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RELIGION, SECULARIZATION AND POLITICS:
THE CASE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

A Thesis Presented

by

BERNHARD BOLL

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Department of Political Science

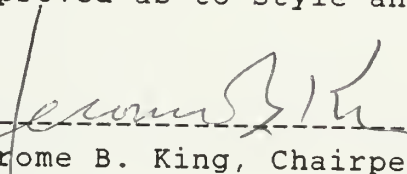
Religion, Secularization, and Politics:
the Case of the Federal Republic of Germany

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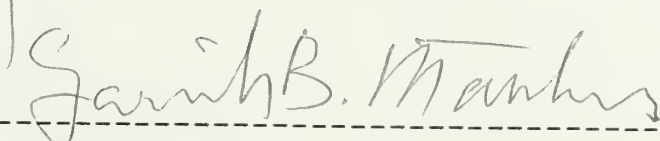
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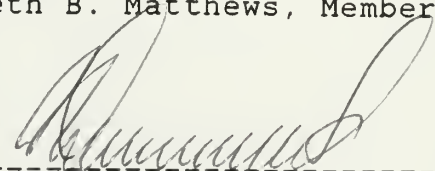
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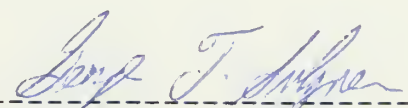
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To my parents
sine quibus non

and

to E. and M.,
for sharing with me many
inspiring discussions
about religion

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The present thesis owes much to a number of persons, without whom this study never would have been possible.

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encouraged me to conceptualize my own ways to approach the relevant questions.

None of the three before-mentioned persons, it goes without saying, is in any respect responsible for the contents of the present thesis. This responsibility is entirely mine.

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CHAPTER I
RELIGION AND THE STUDY OF SECULARIZATION

Scientific Traditions

Secularization can be conceived as only one branch within the scientific study of religion. Since this study is based on a certain theoretical framework, a first step to take in determining what secularization is all about is to look at the contextual location of secularization within the more complex scientific study of religion. A general discussion of the theoretical context of the study of religion, as far as it is relevant to secularization, will be attempted in what follows.

The study of religion can be carried out from various perspectives. Scientists of different faculties approach religion from a philosophical, anthropological, theological, or sociological perspective. For the present study, it seems to be most compatible to discuss the subject through sociological lenses. In what follows, then, referencies to religion and secularization should be understood from this perspective.

Two traditions are found in the study of religion. The first is derived from Cartesian dualism and hence is called the dualistic tradition. The second one is the wholistic tradition; it belongs methodologically to the phenomenological and hermeneutical epistemology.

The dualistic conception in the study of religion sees, basically, a gap between the individual subjective self as a thinking and acting being, and the surrounding objective world in which the individual is living. From this dualism arises the concept of alienation, which Marx understood in terms of the industrial worker's no longer being able to identify with her/his products. Weber's concept is the "Entzauberung der Welt" or disenchantment, the decline of meaning and symbol through a more and more rationalizing society, by, this development loses control over the objective world that it itself once had created. Durkheim's concept describes this alienation as an isolation of the individual from society and social life, expressing itself through different moral and ethical connotations of the individual and of the society.

Since this subject-object dichotomy was the major problem for the human being in modern society, the humanistic goal was, logically, to reunite both and, thus, to reinstall the subject as the master of the object. The key to this enterprise was conceived to be a skeptical view towards the objective world and a general application of skeptical knowledge:

Demystification of the object world and of the forces in it impelling fear and estrangement in the knowing self was to be accomplished by adopting a skeptical attitude concerning the "objectivity" or reality of the object world...Once the world of objects was thus unmasked, it could be re-created,

controlled, and appropriated by the self for its own uses. In this way subject and object were to be reunited and alienation was to be overthrown.¹

This application of skeptical knowledge has certain important consequences for the study of religion within the dualistic tradition. Religion as belonging to an objective world, conceived from a Cartesian perspective, was, hence, out of reach of human control and manipulation, with superhuman entities dominating this realm, even putting constraints and limitations on human affairs. The application of skeptical attitudes to the objective world resulted in a critical observation of the objectivity of religion, "...by demonstrating that forces perceived religiously as emanating from the gods were in fact identifiable as alienated elements of the human world itself."²

This attempted demonstration is the basis of what Wuthnow calls the "radical sociology of knowledge"; it tried reductionistically to show by empirical investigation that these religiously perceived forces were in fact reflections of contexts of an entirely human origin. Paradoxically this reductionistic view of the radical sociology of knowledge ran parallel to the humanistic traditions in the quest to regain

¹ Wuthnow, R. Two Traditions in the Study of Religion, in: Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, Vol.20, No.1, 1981, p.18f

² Wuthnow, R., op.cit., p.19

the object world for the subject,

while at the same time it appeared, at least initially, to provide a firm foundation for scientific analysis by reducing the subjective realm of religious belief to the more objective realm of economic, social, and biological conditions.³

Hence, though the radical sociology has its roots in the dualistic tradition, it developed in reverse direction to the humanistic approach insofar, as it transferred the objectively understood religion into the realm of human control, that is, into the subject world. By this replacement of religion from the object world to the subject, radical sociology of knowledge used observable social variables related to religion that were gained through reductionist methods to explain religious belief itself. Or, as Wuthnow has put the matter, the effort was made to "explain the unknown with the known."

The entire dualistic tradition, with two competing strains, namely humanism and radical sociology of knowledge, not only bears tensions inside, but also tends towards

(1) reification of the object world - a tendency that became fully pronounced with the triumph of empirical positivism. (2) exaggeration of the distinction between culture, which was presumed to be subjective, and social structure, which was presumed to be objective; and (3) an increasing bias in research on religion to focus on

³ Wuthnow, R1 .. op.cit., p.19

the cognitive dimension of religion...⁴

The reification of the objective world and the arguments of the reductionists who took religion as a social phenomenon belonging to the subjective world, as they were put forward by Durkheim, Weber and Marx, implied, that over time religion would be replaced by secular developments. Put differently, it had been assumed that religion would diminish from the sacred to the secular in a deterministic, linear and predictable process and according to the societal developments as they were described in the theoretical contexts of each of these scientists. It goes without saying that according to this view, there would be an inevitable conflict between science and religion.

This classical approach to the study of religion had to undergo serious scrutiny in respect to its deterministic presuppositions. Secularization, indeed, didn't occur as predicted; the phenomenon of secularization seemed not to be as pervasive or irreversible as one had thought it to be. Modernization and rationalization had not swept away religion. The opposite development was rather the case; religion gained in meaning, positivistic methods and views in the study of religion turned out to lose their infallibility, and, at the same time, there developed a growing appreciation

⁴ Wuthnow, R., op.cit. p.20

of the meaning of myths and symbols.

