerning the alternative between idealistic and materialistic perspective. As I stated above, the idea of reciprocal influence shows that this dispute is nothing more than a proverbial catch-22 situation, comparable to the chicken or egg problem. As ever, only empirical research can help to answer the question of causation in its respective context. Furthermore, the relationship between two of the three dimensions can be mediated by the third, i.e. the relation between the history of religions and the history of semantics by social history and so on. As the diagram tries to show, this is a circuit which works in both directions.

---

<sup>29</sup> Cf. e.g. Bödeker, *Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte, Metapherngeschichte*.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Stäheli, "Die Nachträglichkeit der Semantik."

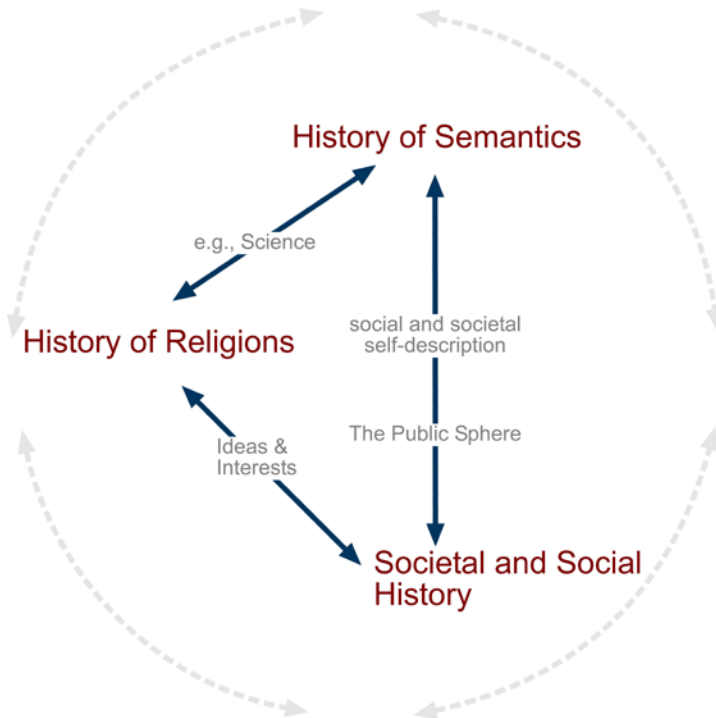


Fig. 1: The circle of history of religions, semantics, and societal processes.

I would now like to apply this model to the topic of secularization. I will not attempt to answer the question of secularization with one of the options I have outlined above, but rather approach the matter of secularization from the circle of reciprocal influence between the history of semantics, the history of religions and social history—and as such relate the discourse on secularization to socio-structural and societal developments.

### *Indicators for Measuring Secularization*

In order to answer the question of the heuristic potency of the concept of secularization in its minimal version and its adequateness concerning socio-cultural reality, one has to establish which indicators are adequate for measuring secularization. If the concept of secularization has more than just a hermeneutical function for the self-description of modernity,



	religious history	social history	history of ideas and reflection
<b>individual</b>	human being as a divine medium or tool	privatization	personality, subjectivity
<b>institution / organization</b>	e.g., church as the body of Christ	religious organizations as bureaucratic entities	loss of relevance or intermediate entities?
<b>society</b>	world rejection or world domination	religion as an autonomous societal sphere with interferences to others	relation between religion and modernity

Fig. 2: Matrix of different levels of conceptualization.

then it should be possible to operationalize and thereby prove it.<sup>31</sup> Quite a few suggestions on how to operationalize the measurement of secularization have been made,<sup>32</sup> and I do not want to simply add another one. Rather, I would like to focus on different dimensions of secularization, which I will derive from the history of religions, social history and the history of semantics.

In order to operationalize secularization, I suggest not only to distinguish between the abovementioned methodical triad, but also between three social dimensions, namely the individual, institutional-organizational and the societal dimension (as known as the distinction between the micro, meso, and macro level). Together with the methodical dimensions, the following matrix results. For a better understanding I will restrict myself to some prominent examples mentioned in figure 2.

Actually, the matrix is more complex than this, because the methodical and the social dimensions are interdependent concerning the topic of secularization. The matrix should therefore be three-dimensional and in

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Dobbelaere, *Secularisation. A multi-dimensional Concept*; Dobbelaere, *Secularisation. An Analysis at three Levels*; Jagodzinski, "Säkularisierung und religiöser Glaube"; Pollack, *Säkularisierung*.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. e.g. Pollack, *Säkularisierung*.

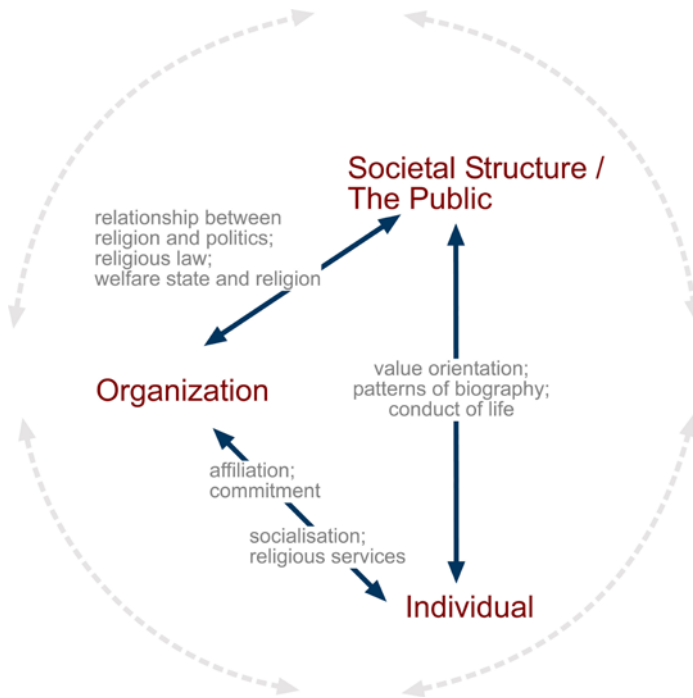


Fig. 3: The circle of the individual, organizational, and societal level.

its third dimension interdependent concerning the relation between the social and methodical dimensions. Not only is such a matrix difficult to depict, it would probably not serve to clarify things. I therefore restrict myself to giving some examples of interdependencies between individuals, institutions and the societal dimension. The methodical triad is always implied, as shown in figure 3.

Examples of the relationship between individuals and religious organizations are on the one hand types of affiliation and commitment. In accordance with these criteria Weber developed his contrast-typology between church and sect. Whereas the church as agency of salvation and grace relies on formal membership and not on emphatic affiliation or commitment, the sect on the other hand is dependent on these two. However, organizations also affect personal attitudes and actions via socialization. Furthermore, they provide services for people, for example worship and pastoral care.

The relationship between individual and society can be described by the terms value orientation, patterns of biography and conduct of life.

These can be imparted by organizations or institutions, but also exist relatively independent of organizations and more or less institutionally.

Examples of the relation between organizations and society are the relation of religion and politics, constellations of religious law, and the welfare state of Western democracies as a possible secular expression of religious ethics.