To make a long story short, the wholistic tradition evolved with the growing realization that deterministic arguments had failed in their pervasive power and in their prediction of societal developments.

The nucleus of the wholistic school is to overcome the subject-object split, which makes religion belong to the objective world. Hence, religion, as understood from the wholistic tradition, is conceived as an expression of the universal quest for meaning of life. With this understanding, the radical sociologist's argument, that superhuman beings were "mythologized expressions of the social and natural world", could be circumvented and, thus, religion be understood as something other than a phenomenon of the external, objective world.

A major assumption of the wholistic school emphasizes the meaning of symbols, passions, emotions, etc:

Meaning,...is an attribute of symbolism, including objects, acts, events, and utterances, and is assumed to be defined by the context in which a symbol or a set of symbols appears. In short, meaning is contextual.⁵

The meaning of symbols by themselves or in a certain context, therefore, is supposed to include certain connotations concerning questions of ultimate concern, contributing to an

⁵ Wuthnow, R., op.cit., p.20

existential "view of the whole". Included are questions concerning the meaning of life, the ultimate conditions of existence, and other questions of related concern.

The roots of this school can be traced back to linguistic studies of Ferdinand de Saussure and Susanne Langer, in which meanings of words are given by their contexts. Contexts, of course, vary in their scope and in their comprehensiveness; the symbolic meaning of the words vary accordingly but, finally, can result in these questions of ultimate concern with which religions deal:

In the wholistic tradition, therefore, the distinctive feature of religious systems came to be identified as symbolism that attempted to evoke meanings embracing the whole of reality.⁶

Understood from this perspective, religion emancipates one from a reductionist's attempt to treat religion empirically; religion is on a different level and cannot be reduced to what can be understood by empirical investigation.

Secularization, according to this school, is to be understood quite in a quite different way. Here, symbolic meanings have to lose their salience and importance for the religious individual before a secularizing process can take place. Hence, not religion, but the mediators of it, - that is institutions, groups, and individuals lose their religious pervasiveness and plausibility, with the result that the role

⁶ Wuthnow, R., op.cit., p.24

of religion in an individual's life is moved from, the center of her/his personal Weltanschauung to the periphery. This process projected to a societal screen means merely that the institutions mediating or maintaining religion lose of their central importance and now occupy another place within society. The reason for this is that traditional religion has to compete with other offers of "ultimate meaning systems"⁷ and "plausibility structures"⁸ which can, in turn, have the same value in society as, for example, churches have. Nothing, however, can be determined from this development as to how far the salience of religion for the religious believer has changed.

This view is, of course, considerably dependent on the definition of religion one has in mind as one studies the change of religion and its significance in modern society. Hence, the first chapter of the present study deals with the definitional approaches to the study of religion. Certain definitions and lines of argumentation in the depiction of the term "religion" are discussed in order to make us aware of how highly problematic the issue of defining religion is. One issue, in particular, we will be dealing with is the idea of the supernatural or superhuman. We do so for several reasons. First of all, as it would be impossible to discuss

⁷ Luckmann, T. The Invisible Religion, New York 1967

⁸ Berger, P. The Sacred Canopy, New York, 1967

the entire problematic of defining religion⁹, we shall concentrate on one issue that is of central interest in the study of religion. Secondly, we shall deal later on dealing with two denominations in which the idea of the supernatural is an axiomatic part; since the conception of a supernatural being is axiomatic, the basic discussion of it can't be false. Thirdly, the supernatural is discussed to learn something about the scientific, sociological, approach to such a topic. Finally, the discussion might also provide information as to what role the belief in a supernatural being plays in the scientific evaluation of religion.

The various concepts of secularization, analytical approaches, and finally certain features of secularization are the focus of the following chapter. In its character it is similar to the previous one, simply because it again elucidates a controversial and ambiguous theoretical realm central to our study. Limits and limitations of the theoretical concept of secularization and a short review of the previously debated issues close this second chapter.

In the third chapter, we develop our own analytical model of secularization, in order to have a methodological basis for the original question of this study: can, for example, voting

⁹ Many scientists of the discipline, such as Peter Berger, consider the definitional question as a minor problem in the study of religion. Perhaps they are right. However, even if the question is of marginal interest, we shall at least consider a sketchy outline of the question as a helpful basis for a further discussion of secularization.

decisions be used as an indicator of secularization ?

The attempt to answer such a question requires both a knowledge of religions and religious institutions in a society, and, equally important, an understanding of the political parties that represent the political interests in this society. The latter aspect, however, is only discussed in its linkage to religion. The society we are looking at will be that of the Federal Republic of Germany.

After asking the question, we try to answer it with two exemplary studies closely related to our question. The tables we are using are the outcome of the statistical methods applied. In the first case there has been a logit-regression analysis, in the second an age-group-analysis. This information is essential, because both methods, though based on 1982 aggregate data analyses, are commonly acknowledged to allow at least some indications of an analysis over time possible. And this is, indeed, what we need if we want to show any traces of secularization at all.

Finally a review of our findings closes our study. In the concluding chapter, we discuss once again the question whether voting behavior can at all be used as an indicator of secularization.

Definitional and Analytical Problems of Religion

More than all other disciplines of the social sciences, the sociology of religion is characterized by a controversial and diffuse definitional discussion about the very object of research. The reason for this problem is twofold; on the one hand, the sociology of religion per se has no cohesive theoretical background and is therefore in need of a close description and definition of the subject. On the other hand, however, there is also the topic "religion", which, in itself, is a term that can be defined in various ways from various points of view. Thus definitional approaches are made from, for example, a theological, anthropological, and philosophical as well as from a sociological side. In general, each deals with some important aspect of the study of religion; but they are not interchangeable in terms of their theoretical character as they try to analyze and explain the religious phenomenon, and even if their approaches are similar, their goals of explanation are quite different. This can be related to purely terminological problems, insofar as identical terms used in the several approaches simply have different connotations. To find a common and completely unproblematic basis for defining the object of research is in this context thus simply not possible.

In what follows we are not dealing with the historical development of the study of religion in one or the other scientific discipline. Also, we don't want to illuminate the function of religion as a help in finding the meaning of life, a project which might rather be a theological or even philosophical question concerning religion. Nevertheless we need a starting point we can base our argument on, in this case, an argument concerned with a problem, that is more or less a sociological, and to some extent an anthropological, one. The following discussion is therefore focused on the more significant definitions of religion from a sociological aspect, though it contains, not only purely sociological, but also, framed in the sociological context, various anthropological aspects to the definitional question.