Just as the relationship between individual and society can be shaped institutionally or organizationally, the relation between institutions or organizations can be mediated by individuals, which is the case especially in times of societal change when institutions lose plausibility and stability and become obsolete, or during the history of religions in situations of religious change or new beginnings. Weber calls this the "*status nascendi*", the state in which religious ideas start to work via charismatic persons. This, too, is a circuit with two directions.

The following indicators for measuring secularization can be deduced from this model:

- The religious attitudes, orientations or values of persons and types of religious conducts of life, including styles of religiosity and piety; social strata, movements and specific milieus are of special interest;
- the normative power and societal relevance of religious institutions (like religious rituals);
- the number of members, the degree of affiliation and the societal influence of religious organizations, movements and groups;
- the importance of religion for the structure of society, as well as the relevance of religion in other societal spheres and the public.

These indicators certainly do not represent a complete list of all possibilities for measuring secularization but are rather an assemblage of representative examples of three social dimensions and their interrelation. To use these indicators as a basis for measuring secularization would require an extensive research program. I will therefore only use a select few of this exemplary collection of indicators.

I will concentrate on *measurable* indicators and as such on the 'visible' religion—except when dealing with indicators for religion's societal significance in the last part of this paper. The 'invisible', individual types of religiosity can hardly be measured by a quantitative approach and are extremely difficult to grasp in a scientific setting. Therefore, individual religiosity cannot be used to show long-term effects of secularization or religious diversity. I will restrict myself to the religious situation in

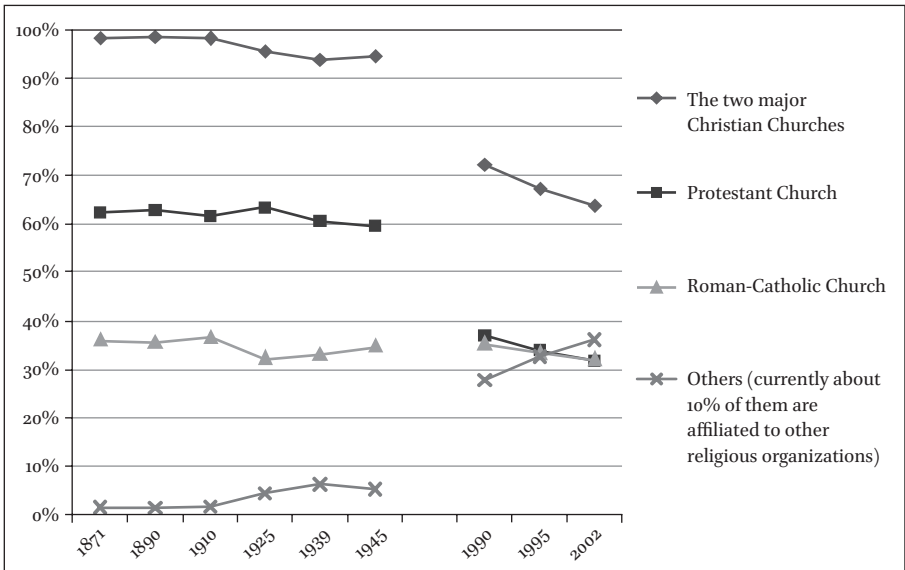


Fig. 4: Religious affiliation in the “*Kaiserreich*” (German Empire), the “*Weimarer Republik*” (Weimar Republic), the “*Dritte Reich*” (3rd Reich), and the Reunited Germany after 1990.

Germany during the twentieth century, as far as the empirical data is available.

#### *Membership and Affiliation to the Church*

First, I want to look at the general statistic of religion in the twentieth century, especially at the rough indicator of formal church membership (see fig. 4), namely the public interest in the “*Institut der christlichen Kirche*” (Institution of the Christian Church), as the theologian Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider defined *Kirchlichkeit* (church affiliation).<sup>33</sup>

The graphic shows religious affiliation to the Protestant and Roman Catholic Church during the “*Kaiserreich*” (German Empire), the “*Weimarer Republik*” (Weimar Republic), the “*Dritte Reich*” (3rd Reich), and in reunited Germany until 2002. The two major German churches together show no significant change in their number of members until 1910. From then on membership dropped until 1940. From 1910 until 1925 the Catholic Church

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Graf, “Dechristianisierung,” 47.

lost members, while the Protestant Church gained more members. This trend changes between 1925 and 1939. The biggest difference concerning membership in the two major German churches was seen between 1945 and 2002, which is hardly surprising. It is well known that Protestantism in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) lost many, if not most, of its members due to socialism and state-decreed atheism. The Roman Catholic Church was not as severely affected during this period. A comparison of religious affiliation in Eastern Germany at specific moments in time illustrates this quite clearly (see fig. 5):

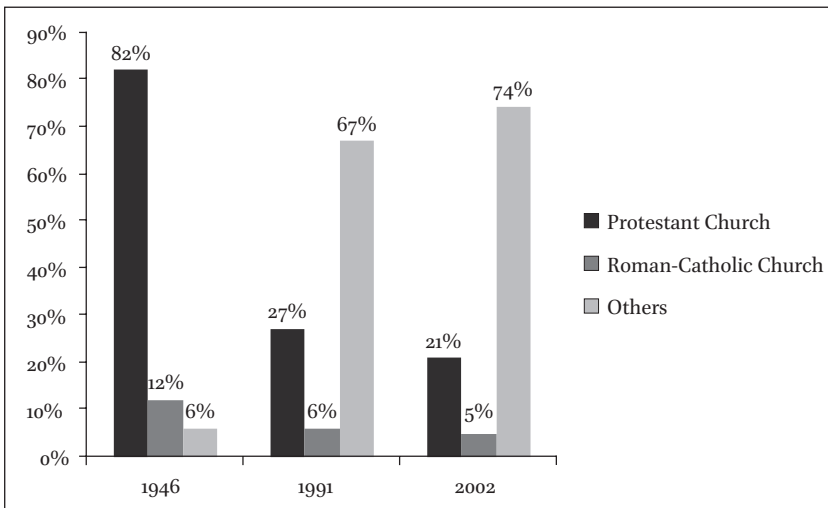


Fig. 5: Religious affiliation in Eastern Germany, a comparison in 1946/1991/2002.

While in 1946 members of the Protestant Church in the GDR still accounted for 81.6 per cent of the population, in 1991 they only represented twenty-seven per cent and in 2002 just 21.18 per cent of the East German population. The members of the Roman Catholic Church represented 12.2 per cent of the population in 1946, six per cent in 1991 and 5.08 per cent in 2002. The reason why religious politics in the GDR hit the Protestant Church so hard is simply that it was the major religious organization in Eastern Germany. While the Protestant Church lost seventy-four per cent of its members between 1946 and 2002, the Catholic Church lost fifty-eight per cent.

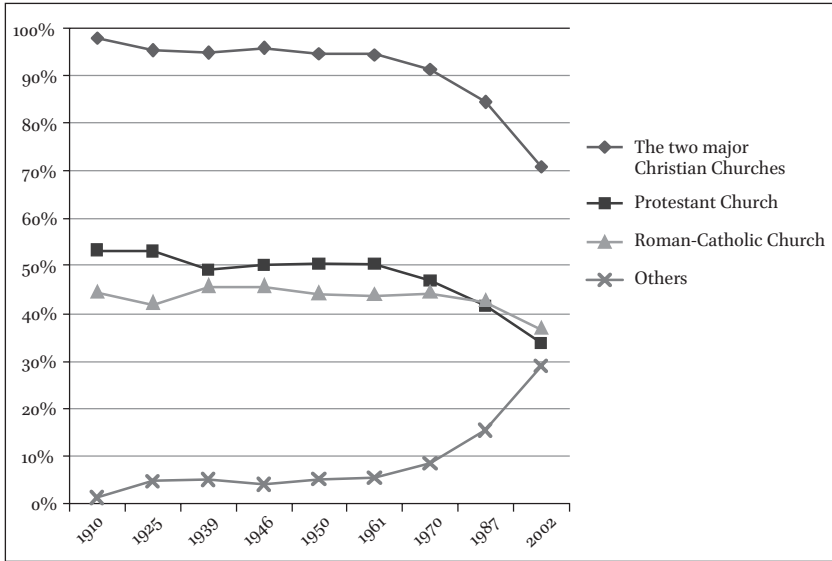


Fig. 6: Religious affiliation in West Germany between 1900 and 2002.

Thus, religious politics in the GDR had a strong influence on the statistics of church membership. However, this circumstance is not a factor of secularization as a loss of religion's significance in the process of a structural and thus unavoidable societal development. Religious politics in the GDR are not part of structural development in modern society but a cultural factor; religious politics are a *Weltanschauungskampf* (ideological question), based on Marxist atheism. And as atheism can be understood as a system of belief, religious politics in the GDR are part of the modern history of religions. With regard to the topic of secularization it is necessary to isolate and analyze the factor of religious politics. I cannot do so in this paper as the empirical material has not been prepared—if it even exists. Important work has been done in this field by Kurt Nowack, Jochen-Christoph Kaiser and Detlef Pollack. I will restrict myself to the former Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the material available.

The statistics of church membership show that the two major churches in the FRG experienced no significant change in membership from the end of WW2 to the 1960s (see fig. 6).<sup>34</sup> When one church loses members, the

<sup>34</sup> Source of data: Kirchliche Jahrbücher (church statistics); Zentralstelle für Kirchliche Statistik des Katholischen Deutschland; own analysis.

other one gains members. At the end of the 1960s the situation changed. At first only the Protestant Church loses a substantial number of members. At the beginning of the 1990s this likewise happens to the Roman Catholic Church. As this loss of members cannot be explained by religious politics in the GDR alone, I will take a closer look at a second indicator, namely movements encouraging people to leave the church (known as “Austrittsbewegungen”).

*Church Exit*

In 1788 the “Wöllnersche Religionsedikt” (Edict on religion of 1788) allowed people in Germany to change their confession. Six years later in the “Allgemeine Preußische Landrecht” (General state laws for the Prussian states) freedom of conscience was acknowledged, and so the legal basis for church exit was laid. With the establishment of the register of births, marriages and deaths in 1874 in the whole of the Reich, church exit finally started to become evident. However, several edicts and decrees concerning fees, fiscal exoneration and suchlike stopped church exit abruptly. Not until the end of the nineteenth century did liberal religious law start to show effects.

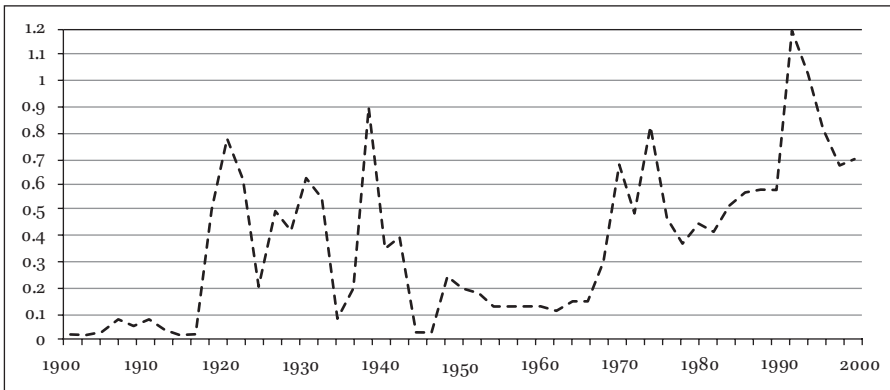


Fig. 7: Church exits from the Protestant Church in the “Kaiserreich” (German Empire), the “Weimarer Republik” (Weimar Republic), the “Dritte Reich” (Third Reich), and Reunited Germany, 1900–2000.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Source of data: Kirchliche Jahrbücher (church statistics).

Between 1884 and 1949, during the course of fifty-five years, approximately five million people in Germany left the Protestant Church (see fig. 7). This is equivalent to seventeen per cent of its members at the beginning of the period. The same number left the church between 1970 and 2000, during the course of just thirty years. These, too, represent seventeen per cent of its members at the beginning of the period. From 1906 just minor movement in the statistic of church exit is evident. From 1906 until 1914 organized church exit first took place.<sup>36</sup> This movement was essentially initiated by the Free Thinkers. As the church spoke out against social democrats and the workers' movement, these groups also started advocating church exit. In the words of Hans-Ulrich Wehler, people could get the impression that the church was turning towards the well affluent middle classes and the masters in their manor-houses rather than towards the peasant labourers and the exploited in the cities.<sup>37</sup> By leaving the church, one could express opposition towards the state in a relatively safe way. But even politically active Christians were disappointed with the church and joined movements advocating church exit. A prominent example is Paul Göhre, former vicar, factory labourer and friend of Max Weber.

Apart from ideological and political motives, financial reasons played an important role. The new law of 14 July 1905 on the financing of the churches in Prussia required more families, especially from the working class, to pay church taxes. As soon as the state was legally allowed to have insight into the actual income of the workers, many more workers had to pay taxes. Therefore, in 1908 the statistics on church exit show an increase of 118.9 per cent. This is clear evidence that not only ideological motives but also financial and other socio-historical conditions have to be considered in order to interpret the statistics.

At the end of the First World War the number of people leaving the church rose rapidly on an unprecedented scale. Parallel to this the Free Thinker Movement grew: In 1932 the Free Thinkers associations had about 800,000 members. They were primarily located in the centres of the workers movement, for example, in Saxony, Thuringia, the Rhineland and Westphalia.

---

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Göhre, *Die neueste Kirchengaustrittsbewegung*; Pfender, *Kirchengaustritt und Kirchengaustrittsbewegung*; Ermel, *Die Kirchengaustrittsbewegung*; Feige, *Kirchengaustritte*; Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach, *Kirchengaustritte*.

<sup>37</sup> Wehler, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich*, 119.



When in 1933 the National Socialists came to power, the number of people leaving the church declined, and people started to join the churches again. To strengthen their position within the population the National Socialists had given the impression that they were in favour of church-friendly politics. They claimed “positive Christendom” and actually staged services—eventually in uniform.