This focus needs further explanation. To us it seems that dealing with the role religion plays in society, that is, the function, influence, validity religion has in society

- not to forget about the impact it has on society - is not the province of only one particular discipline. Dealing, however, with the character of religion and its societal role in respect to cultural, historical, sociological and social importance, we shall particularly address the sociology and the anthropology of religion. The theoretical borders between even these two disciplines, however are quite fluid. Each has contributed to the definitional approaches of the other.

But before we concentrate more deeply on this problem,

several terms, which are used frequently in the scientific definitional discussion, should be presented in at least in their basic meaning. In this preliminary discussion we can expect to clarify several aspects for the further discussion of religion later on.¹⁰

Dichotomous Terms of Definition

Most definitions of religion represent a couple of terminological dichotomies. Basically they can be divided into nominal and real definitions. Nominal definitions try to describe every possible outcome and development of religious behaviour and phenomena. They can be imagined as a kind of multivariant formula, in which the concrete religious phenomena have to be put to define and explain the character and form of the appropriate religion. As can be observed, those definitions or descriptions of religion are sometimes extremely abstract and most of them are highly arbitrary. They bear, therefore, the danger that they cover too many forms and too many aspects of religion. The accurate adumbration of a particular realm can thereby easily get lost in the search for generality. Nevertheless nominal definitions are often used, since they can be applied to almost every problem

¹⁰ We refer here, as we discuss the different terms, to Roland Robertson's book The Sociological Interpretation of Religion, Oxford, 1970.

as long as there exists already a cohesive theoretical framework which they can be based on.

Real definitions cover those descriptions of religion which try to deal with all empirical data and phenomena of religion and, in addition, with the unique and singular facts of religious belief systems. Those definitions are based on some already accepted proposition about some religious aspect or phenomenon and are, of course, limited in their application as well as in terms of the realm they try to define.

The application of these two types of definition depends strongly on the aspect of religion one wants to discuss while dealing with sociological questions of religion. The systematic and scientific approach to religion, however, requires an accurate definition of religion; too general a definition is therefore hardly useful.

Another important dichotomy is the distinction between broad-inclusive and restrictive-exclusive types of definition of religion.

Broad or inclusive definitions interpret the term religion as not necessarily linked with supernatural, ritual or confessional criteria they include in their definition political ideologies such as, for example, communism or fascism, and the like. A prominent representative of this definitional approach is J.Milton Yinger, who understands communism as a form of religion, too.

If one desires to apply the former distinction of nominal and

real definitions to the second dichotomy, broad or inclusive definitions surely fit in the nominal category.

Restrictive or exclusive definitions are, accordingly, real definitions. They are characterized by a more narrow or accurate form of defining religion sociologically. Dealing more with the relationship of religious beliefs to other non-religious societal organizations or institutions, as well as with the impact of the latter on the first and vice versa, they exclude belief systems like communism from their definitional frame for the term religion.

A third dichotomy is the division between functional and substantive types of definition. One can almost derive the meaning of this division from the general meaning of the terms used in making it.

A functional definition of religion looks for the phenomena of a belief system, identifies them and investigates the actual functions of these phenomena in the societal or political, cultural or historical, or whatsoever system to which they belong. The character of these definitions is not necessarily restrictive. Here, to stick to the communism-example, political ideologies understood more or less as religions are not excluded from a functional definition of religion. Judging merely from their functions, one could well argue that even political ideologies are religions because they certainly fulfill some sets of appropriate functions within a system.

The substantive definition concentrates more on the actual contents, or better the substance of a belief system. The focus of this type of definition is not on the functions a belief system in general fulfills, but on the actual main features of religion in particular, the distinction between political and religious commitment, the existence of supernatural beings or symbols, and also the social, sociological, cultural, political functions and consequences of religion the society.

Comparing those main features after such an analysis to a entirely political ideology, one could indeed argue that a political ideology has some religious features. Then, of course, one has to ask whether this is understood from a broad-inclusive or restrictive-exclusive definitional point of view. The point to make here, however, is that even with the distinction between a functional and a substantive definition a religion cannot be unambiguously described without the additional help of other definitional limitations. In any case, a belief system analyzed in this way would then be called a functional equivalent of religion.

Functional equivalent is also a term within the definitional debate. It combines some features of the functional-substantive dichotomy and is therefore also used in the sociological analysis of religion. It takes parts of both the functional and substantive features into account when a belief system of any kind is analyzed. Depending on the perspective, one might

decide to call the belief system being analyzed a religion or not. To call it a functional equivalent is to imply that it is a non-religious system which functions are generally equal to those of a religion. How one could differentiate between those true religions and mere functional equivalents, will be another, later, focus within this discussion of definitional and analytical problems of religion.

A term we have used up to this point but what has not been explained yet, is the expression "belief system". We agree with Melford E. Spiro, who explains this term, stressing the importance of an additional variable in the belief in supernatural beings, as follows:

...Beliefs concerning the existence and attributes of these beings, and of the efficacy of certain types of behaviour (ritual, for example) in influencing their relations with man constitute a belief system.¹¹

Since we agree basically with Spiro's definition of religion, as well, his argumentation will be discussed extensively in turn.

¹¹ Spiro, Melford E., "Religion: Problems of Definition and Explanation", in: Banton, Michael (ed.) Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion London, 1966

Definitional Models of Religion

We have already mentioned that our concern is of both an anthropological and a sociological nature. In referring to anthropology we mean that discipline of anthropology which deals in particular with the inquiry into social phenomena like religion. If we talk about sociology, we think of those parts of it which deal with religion as a sociological phenomenon that is to be analyzed and explained. Here it would mean that we want to use the entire discipline, the sociology of religion with all its various approaches to the subject. That, of course, we would like to do. But to do so, would burst the bounds of this work.

Other approaches to religion, such as the theological and the philosophical, we would like to bypass in our particular concern as far as this is possible, for several reasons. It should be mentioned, however, that we are very well aware of the important contributions these two approaches have made to the study of religion. But, for one thing, as both the theological and the philosophical approaches elaborate on religion, not all of them place their focus directly on the social function and influence of religion. That means if we would like to discuss to what extent religion influences political behaviour as well as social change, it would be wrong to use them for this purpose. Hence, to use an appro-

priate definitional background, but also for the sake of brevity, we stress our interest in the definitional models of religion, on the social anthropologist's and, if there are decisive differences, on the sociologist's perspective on religion.

But even if we restrict ourselves in this rigorous fashion, we cannot omit Max Weber's approach to the study of religion. Since we do not want to compare the classical approaches of Weber and Durkheim - the reason for this is nothing but our feeling that we can't sufficiently discuss the gigantic influence both scientists had on the study of religion, our stress for the time being is put on Weber's general conception of the development of religion. Then, after that, we shall discuss a scientist who stands strongly in the Weberian tradition, Melford E. Spiro. We do this, because Spiro on the one hand represents, as has been mentioned, Weber's approach, and on the other hand, not only clearly deviates from Durkheim's understanding on the essential point of a belief in a supernatural being, but also echoes our own general understanding of religion.