After national-socialist church politics failed in 1934 and the “Reich” removed its foreign-political gloves after 1936, the number of people leaving the churches rose rapidly. The effect of this was even more noticeable than in the first years of the Weimar Republic. During the Second World War membership declined, as it did during the First World War. An all-time low was reached in 1945. After the end of the war the churches took over various important functions in the process of denazification and began and run social welfare organizations. As the churches were deemed to have been relatively ‘innocent’ and many people were looking for spiritual orientation after the war, the number of people (re-)joining churches grew. When in 1949 circumstances approached normalcy, the number of people leaving the churches rose again.

Between 1950 and 1967—a time of economical and societal consolidation which was coupled with restorative tendencies in many areas of society—the number of church exits remained low. A rapid rise of these numbers occurred at the end of the 1960s. In contrast to the years between 1906 and 1914 or after 1918 this development was attributable to deep structural change in society based on cultural developments and mental adjustments within the population of West Germany, which can accurately be described by the terms liberalization and individualization. Such a process set the potential free to criticize institutions—an occurrence which of course did not fail to target the churches as well.

The surge of people leaving the churches around 1970 is probably the only secularization movement of an organized religion that reflects structural change in society due to modernization independent of ideology or at least in addition to it. There is a strong correlation with a fundamental change in value orientation, which has been extensively covered in research. I want to give just one example, namely the decrease of acceptance of seemingly outdated values as an indicator for criticizing institutions.

Figure 8 shows a correlation between the receding level of church affiliation and the decreasing willingness to integrate oneself into a fixed order. The effects of the individualized conduct of life relate to an increasing

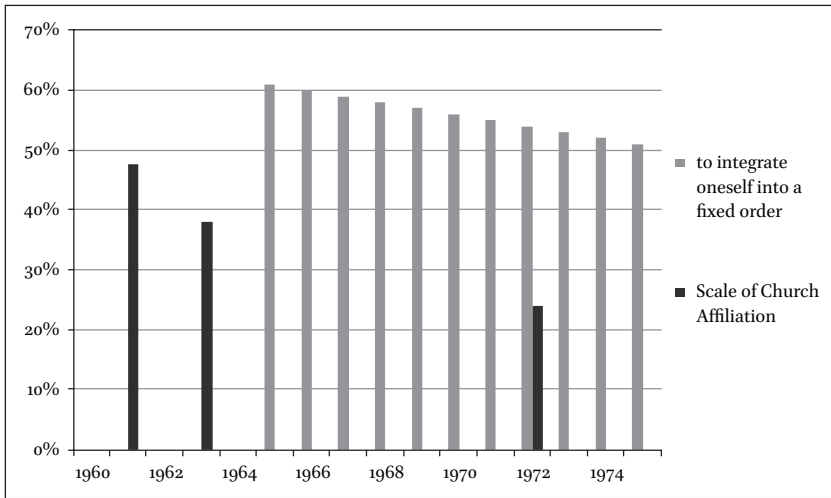


Fig. 8: Church affiliation and change in value orientation.<sup>38</sup>

distance to the church organization.<sup>39</sup> The sharpest rise in church exits can be seen in 1991. This is due to the so-called “Solidaritätszuschlag” (Solidarity Surcharge), a tax levied in the West of Germany to fund development in the East; it prompted people on a low income to save on church taxes.

The reasons for the church exits—with the exception of the developments at the end of the 1960s—can be summarized as social, political, economical, and cultural. The decreasing number of church members is therefore not necessarily part of a process of modernization but to a great extent just based on interest groups and therefore of a contingent nature.

### *Taking Part in Church Life*

Theological church statistics of the 19th century already used participation in Sunday service and communion as the most important indicator for ‘true religiosity’. I will now refer to communion statistics to exemplify participation in church life—not for theological reasons or consideration of church politics but rather for sociological reasons: As Lucian Hölscher

<sup>38</sup> Source of data: Allensbach Institute; Kaufmann, “Kirchlichkeit.”

<sup>39</sup> This, however, says nothing about religiosity in general.

mentions in his “Datenatlas” (2003),<sup>40</sup> participation in communion is an indicator for *genuine religious* participation in church life in contrast to participation at baptisms or funerals, which may simply be motivated by conventional thinking. The communion statistics for the Protestant Church in Germany show the following results:<sup>41</sup>

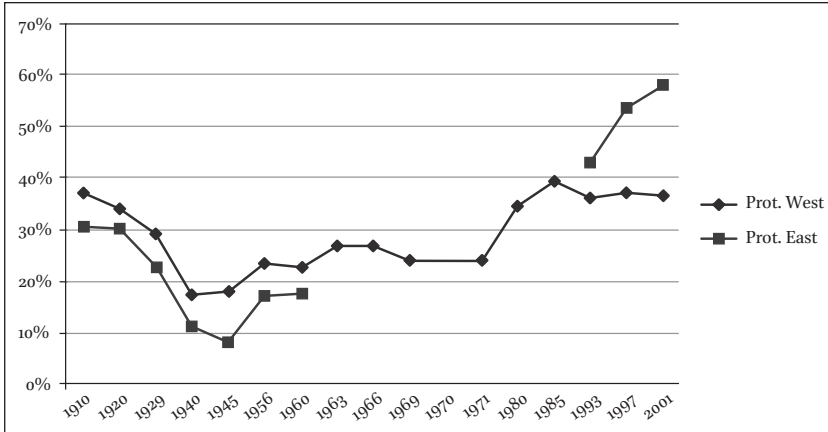


Fig. 9: Communion statistics for the Protestant Church in Germany, 1910–2001.

Between 1910 and 1945 attendance at communion declined rapidly (see fig. 9). In the 1960s it levelled out at about twenty-five per cent. In the 1980s attendance suddenly increased dramatically and levelled out until the present day. A possible reason for this increase is a strong interest in ritual performances in addition to rites of passage. Rituals are obviously not only to be celebrated traditionally but with a concentration on the religious dimension. The large numbers for Eastern Germany strengthen the hypothesis that the church in Eastern Germany is more dependent on its members’ declaration of belief and religious interaction than the church in Western Germany. Secularization appears in a different light once qualitative aspects such as religious actions are taken into account in addition to statistics on church membership.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Hölscher, *Datenatlas zur religiösen Geographie*.

<sup>41</sup> Source of data: Kirchliche Jahrbücher (church statistics); own analysis.

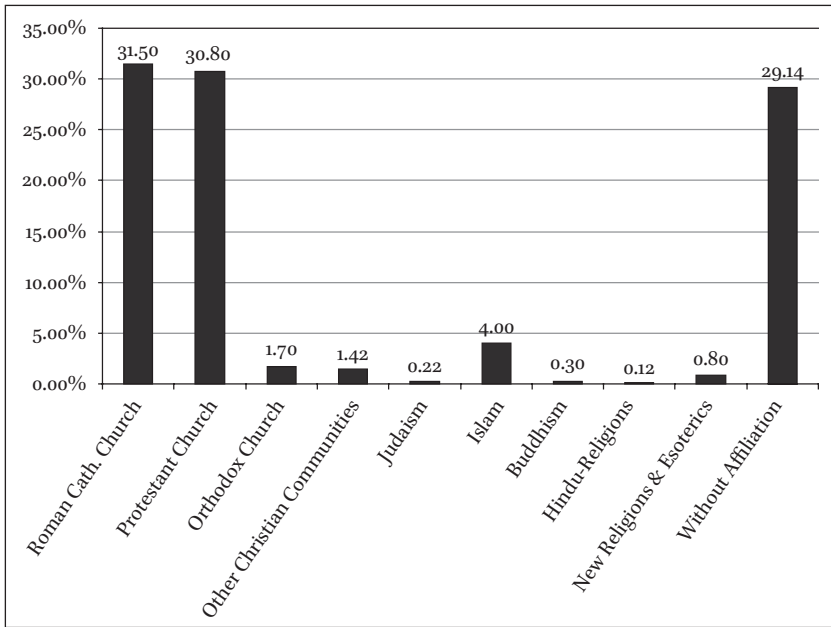


Fig. 10: Religious diversity in Germany, 2005.

### *Religious Pluralism versus Secularization?*

The situation of religious pluralism in the USA inspired market- and rational-choice theoreticians to coin the idea that European secularization is a product of state churches, while the free religious market leads to increasing religiosity.<sup>42</sup> Independent of this assumption, the idea that declining numbers of church members do not necessarily reflect a decline in religiosity is certainly true. Therefore in the German situation the question arises concerning the identity of those I named 'others' in the graphic above.<sup>43</sup> The corresponding statistics are virtually impossible to create, as the statistical data over the years have used widely differing categories<sup>44</sup> and are furthermore rather rough and do not adequately meet the requirements for measuring religious diversity.

<sup>42</sup> For this discussion cf. Young, *Rational Choice*.

<sup>43</sup> On religious pluralism in Germany cf. Wolf, "Religiöse Pluralisierung".

<sup>44</sup> On this problem cf. Ziegler, "Das Religionsverzeichnis".

Figure 10 shows religious statistics for Germany in 2005.<sup>45</sup> One can clearly see that religious diversity is increasing—at the moment there are at least 200 religious communities and systems of faith recorded in Germany.<sup>46</sup> However, the personal interest in religion—as far as membership or affiliation is concerned—is not rising. The number of non-denominationals is rising instead—not only in Eastern Germany. While the members of all religious groups without the two major Christian churches are just 7.3 per cent of the population, the number of non-denominationals is roughly twenty-eight per cent.

How does this help with the question of secularization? It is rather difficult—as mentioned above—to compare religious communities over time. One can, however, say that according to the internal statistics of the smaller religious communities, religion in its organizational form has declined quantitatively regardless of religious diversity. This can be the basis for some conclusions concerning the relation between religious organizations and individuals. The significance of organized religion in society cannot be deduced from this data.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, it cannot be said that religiosity loses significance with the decline of organized religion. This takes us to the next indicator: religiosity in contrast to church affiliation.<sup>48</sup>

### *Religiosity versus Church Affiliation?*

Since Thomas Luckmann coined the term ‘invisible religion’ in the 1960s—and from a theological point of view even as early as Friedrich Schleiermacher around 1900—the individual and deinstitutionalized forms of religiosity have come under scrutiny. Sociologists discuss the question whether the paradigm of individualization should replace the idea of

---

<sup>45</sup> This data is based on official statistics of the religious communities and on material accumulated by the *Religionswissenschaftlicher Medien- und Informationsdienst* in Marburg analysed by myself.

<sup>46</sup> My team and I recently conducted research on religious diversity in North Rhine-Westphalia, with North Rhine-Westphalia being the German federal state with the highest number of migrants and the Ruhr area within North Rhine-Westphalia being the largest metropolitan area in Europe. We have collected data on 228 religious communities and movements; for details cf.: [www.religion-plural.org](http://www.religion-plural.org) (accessed September 24, 2012).

<sup>47</sup> On the societal relevance of religious organizations cf. Geser, “Zwischen Anpassung, Selbstbehauptung und politischer Agitation.”

<sup>48</sup> On operationalizing the dimensions religiosity and church affiliation cf. Höhmann, Krech, “Die vierte Kirchenmitgliedschaftsuntersuchung”; Höhmann, Krech, “Kirchenmitgliedschaft”.

secularization.<sup>49</sup> So participation and affiliation as indicators for religiosity have to be complemented by other indicators. One of these can be the personal attitude towards questions or problems arising from religion.<sup>50</sup>

As a first indicator I want to refer to the question how many people deem themselves religious. A sociological survey from 2002<sup>51</sup> presents the following data:

		Valid per cent	
not religious		22,6%	
	-1-		
	-2-	8,6%	
	-3-	7,8%	
	-4-	4,0%	
	-5-	9,5%	
rather not religious			52,50%
	-6-	8,3%	
	-7-	11,1%	
	-8-	11,7%	
	-9-	6,9%	
religious	-10-	9,5%	
rather religious			47,50%

Fig. 11: Degree of religiosity among the German Population in 2002.

According to these data 47.5 per cent of the German population think of themselves as rather religious, 52.5 per cent as rather not religious (see fig. 11). With regard to the studies on the change of value orientation conducted by Ronald Inglehart, this value has been a little higher in Western democracies over the last twenty years, namely fifty-five per cent.<sup>52</sup> However, the question arises what has been measured by such an indicator: Is this really the attitude towards religion or is it rather the expectations that are linked to orthopraxis? For this reason I will use the question of the importance of church and religion as a second indicator.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Pollack and Pickel, "Individualisierung und religiöser Wandel"; Wohlrab-Sahr, Krüggeler, "Strukturelle Individualisierung"; Pollack, Pickel, "Religiöse Individualisierung statt Säkularisierung?"

<sup>50</sup> The problem is that the empirical material has only been available since the 1960s and 1970s.

<sup>51</sup> "Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage in den Sozialwissenschaften" (ALLBUS).

<sup>52</sup> Inglehart, Minkenberg, "Transformation religiöser Werte", 136 ff.

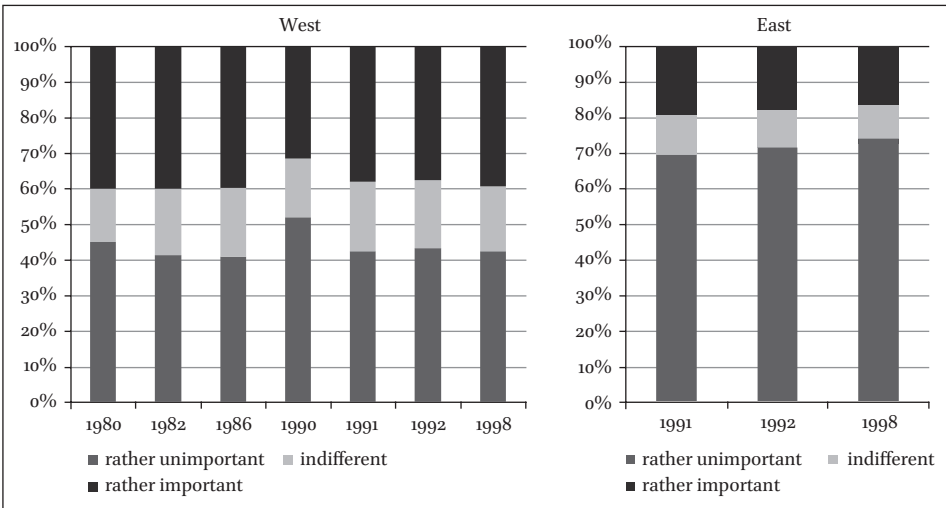


Fig. 12: Importance of Church and religion between 1980 and 2000.<sup>53</sup>

As was to be expected, there are large differences between the East and West German population. While forty per cent of the people in the Western parts of Germany regard religion and church as important, only eighteen per cent of the East Germans think likewise. Processes of religious socialization have been largely abandoned here—for a long time now. What I want to focus on is the fact that the statistics and accordingly the attitude towards the church have been roughly the same for the last twenty years in Western Germany.