According to Weber, there was a point of common origin of all religious development, a general primitive religion. By more and more developing differentiation, different forms and types of religion developed. The essential motivation for this differentiation is not an applied rationalization of the primitive religion, but an abnormal, exceptional event. This

event is conceived as the realization of the difference between secular and religious phenomena. Up to this point, this distinction could not have been made clear within the primitive religion. Religious events, starting from this special event, differentiate from secular in respect to the quality of the religious event (forces, attitudes and virtues) which are understood as being exceptional, special. Weber calls the extraordinary quality of such an event charisma¹². From this charisma, Weber argues, can easily arise a conception of a supernatural world in contrast to the ordinary daily life. How this supernatural world is understood - conceptions of entities and their relation to the actual world - is a matter of imagination. An individual person might conceive such an entity as a soul, whereas in public such entities are understood as gods or demons. A imagination that transforms the entities into god or demons is made possible by either a magical or a secular influence e.g. by a particular creed of a magician that is accepted by his followers or, by a "secular chieftain" (Weber) who applies divine features to a dead ancestor or hero:

What is primarily distinctive in this whole development is not the personality, impersonality or superpersonality of these supernatural powers,

¹² Talcott Parsons observes a striking similarity among Durkheim's term sacre and Weber's term charisma. Parsons, Talcott, The Structure of Social Action, 2nd. edition Glencoe, Ill. 1949, particularly chp.17, p.640-686

but the fact that new experiences now play a role in life. Before, only the things or events that actually exist or take place played a role in life; now certain experiences, of a different order in that they only signify something, also play a role in life. Magic is transformed from a direct manipulation of forces into a symbolic activity.¹³

Symbolic activities imply the question of meaning, because one wants to know the meaning of this symbolic action. The symbols or symbolic action, as Weber argues, by and large sweep away the naturalistic aspects of the traditional religion. For this process, the rationalization, a general interpreter of the new religion, which had possibly swept away some of the major features of the traditional religion, is needed. Max Weber calls this interpreting process "prophecy", and the person acting analogously a "prophet". Two types of prophets are determined by Weber. The ethical type of prophet feels himself as an instrument of the divine will and tries to teach the way to salvation (Jesus, Mohammed). The exemplary type of prophet feels himself as the personified way of life to salvation (Buddha). Here we have arrived at a point, where an important problem in the definition of religion is touched, the idea of a supernatural being. For the time being, it is sufficient to note that Max Weber understands religion as a human phenomenon, including the belief in a superhuman being in various forms, which can be,

¹³ Weber, Max, The Sociology of Religion, transl. by E. Fischhoff, Boston 1956, p.6

nevertheless, reduced to the two types of prophet. It is important to note that all this rationalization, the development of new values, is not given in a merely ad hoc fashion to the stage of the primitive religion, but is part of a cultural, "this-worldly" process.

However, we do not want to leave Weber's argumentation per se without a point most crucial to the study of religion. Vrijhof has pointed out¹⁴ that Max Weber, taking religion as a human phenomenon rather than a social phenomenon as other scientists did, is, with his approach, solely outside of the hermeneutic circle. This circle makes it impossible for the recent sociology of religion to answer one of its most important questions without the help of other, philosophical or theological approaches. Let us see why this is so.

Religion understood as a social phenomenon, bears, it is commonly acknowledged, an integrational function. The question arises, consequently, how that integrative function can be explained. Can it be explained by the contents of a religion or by the special structure of the religious community ("Gemeinde", as Weber calls it) and the particular relationship between its members? This is the crucial point of either return or no return; if the question is answered

¹⁴ Vrijhof, Pieter H. "Was ist Religionssoziologie?" in: "Probleme der Religionssoziologie", Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, ed. by Rene Koenig, special issue No.6, 2nd edition, Cologne 1966, p.10-35

positively, then one may ask whether this integration is to be understood religiously as belonging to religious phenomena. If, however, this question is answered negatively, then one cannot explain how the integrative function of religion is to be determined.

Max Weber is outside this hermeneutic circle, as Vrijhof observes:

Bei Max Weber fehlt die explizite Fragestellung nach dem Wechselverhältnis von Religion und Gesellschaft. Er sieht als Soziologe die 'Sinndeutung des sozialen Handelns' als vornehmste Aufgabe an...Religiös oder magisch motiviertes Handeln ist in seinem urwüchsigen Bestande diesseitig ausgerichtet... Max Weber will den Einfluss der Religion nicht verstehen als Auswirkung einer übernatürlichen Gegebenheit auf Mensch und Gesellschaft sondern als menschliche Sinndeutung des Übernatürlichen, das er als solches außerhalb der Betrachtung beläßt.¹⁵

Having discussed one of the most important points in the sociology of religion from Weber's perspective, we now look at the contrast between one scientist in the Weberian tradition, Melford E. Spiro, and Emile Durkheim's views of the supernatural. This comparison meets two goals at one time; first, the difference between a classical (most influential) approach and recent one becomes obvious; secondly, a central question in the sociology of religion, the idea of the supernatural, will be discussed.

¹⁵ Vrijhof, Pieter H., op.cit., p.11

We have already agreed with Melford Spiro's¹⁶ definition of a belief system. He disagrees with Emile Durkheim's¹⁷ definition of religion even in some basic elements. Those differences are to be discussed first before we take up Spiro's own descriptions and explanations.

There is, to begin with, the most crucial difference in the question whether a religion is to be characterized by the belief in supernatural beings, as Durkheim calls them, or not. Durkheimian supernatural beings are:

...all sorts of things which surpass the limits of our knowledge; the supernatural is the world of the mysterious, of the unknowable, of the un-understandable.¹⁸

For Durkheim, the idea of the existence of a supernatural being is a artefact of men's inability to cope with things he hasn't yet been able to explain. If one agrees that the phenomena of the universe are based on certain laws, one cannot, simply because one doesn't understand certain phenomena, explain them by appealing to the existence of supernatural beings:

¹⁶ Spiro, M.E., op.cit., p.85ff

¹⁷ Durkheim, E., The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, transl. by J.W. Swain, New York, 1961, p.37ff

¹⁸ Durkheim, Emile, op.cit., p.39

In order to say that certain things are supernatural, it is necessary to have the sentiment that a natural order of things exists, that is to say, that the phenomena of the universe are bound together by necessary relations, called laws.¹⁹