Though these numbers give a rather undisputed insight into the attitude towards religion and church, one has to ask what has been measured by the indicator named ‘general religiosity’. While formal membership is probably too rough an indicator, measuring general religiosity is not specific enough. Therefore I would suggest taking concrete questions and statements of belief into account:

<sup>53</sup> Source of data: “Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage in den Sozialwissenschaften” (ALLBUS).

	Valid per cent
Theistic belief (Item: There is a personal god)	23
General belief (Item: There is a higher being or a higher spiritual power)	31
Agnostics or undecided (Item: I do not know what to believe)	15
Atheism (Item: I do not believe in a personal god, a higher being or a spiritual power.)	31
Total	100

Fig. 13: Statements of belief among the German population in 2002.

According to the ALLBUS questionnaire of 2002, about twenty-three per cent share a theistic faith and thirty-one per cent believe in a general transcendent authority (see fig. 13); fifteen per cent are agnostic or undecided and some thirty per cent embrace atheism. There are good reasons to call atheism a system of faith. Atheists do not believe, but rather believe in the nonexistence of a transcendent authority. If we chose to ignore this, fifty-four per cent of the population can be classed as faithful and the other forty-six per cent are agnostics, undecided or atheists. Unfortunately, we do not have such data for the first half of the twentieth century, and the data we have from the 1960s and 1970s are not comparable to the data shown above. There is, however, research done by Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart which provides ample evidence to assume that these data have been more or less constant between 1980 and today.<sup>54</sup> As such one cannot speak of secularization as the general loss of significance of religion during this period.

#### *Societal Presence of Religion*

In a further step I would like to deal with the sixth indicator, namely the societal presence of religion, beyond the personal and organizational dimension. When taking a closer look at societal public sphere, it becomes quite clear that secularization is born from modern society, beyond and maybe even independent of empirical evidence. Anyhow, the

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*.



discussion concerning secularization itself—and that is the point I want to make—becomes an empirical fact. The history of the idea of secularization shows that—except for the legal term secularization—the notion of secularization stems from theology, from within the religious sphere. The 1928 world conference on mission in Stockholm dealt with the topic of “the fight against secularization”. Parallel to church-building and the organization of mass religiosity Protestantism during the nineteenth century developed an idea of religious practice which is based on authenticity, faith and emphasis and in the light of which actual religious practice could only be seen as deficient. From within the religious field the idea of secularization was used as a societal stimulus for religion among the public and from thereon became an analytical term in the social sciences from the beginning of the 1950s on. This transfer from the religious sphere via the public to the social sciences led to a rapid increase in the production of books on the subject of secularization, as the statistics shown in figure 14 indicate:

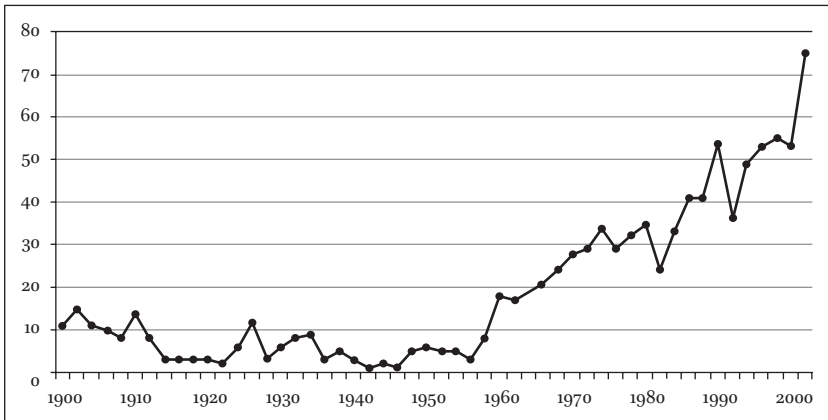


Fig. 14: German book titles containing “säkular”, “Säkularisation” or “Säkularisierung”, 1900–2003.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Source of data: “Verbundkatalog GBV”; own analysis.

Even if one does not go deeper into the content of the books produced, the sheer number of books on secularization can be used as an indicator of secularization being in greater and greater demand during the course of the twentieth century. After a slow start at the beginning of the century, the curve rises rapidly from the early 1950s until today. The responsibility for this development lies both with the proponents and with the critics of the idea of secularization.

In a second step I want to compare the numbers of church exits with the course of the statistic on literature on the subject of secularization (see fig. 15):

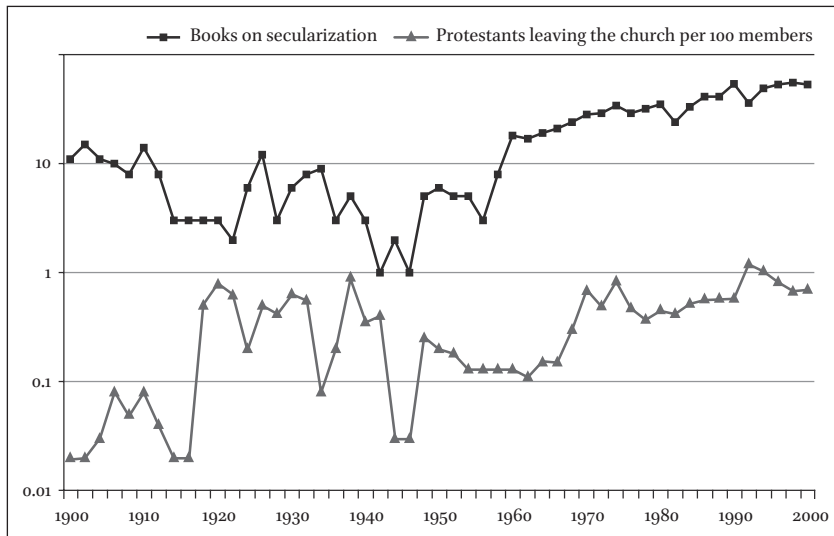


Fig. 15: Secularization literature and Church exits in Germany, 1900–2003.<sup>56</sup>

This comparison shows that literature on secularization booms just before waves of church exits. This is true of the situation at the beginning of the century, when secularization literature was in high demand, and the first large wave of church exits began in 1918. After the end of the Second World War secularization literature was being produced in ever-increasing numbers, from the beginning of the 1950s. The corresponding wave of

<sup>56</sup> Logarithmic scale, source of data: Verbundkatalog GBV and church statistics of the EKD; own analysis.

church exits started at the end of the 1960s. If taken with a grain of salt, one could suggest, that from then on secularization literature and church exits increase proportionally.

I do not want to construct a singular and thus simple causal relationship between these two indicators. But they do tend to inspire the idea that the history of the concept of secularization and its scholarly reflection stimulated church exits in addition to social and religious factors and vice versa. Apart from the literature on secularization, I have recorded the number of books on religious topics in comparison with overall book production (see fig. 16):

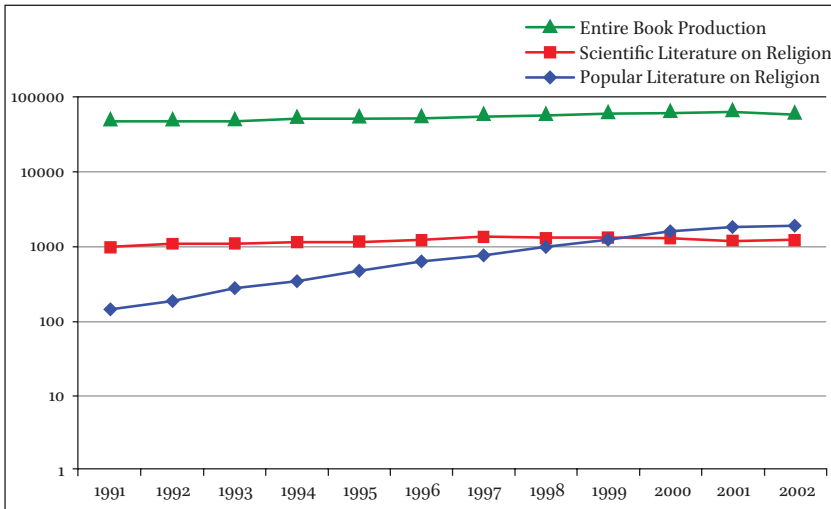


Fig. 16: Scientific and popular literature on religion in relation to total book production in Germany 1991–2002.<sup>57</sup>

The green upper curve shows overall book production in Germany. Below (in red) is the production of scholarly literature on religion and the blue curve which rises steeply shows the number of popular, non-scholarly literature on religion. While church membership has been in decline since the 1990s, the production of popular religious books has increased. The “Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung” (GfK Group) diagnosed a twenty per

<sup>57</sup> Logarithmic scale, source of data: Verbundkatalog GBV, Amazon, “Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen”; own analysis.

cent growth rate for the esoteric book market, and in 1998 the volume of sales in this sector exceeded DM one hundred million. If one tries to interpret these facts as a growing interest in religious topics, one could easily argue that organized religion is evolving into vagrant religiosity—in accordance with Ernst Troeltsch and Thomas Nipperdey. Again, I do not want to state that there is a singular and direct connection between the abovementioned topics and facts but simply to point out the way in which indicators for societal virulence of religion can be constructed.

### *Summary*

The indicators I have discussed as possible criteria for measuring secularization on different levels do not draw a clear image of what the notion of secularization might represent in regard to statistics. While church membership declines, the reasons for this decline are not based on the changing structure of society in terms of a process of modernization which is principally incompatible with religion. Although church membership is on the decline, there is good evidence for the fact that the interest in genuinely religious acts (here: communion) is rising. Religious diversity is more evident in Germany than ever before, but even this does not mean there is an expansion of religion in society—at least not on the level of organized religion. General religiosity and the acceptance of statements of faith can be ascribed to about fifty per cent of the population, an amount which has not been varied over the last twenty years. As the idea of secularization and the debate on it was in great demand before the respective waves of church exits, the secularization debate, amongst other socio-historic factors, could possibly have stimulated those waves. And last but not least, a disproportionately large amount of religious books is being published on the subject of secularization beyond the scope of organized religion and affiliation to a religious organization.

The analytic model of functional differentiation might help to explain the rise of the secularization concept as the attempt to express the formation of religion as a functional system within society. From this perspective secularization describes the internal differentiation between diffuse and emphatic religiosity as well as the outer distinction between a religious and a non-religious description of the world. As such, secularization is part of religion's own positioning within a modern and functionally differentiated society. This perspective makes it quite clear that the religious and the secular are interdependent; one cannot exist without the

other. To take this a step further, one could say that secularization is an ambivalent process with two directions: secularization, if looked at from the perspective of a modern—i.e. an emphatic—concept of religion, is interpreted as a process in which the importance and significance of religion in society diminishes. At the same time secularization reinforces and strengthens the position of religion within society as it refocuses religion on its specific function as a distinct societal sphere.

Even the non-religious self-description of society cannot avoid using the distinction (not the separation!) between the secular and the religious. Throughout modern times the question of secularization has been hotly debated again and again. As vehemently as secularization has been advocated it also has been denounced. This alone can be seen as a sign that modern society cannot exist without religion, even if it is just the negative blueprint of its self-description. Religion is a central part of the history of fascination to which society adheres. It is a mirror for modernity, the looking glass through which society may perceive itself. Even more than that, religion often serves as the projection surface for the most diverse demands. Religion can serve to represent the emphatic wish to denounce tradition and embrace progress. Or it can represent the deep yearning for the archaic—be it a utopian revision of it or the enlightened dissociation from the ‘myths of modernity’. One might get the impression that religion and its place in modernity is becoming a figure of reflection on modernity itself, even more so as orthopractic religion appears to be on the decline.

### *Bibliography*

- Asad, Talal. “Ethnographic Representation, Statistics, and Modern Power.” *Social Research* 61, no.1 (1994): 55–88.
- . *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity (Cultural Memory in the Present)*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Aubrey, Edwin E. *Secularism: A Myth: An examination of the current attack on secularism*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954.
- Berman, Morris. *The reenchantment of the world*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981.
- Bödeker, Hans Erich. *Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte, Metapherngeschichte*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2002.
- Bruce, Steve. *God is Dead: Secularization in the West*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.
- Casanova, José. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Cicero, Marcus Tullius. *De natura deorum*, edited by Olof Gigon. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Sammlung Tusculum, 1996.
- Comblin, Joseph. “Säkularisierung: Mythen, Realitäten und Probleme.” *Concilium* 5 (1969): 547–552.
- Diels, Herman, and Walther Kranz, eds. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. 3 vols. Hildesheim: Weidmann, 2004.