Durkheim argues that the idea of a supernatural being is the result of the positive sciences, "...a postulate on which positive sciences reposed"²⁰, and that was thus recently established and which was proved by their progress. On the other hand, Durkheim continues, the classical ancient thinkers had not even been aware of this universal determinism, therefore, the belief in supernatural beings is a product of at least early modern man. Up to this time any extraordinary or extra-natural event was taken to be perfectly conceivable. Now, with universal determinism, the belief in supernatural beings is established and the original conviction considerably weakened that even abnormal events are conceivable. This belief in supernatural beings and their work, as Durkheim argued, originally prevailed in the sciences. But, while it was abolished in the natural sciences rather quickly, it was not until recently that it has been rejected in the social sciences. This is, Durkheim argues, the reason why this belief is still discussed in the social sciences, he concludes that "...as far as social facts are

¹⁹ Durkheim, Emile, op.cit., p.41

²⁰ Durkheim, Emile, op.cit., p.41

concerned, we still have the mentality of primitives"²¹. Concentrating on the belief in supernatural beings in religion, Durkheim sees this creed acquired not from primitive beliefs but from a few advanced religions. The argument here is that this belief was not given to man but "...it is man who forged it, with his own hands along with the contrary idea"²². Therefore, the belief in supernatural beings cannot be made a characteristic mark of religious phenomena:

It is impossible to make it the characteristic mark of religious phenomena without excluding from the definition the majority of the facts to be defined²³.

Relating to the religions which do not have a belief in supernatural beings, such as Bhuddism, Durkheim appears to offer proof as to why a supernatural being can't be a relevant feature while analyzing religions comparatively and cross-culturally²⁴.

Spiro's opinion concerning the belief in 'superhuman' beings - as he calls them to avoid Durkheim's (ambiguous) word 'supernatural'- is simply the opposite. He argues for the inclusion of superhuman beings in a definition of religion in

²¹ Durkheim, Emile, op.cit., p.42

²² Durkheim, Emile, op.cit. p.43

²³ Durkheim, Emile, op.cit., p.43

²⁴ For a detailed argumentation in this respect see Durkheim, Emile, op.cit., 45ff.

both a methodological and factual way. By superhuman beings Spiro understands

...any beings believed to possess power greater than man, who can work good and/or evil on man, and whose relationship with man can, to some degree, be influenced ...²⁵

Methodologically he sees no reason why a comparative study of religion should be - regardless of superhuman beings - performed universally. That is, even if there are religions which can't be explained or defined by a certain definition of religion, it does not follow that the study of religion then loses fascination or validity:

The fact that hunting economies, unilateral descent groups, or string figures do not have a universal distribution has not prevented us from studying them comparatively... once we free the word 'religion' from all value judgements, there is no reason for dismay nor for elation concerning the empirical distribution of religion attendant upon our definition.²⁶

This is clearly a rejection of Durkheim's design for studying religion. But it is, as we also feel, a legitimate question, why a comparative study of religion (something in any case, which we are not attempting here) has simultaneously to be universal. In Durkheim's exclusion of superhuman beings as an

²⁵ Spiro, M.E., op.cit., p.98

²⁶ Spiro, M.E., op.cit., p.88/89

important indicator of religion, Spiro even sees a restriction in the study of religion. He states that if the study sets out to analyze a social phenomenon cross-culturally, it should not be limited in its scope in respect to, as Spiro calls it, the "intra-cultural intuitivity". With that he refers to a system's intuitivity, e.g. to accepting a belief in the existence of superhuman beings. But, as we have already stated, that is exactly what is omitted in the Durkheimian argumentation as well as in his later, controversial, universal definition of religion. That means for Spiro, that a study of religion without the inclusion of superhuman beings both in the argumentation as well as in a later definition is not possible²⁷.

So far we have considered Spiro's discussion from a methodological point of view; we turn now to the question of factual adequacy. Factually, Spiro takes Durkheim's Buddhist example to show that, though not directly, even in the Buddhist belief system there exist some definite forms of superhuman beings²⁸. Hence he concludes

...the belief in superhuman beings and in their

²⁷ Spiro argues with respect to the universality of the comparative sciences that the "...insistence on universality...is an obstacle to the comparative method for it leads to continuous changes in definition...because of their vagueness or abstractness." Spiro, M.E. op. cit., p.86

²⁸ For a detailed discussion in this respect see Spiro, op.cit., p.91-94f

power to aid or harm man is a central feature in the belief systems of all traditional societies²⁹.

He goes on to show that in different religions, Confucianism as well in Hinduism, Catholicism as well as in Judaism, there exists a form of superhuman beings. This is so regardless of whether moral and /or value system has a, to use the Weberian terms, "this-worldly" or "other-worldly" character. In brief, regarding the acception or rejection of superhuman, or in the Durkheimian terminology supernatural, beings, Spiro understands the belief in them as a "core variable" which also shows an almost universal distribution and should thus "...be designated by any kind definition of religion"³⁰. In what way these superhuman beings form part of a given religion depends on the way they are understood, whether as means or ends. As a means they may be needed as aids in reaching a worldly goal. If they are understood in a religion which has more immaterialistic, "other-worldly" values, then superhuman beings, according to Spiro's argumentation, are viewed as an 'allconsuming goal'.

That means it is the appropriate belief itself which characterizes its superhuman beings as objects of Weberian "ultimate concern" (questions which the individual asks in respect to the meaning of life, or concerning the fact of death) or whether they are not to be understood as such. As a corrola-

²⁹ Spiro, M.E., op.cit., p.94

³⁰ Spiro, M.E., op.cit. p.94

ry, one may add that beliefs needn't be in any sense an "ultimate concern".

Secondly, there is another major difference between Durkheim and Spiro as it has already been noted; it concerns the general methodological approach or design for the study of religion. The point needn't to be repeated here. But it should be mentioned that research design in the sociology of religion has changed considerably in scope as well as method from the earliest work (and Durkheim belongs to this period) down to the present.³¹

Having described the major differences between Durkheim and Spiro, the latter's understanding and his definition of religion are now of interest.

Since we do not dare to reflect in soliloquy on Durkheim's distinction between the 'profane' and the 'sacred'³², we want to discuss what Spiro has to say about it. We do this because, first, we believe that he has interpreted it correctly and, because what Spiro says about Durkheim is of an essential importance to Spiro's own definition of religion.

Since beliefs are not necessarily matters of ultimate concern, Spiro concludes that a religion must therefore

³¹ For a review of the development of the sociological approaches of religion see Luckmann, Thomas, The Invisible Religion, New York/London, 1967

³² Durkheim, Emile, op.cit., p.52- 57

relate to those Durkheimian sacred things, while secular concerns relate to the profane things. In addition he argues that 'sacred' therefore belongs to beliefs of ultimate concern, and 'profane' to those of secular, ordinary concern. Concerns can refer to all kinds of phenomena. The essential characteristic that distinguishes between religion and non-religion is whether the belief is of ultimate concern to the believers and followers of this belief or not. Accordingly, by definition, everything can be called a belief - esoteric propositions like e.g. "all possible forms of life will be transformed into light", as well as materialistic orientations like the stockmarket, political ideologies like communism, or even consumatory things like baseball.

All those commitments can be called, as long as they are of ultimate concern, a belief - but qua definitionem not a religious belief. They may serve the same functions; if so they are functional equivalents in the sociological terminology to which we want to stick here. Once again, according to Spiro, those beliefs cannot be called religious beliefs because of their reference to profane phenomena, and since they conversely have no reference to superhuman beings.

Hence, Spiro has developed the following definition of religion:

...an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings.³¹

³¹ Spiro, M.E., op.cit., p.96

In this definition occur some terms which need to be explained for a correct understanding of the entire definition. Undoubtedly the term "institution" refers to "church" in Durkheim's definition of religion. Spiro himself says this, explaining that "...religion is an attribute of social groups, comprising a part of their cultural heritage"³². This means that the essential features of a religion count among the variables of a particular culture and are developed and accepted in exactly the same "enculturation process" as other cultural variables. It follows then that

the variables constituting a religious system have the same ontological status as those of other cultural systems: its beliefs are normative, its rituals are collective, and its values prescriptive...³³

Instead of Durkheim's "church", Spiro, in his definition, uses "institution" to mean what Durkheim tried to express with his terminology. Durkheim had similarly insisted on the social importance of religion within a group of believers. One may, perhaps, understand this social importance in terms of identifying membership or, with reference to the security of the individual in a group.

³² Spiro, M.E., op.cit., p.97

³³ Spiro, M.E., op.cit., p.97

Interaction, in Spiro's definition, is understood in two ways; firstly, the term comprises every action which is believed to be consistent with the will of the superhuman being. Secondly, it represents all actions which are believed to be apt to influence and communicate with the superhuman being. The first aspect represents a value system, which is established according to the religion taught, again reflecting the putative will of the superhuman being. If both aspects mingle, the fact is a symbolic action, which is called ritual.

Superhuman beings and belief system need not be explained again, since we have already mentioned Spiro's explanations of these terms during our definitional discussion.

Summing up Spiro's understanding of religion and his way of differentiating between religion and other culturally constituted institutions, a religion contains three main features, all of which refer to a superhuman being. These are the belief system, the action system and the value system. Taking these features seriously into account while one analyzes a belief, one can determine whether it can be called a religion or not.

This definition serves us in manifold ways. So far we have discussed a social anthropologist's views and reflections on how a religion can be not only defined but also both analyzed and, as far as this is possible, explained. Spiro has approached this problem also, as we feel, in an almost

sociological fashion, touching the major sociological matters of concern within the study of religion. Coming originally from a discipline which has had not too much in common with sociology in general, he has dealt with one of the sociology's most prominent and celebrated representatives, particularly in the sociology of religion, Emile Durkheim.

Up to this point, we have dealt with two apparently different kinds of approach to the study of religion. In fact, however, both are simultaneously different and similar. They are different, insofar as Durkheim denies that the belief in a supernatural or superhuman existence is an essential variable within the definition of religion. They are, however, similar, in that Durkheim as a sociologist has approached his subject from a more anthropological perspective whereas Spiro as a social anthropologist approaches this realm from a more sociological perspective. In respect to their differences, our somewhat latent intention has now to become manifest. In the discussion so far, we were not simply dealing with differences between the approaches of two scientists concerned with religious phenomena. What we were dealing with here is in fact that there are two different schools within the study of religion. One school can be basically recognized as followers of the substantive definition of religion, or of the wholistic tradition, whereas scientists in the other school have a functionalistic approach to religion, representing, hence, the radical sociology-part of the Cartesian,

dualistic tradition.

We have already mentioned, admittedly in only a sketchy way, the major features of substantive and functional definitions. We want to complete now our depiction of both types of definition. While we are looking at the limitations of both schools and how the approach of each must be supplemented, we want to restrict ourselves to clarifying those aspects of the extensive literature on methodological and factual definitions and adding a few remarks relating to our own purpose in the present study.

The difference between Durkheim and Spiro as we have discussed it here, the superhuman beings, is also the point of difference between functionalists and substantivists. It depends on how one regards religion in respect to those superhuman beings. If one is interested in religion tout court, and so in including the belief in superhuman beings, then one must deal with the meaning content of this phenomenon. This is the substantive basis, the fundamental proposition of the one school. If one, however, understands religion as an encounter with a superhuman being, then the sociology of religion as a human science can deal only with observable aspects of religion, according to the dualism of the subjective world and the objective world, and the consequences which evolve out of them. This is the argumentation of the functionalist school.

Paul Berger sums up both goals as follows:

...substantive definitions of religion generally include only such meaning-complexes as refer to transcendent entities in the conventional sense—God, gods, supernatural beings and worlds, or such metaempirical entities as, say, the ma'at of the ancient Egyptians or the Hindu law of karma. By contrast, functional definitions are likely to include such meaning-complexes as nationalism, or revolutionary faiths, or the mobility ethos, or any numbers of new 'life-styles' with their appropriate cognitive and normative legitimations.³⁶

It follows from this functionalistic proposition, that one must analyze observable aspects of religion and concentrate on the functions, conditions and effects a religion might have on the individual and on society. But as a superhuman being is not empirically observable, functionalistic definitions of religion simply can't make superhuman beings a core variable of their definitions. On the other hand, those definitions therefore fail to distinguish between religious and non-religious belief systems. This can be easily seen, since empirically, given the search for "answers to the problems of meaning"³⁷, a belief in superhuman beings or the rejection of it does not influence the results of empirical observations.

³⁶ Berger, Peter L., Some Second Thoughts on Substantive versus Functional Definitions of Religion, Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion Vol.13, No.2, June 1974, p.124ff

³⁷ Parsons, Talcott, "The Social System", London 1952, p.367

The critics of functionalism, like Ernest Nagel, see too many mechanical analogies in the explanations of functionalists. Those analogies disregard the aspects of human behaviour which are not always predictable.