- Dobbelaere, Karel. *Secularization. A multi-dimensional Concept*. London: Sage Publications, 1981.
- . *Secularization. An Analysis at three Levels*. Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2002.
- Eder, Klaus. "Europäische Säkularisierung—ein Sonderweg in die postsäkulare Gesellschaft?" *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* 3 (2002): 331–343.
- Ermel, Horst D. *Die Kirchengaustrittsbewegung im Deutschen Reich 1906–1914*. Köln: Dissertation, 1971.
- Feige, Andreas. *Kirchengaustritte. Eine soziologische Untersuchung von Ursachen und Bedingungen am Beispiel der Evangelischen Kirche von Berlin-Brandenburg*, second edition. Gelnhausen: Burckhardtthaus-Verlag, 1977.
- Frisby, David P., and Klaus Christian Köhnke, eds. *Georg Simmel. Philosophie des Geldes. Gesamtausgabe*. 24 vols. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989, Vol. 6.
- Geser, Hans. "Zwischen Anpassung, Selbstbehauptung und politischer Agitation. Zur aktuellen (und zukünftigen) Bedeutung religiöser Organisationen." In *Institution—Organisation—Bewegung. Sozialformen der Religion im Wandel*, edited by Michael Krüggeler, Karl Gabriel, and Winfried Gebhardt, pp. 39–69. Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1999.
- Göhre, Paul. *Die neueste Kirchengaustrittsbewegung aus den Landeskirchen in Deutschland*. Jena: Diederichs, 1909.
- Graf, Friedrich Wilhelm. "'Dechristianisierung'. Zur Problemgeschichte eines kulturpolitischen Topos." In *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung im neuzeitlichen Europa. Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung*, edited by Hartmut Lehmann, pp. 32–66. Göttingen: Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, vol. 130, 1997.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *Glauben und Wissen*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001.
- Hildebrandt, Mathias, Manfred Brocker, and Hartmut Behr, eds. *Säkularisierung und Resakralisierung in westlichen Gesellschaften*. Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2001.
- Hömann, Peter, and Volkhard Krech. "Das weite Feld der Kirchenmitgliedschaft. Vermessungsversuche nach Typen, sozialstruktureller Verortung, alltäglicher Lebensführung und religiöser Indifferenz." In *Kirche in der Vielfalt der Lebensbezüge. Die vierte EKD-Erhebung über Kirchenmitgliedschaft*, edited by Wolfgang Huber, Johannes Friedrich, and Peter Steinacker, pp. 143–195. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006.
- . "Die vierte Kirchenmitgliedschaftsuntersuchung. Alles wie gehabt?" *Praktische Theologie* 1 (2004), 3–12.
- Hölscher, Lucian. "Die Religion des Bürgers. Bürgerliche Frömmigkeit und protestantische Kirche im 19. Jahrhundert." *Historische Zeitschrift* 250 (1990): 595–627.
- . *Datenatlas zur religiösen Geographie im protestantischen Deutschland, Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001.
- Inglehart, Ronald, and Michael Minkenberg. "Die Transformation religiöser Werte in entwickelten Industriegesellschaften." *Jahrbuch für Europa- und Nordamerika-Studien 2: Religion und Politik. Zwischen Universalismus und Partikularismus*, edited by Heinz-Dieter Meyer, Michael Minkenberg, and Ilona Ostner, pp. 125–138. Opladen: VS Verlag, 2000.
- Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach. *Kirchengaustritte. Eine Untersuchung zur Entwicklung und zu den Motiven der Kirchengaustritte*. Allensbach: Institut für Demoskopie, 1992.
- Isenberg, Wolfgang. *Konsum als Religion? Über die Wiederverzauberung der Welt*. Mönchengladbach: Kühnle, 2000.
- Jaeschke, Walter. *Die Suche nach den eschatologischen Wurzeln der Geschichtsphilosophie. Eine historische Kritik der Säkularisierungsthese*. München: Chr. Kaiser, 1976.
- . "Säkularisierung." In *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*, edited by Hubert Cancik, Burkhard Gladigow, and Karl-Heinz Kohl, vol. 4, pp. 9–20. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2001.

- Jaeschke, Walter, and Leo Laeyendecker. "Säkularisierung/Säkularismus." In *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, edited by Erwin Fahlbusch, et al., pp. 37–40. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994.
- Jagodzinski, Wolfgang. "Säkularisierung und religiöser Glaube. Rückgang traditioneller Religiosität und religiöser Pluralismus in Westeuropa." In *Die deutsche Gesellschaft in vergleichender Perspektive. Festschrift für Erwin K. Scheuch*, edited by Karl-Heinz Reuband, Franz U. Pappi, and Heinrich Best, pp. 261–285. Opladen: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1995.
- Kaufmann, Franz-Xaver. "Zur Bestimmung und Messung der Kirchlichkeit in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland." *Internationales Jahrbuch für Religionssoziologie*, vol. 4, pp. 63–100. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1968.
- Lanczkowski, Günter. *Einführung in die Religionswissenschaft*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980.
- Lehmann, Hartmut, ed. *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung im neuzeitlichen Europa. Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung*. Göttingen: Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, vol. 130, 1997.
- Livius, Titus. *Ab Urbe Condita*. Liber I. *Römische Geschichte*. 1. Buch. Translated by Robert Feger. Ditzingen: Reclam, 1986.
- Lübbe, Hermann. *Säkularisierung. Geschichte eines ideenpolitischen Begriffs*. New second edition. Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag Karl Alber, 2003.
- Martin, David. *On Secularization: Toward a Revised General Theory*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005.
- McLeod, Hugh. "Comparing Secularizations: Germany and Britain." In *Religionspolitik in Deutschland. Von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart*, edited by Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, and Kurt Nowak, pp. 177–192. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1999.
- Norris, Pippa, and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular. Religion and Politics Worldwide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Pfender, Gottfried-Martin. *Kirchenaustritt und Kirchenaustrittsbewegung in Preußen*. Breslau: Mandel, 1930.
- Pollack, Detlef. *Säkularisierung—ein moderner Mythos? Studien zum religiösen Wandel in Deutschland*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.
- Pollack Detlef, and Gert Pickel, "Individualisierung und religiöser Wandel in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland." *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 28 (1999): 465–483.
- . "Religiöse Individualisierung statt Säkularisierung? Eine falsche Alternative: Antwort auf Monika Wohlrab-Sahr und Michael Krüggeler." *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 29 (2000): 244–248.
- Polybius. *Historiae*. Edition sterotypa, edited by Theodor Buetner-Wobst, vol. 2. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1985.
- Ruh, Ulrich. *Säkularisierung als Interpretationskategorie. Zur Bedeutung des christlichen Erbes in der modernen Geistesgeschichte*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1981.
- Schieder, Wolfgang. "Religion in der Sozialgeschichte," In *Sozialgeschichte in Deutschland. Entwicklungen und Perspektiven im internationalen Zusammenhang. Band III: Soziales Verhalten und soziale Aktionsformen in der Geschichte*, edited by Wolfgang Schieder, and Volker Sellin, pp. 9–31. Göttingen: 1987.
- Schröder, Winfried. *Ursprünge des Atheismus. Untersuchungen zur Metaphysik- und Religionskritik des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann Holzboog, 1998.
- Stäheli, Urs. "Die Nachträglichkeit der Semantik—Zum Verhältnis von Sozialstruktur und Semantik." *Soziale Systeme* 4, no. 2 (1998): 315–340.
- Weber, Max. *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1920.
- Wehler, Hans-Ulrich. *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich 1871–1918*, third edition. Göttingen: Kleine Vandenhoeck Reihe, 1977.

- Wohlrab-Sahr, Monika, and Michael Krüggeler. "Strukturelle Individualisierung versus Autonome Personen. Wie individualisiert ist Religion? Antwort auf Detlef Pollack und Gert Pickel." *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 29 (2000): 240–244.
- Wolf, Christof. "Religiöse Pluralisierung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland." *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie. Soziale Integration. Sonderheft* 39 (1999): 320–349.
- Young, Lawrence A. *Rational Choice Theory and Religion: Summary and Assessment*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Zabel, Hermann. *Verweltlichung/Säkularisierung. Zur Geschichte einer Interpretationskategorie*. Münster: Dissertation, 1968.
- Ziegler, Paul. "Das Religionsverzeichnis als Grundlage der Konfessionsstatistik." *Kirchliches Jahrbuch* 85 (1959): 422–436.