The followers of a substantive definition of religion, like Peter Berger, claim that the scientific study of religion

...must bracket the ultimate truth claims implied by its subject. This is so regardless of one's particular conceptions as to scientific methodology - for instance, as between 'positivistic' or 'humanistic' conceptions of science. ³⁸

Berger's argument is directly linked to the inability of the functionalists to distinguish religion from non-religion, due to their own definitional understanding of the study of religion. His own approach to religious phenomena is the Weberian way of understanding "from within". Berger sees the methodological line of demarcation in the question by which the researcher wants to find out the "...understanding and location of these religious meanings within human experience"³⁹. In dealing with this question the methodological differences of substantivists and functionalists emerge. Berger's own approach as a substantivist of the wholistic tradition is based on, as he calls it, "...the fundamental 'humanistic' proposition that the world is essentially a

38 Berger, Peter L., op.cit., p.125

39 Berger, Peter, op.cit., p.126

network of meanings and that, therefore, nothing in this world can be adequately understood without understanding of these "from within"⁴⁰.

Berger formulates a critique which before him was repeatedly articulated by various scientists reflecting on functionalism. According to this critique there is a danger that the functional approach can serve for "quasi-scientific legitimations of a secularized world view" by avoiding the detailed specificity, while religious phenomena are equated to other, secular phenomena. Thereby, the nature of religious phenomena gets lost; the equation or comparison gains validity. Finally, secular commitments have the same value and meaning as religion. Then religion is analyzed in the same way as adequate secular phenomena are, that is, merely in terms of social and psychological functions, leaving out transcendental aspects of religion.

The functionalists (we take J.Milton Yinger as a prominent representative) find aspects to criticize within the substantive approach to definition. In regard to his own sometimes controversial definitions of religious phenomena, Yinger states two points which have led him to different judgments on apparently the same objects. Firstly, the line separating religion from non-religion can't be generally determined. Whereas a given distinction might fit well in some situations with certain conditions, it might simply not fit reasonably

⁴⁰ Berger, Peter, op.cit., p.126

in a similar case with almost the same characteristics. Secondly, Yinger explains, while he has made judgements on certain things, he has taken contemporary mankind as his fundamental measure of consideration. There he observes that the understanding of a supernatural being has become differentiated, sometimes even vague:

If one is dealing with societies within which supernatural conceptions are universal, there is little reason to wonder whether naturalistic conceptions may not have a similar place in the life of some people. If one is dealing primarily with contemporary urban societies, however, within which definitions of the supernatural have become vague for some individuals, and 'ultimative belief and practice systems'...grow out of older religious systems by gradual steps, the use of the supernatural as a defining criterion becomes problematic. The difficulty becomes even more serious, if one is seeking to develop a theory of religion that encompasses both types of societies. ⁴¹

This quotation expresses the major functionalist critique of the substantive approach. It implies that a supernatural being is not enough to differentiate generally or in all cases correctly, a religion from a non-religion. It implies also that in our contemporary society the supernatural is sometimes so diffuse and vague, that the supernatural can't be any longer an essential criterion, because it has developed in different types, forms and connotations. Finally, Yinger's critique points to the problem posed by a contem-

⁴¹ Yinger, Milton, J. "The Scientific Study of Religion", London 1970, p.13

porary society in that it has developed in so many different ways, that it eludes simple generalizations. Here again he sees borders for the supernatural as a core variable in definitions of religion. A definition which tries to adumbrate religion in a sufficiently complex society, obviously can't include the supernatural.

Without working in a circular fashion, we want, at this point, to remark on something which Spiro has already mentioned ; we will do so, because we are convinced that Yinger knows this argument, since he himself quotes from Spiro. Our argument, simply put, is the following: if there are, which we do not doubt, many different forms of beings said to be supernatural, or many different, seemingly contradictory, or excessively vague, connotations of the term "supernatural", does that mean that supernatural beings simply do not exist ? Or, does it mean, because allegedly supernatural beings are so varied and the connotations of the term "supernatural" are so diverse, that it is not worthwhile defining a whole study with reference to it ?

We have ended up at this point with a variety of questions. But we want to note the following provisional considerations:

- Be they as developed and differentiated as can be, the theoretical and definitional approaches to the study of religion divide, due to their basic theoretical differences, on the question of the connotation and operationalization of the supernatural.

- The functional and the substantive approach are extremely fecund to a study which has a definite goal and purpose; neither approach, however, serves as a general recipe for the correct and comprehensive, methodological, approach to religion.

- Neither approach excludes the other; they may therefore be used simultaneously if this helps to reach the goal of a study. Or, as Wuthnow evaluates this matter:

Because of their limitations as directives for empirical research, phenomenology and hermeneutics came to serve the study of religion primarily as a theoretical rationale for the importance and nonreducibility of religion, while the dualistic tradition continued to supply the major definitions and concepts used in empirical research.⁴²

⁴² Wuthnow, R., op.cit., p.23

Towards an Expedient Definition of Religion

Having, to a limited extent, completed the definitional discussion, we now have to recall the goal of our study. Then we must decide which major aspects of religion we are dealing with and afterwards determine which of the two approaches, or both, or parts of both, we want to use. That it is methodologically legitimate to combine these approaches we want to support with a few reflections from scientists within the discipline we have already mentioned.

The goal of the present study is to analyze some aspects of the impact religion has on political behaviour of the individual within a society. The society to be looked at is that of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Christian belief, Judaism and Islam prevail the entire continent of Europe. The Federal Republic belongs to those societies that can't properly be analyzed with Yinger's distinction of two forms of society. What frustrates the application of Yinger is that there is both the universal belief in supernatural beings and a modern urban society within which a diffuse and vague concept of these supernatural beings exists. Hence Yinger's functional approach, because it does not contain an, in this case essential, variable, cannot be properly applied. Yet the functional approach is important for our study, since

we want to look for the consequences of religion in respect to political behaviour - clearly a point which might properly be approached functionalistically.

But to understand a behaviour that might be influenced by a religious belief in a superhuman being, we need to understand it "from inside". That, however, means that we need the substantive approach such as Berger has used, since we find here the missing variable, the belief in a superhuman being, included in this approach. As a matter of fact, therefore, we need bits of both approaches. It seems, therefore, as if we are forced to construct our own, individual definition of religion. Is this scientifically legitimate ?

According to Berger,

...definitions are always ad hoc constructions. They don't fall from heaven. They have a specific cognitive purpose. To some extent, definitions are a matter of taste.⁴³

Hence we may think of our own purposive definition. We have already discussed the terminology, we are aware of the major problems of defining religion scientifically, and we know of the two different scientific approaches to the study of religion. Therefore, as we do not dare to formulate a definition of religion from scratch, we simply intend to paraphrase our purposive definition of religion as follows.

We agree with Spiro and Berger (hence with Weber, too) that

⁴³ Berger, Peter, op.cit., p.127

the belief in a supernatural being is essentially important for the definition of religion. We do so for two reasons. Firstly, it simultaneously facilitates the distinction between religion and non-religion, and it narrows the object of the study clearly. Secondly, we will be dealing with a society within which, though there are a variety of religious beliefs, the belief in some supernatural being or the other is universal.

In addition, we generally agree with Spiro's definition of religion, which pays also attention to the cultural aspect of religion as it has been described and defined in the belief system, value system and action system.

From the functionalist approach we take over the analysis of the impact, function and consequence of religion into our own definitinal understanding of religion. This might be a poor, or only small, contribution to our study, but we are convinced that we simply can't accept more without losing some of the elementary functionalistic features as described by Yinger as follows:

Functional investigation focuses on those intra-system processes in which a product of the system helps to maintain it by reducing or eliminating otherwise destructive processes. Or perhaps it would be better to say that functional investigation is a study of the degree to which a product of the system serves to maintain it, full attention being paid to the balance of support and costs.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Yinger, Milton J., op.cit., p.93

We are not focusing on the degree to which religion helps to maintain a system, nor on the "balance of support and costs". We feel, therefore, that we have to restrict our functional element within the definition of religion to the above mentioned extent.

Describing finally the character of our definition of religion as we have it introduced here, we can say that ours is a real, restrictive-exclusive, partly functional and partly substantive, definition of religion. A purposive definitional basis for our further study is thus both scientifically and legitimately completed.

This has been, perhaps, only a partial discussion of the definitional problematic; nevertheless we think that it serves our purposes as a background information for a discussion of the theoretical concept of secularization, which we want to focus on, in turn.

CHAPTER II

SECULARIZATION : CONCEPTS, FORMS, AND PHENOMENA

Theoretical Prepropositions

An important theoretical concept concerning the role of religion within social change is called secularization. The term itself can be explicitly traced back into the middle ages. In 1648 the term "secularization" occurred in the text of the Peace of Westphalia transferring church property into the property of the German Princes. During and after the French Revolution it was used in the same connotation but in a more aggressive, politically motivated and enforced, program to expropriate the church's real estate and other precious goods.

By and large, secularization came to be understood not only in this rather materialistic sense but also as an expression of a negation of religious moral values, concerning e.g. the conduct of life, social behavioral conventions, etc. In other words, the term was used to show a more and more increasing emancipation from the church's social and moral implications and controls within the life of the individual and the society in toto. It is important to distinguish between (1) secularism understood as the reflection of an anti-religious program, and (2) secularization as the reflection of a

neutral attitude towards religious traditions.⁴⁵

Though the distinction between secularism and secularization is reasonably clear, the sociological connotation of the latter is neither unique nor at all precise. Weber and Troeltsch took it as a descriptive and analytical term, yet the term's location within sociological theories isn't yet determined. There are at least five different concepts of secularization⁴⁶.

Concepts of Secularization

Secularization can accordingly be conceived, first, as a decline of religion. Religious institutions, doctrines and values that once prevailed lose their general validity and importance. The final state of religion, it is assumed, is a highly isolated or, to a large extent, marginally differentiated and institutionalized one.

Secularization may be conceived, secondly, as a process of conformity with the world. Religious groups de-emphasize to a certain extent their focus on the supernatural and orient themselves more to the social world surrounding them. The question here, however, is to what extent this tendency is to

⁴⁵ Shiner, Larry " The Meanings of Secularization ", International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion, Vol.3, 1967, p. 51-60

⁴⁶ Shiner, Larry, op.cit.; See there for a much more detailed discussion both of the implications and theoretical roots of these five different concepts.

be understood as an 'aggiornamento' to the secular world and to what extent it is to be understood as part of the religious tradition itself, perhaps a part which has not been emphasized much previously but which is indeed a form of secularization. Both questions can be used to evaluate this process toward secular conformity and decline. However, the empirical proof of answers that might be offered to each of these questions is difficult. Talcott Parsons gave an alternative solution in respect of the decline - conformity debate. Parsons suggested substituting the term secularization with differentiation. This replacement makes it possible to conceive religion simultaneously from inside and outside the debate. Conceived from outside, religion merely shifted its location within a highly complex and differentiated world. By transferring some of the roles it had in former times to other, secondary, institutions, religion has not necessarily lost or given up any of its major roles (conformity) nor has it basically lost any of its most important meaning for the individual or for the society (decline). When religion is conceived from inside the debate, followers of both propositions use Parsons' suggestion as support for their theories. The point Parsons wanted to make is simply outside this debate. That is, western religious traditions needn't necessarily be considered as being 'disintegrated' as long as they are conceived as having shifted their location within modern society.

Secularization may be conceived, thirdly, as the desacralization of the world. The individual's as well as the society's view of the world is subject to change due to the development of rational and causal explanation and descriptions. What were formerly miracle or mystic images, coloured by whatever kind of explanation, lose their power to convince. Religious meaning and teachings are also seen in this secular light and lose appropriately in their sacral connotations. The final state according to this concept of secularization is a perfectly rational world, without any belief in a supernatural being or in mystery.

Secularization can be thought of, fourthly, as the disengagement of society from religion. The complete withdrawal of religion from its societal roles and its limitation of the private sector is the final state of religion under this concept. Also, religion is conceived in this final state as having entirely no influence beyond the borders of the religious parish, not even in the decision-making processes or the social behavior of individuals or of corporate bodies or of institutions. Hence two different forms of this concept are apparent: the intellectual-existential and, appropriately, the institutional-social plane.

The fifth form of secularization is the transposition of beliefs and patterns of behavior from the 'religious' to the 'social' sphere. In contrast to the disengagement concept, in which secular institutions were conceived as a consequence in

modern society of both secular and religious development as well, the transpository concept conceives the institution's developmental heritage as stemming from a former sacral context or tradition. Here, the culminating state of society would be the transposition of all former functions of religion by society, and a religion that is understood anthropologically. The difficulty with the transposition concept is almost the same as in the decline-conformity debate; firstly, it is very difficult to offer evidence as to how far transmigrations and survivals of religious origins into modern society have taken place. Secondly, even after one has succeeded in collecting some evidence on this matter, one has not answered the question as to what extent the analysed phenomenon has a genuinely religious background; whether it is, in addition, a purely Christian tradition or some other, or even a mixture of religions within the same cultural circle; or, finally, whether the observed phenomenon is of some completely other origin, having taken over some features of a religion.

Having debated five different concepts, Shiner concludes that a term with so many different connotations, simultaenously overlapping and distinct, should be abolished in the sociological context. He finds support in this respect from Trutz Rendtorff⁴⁷, who states that it is only reasonable to use the

⁴⁷ Rendtorff, Trutz "Zur Säkularisierungsproblematik" International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion, Vol.2, 1966, p.61

secularization concept analytically and then only to a very limited extent. The secularization concept can be used then only for a descriptive analysis of a society at a certain point in time, appropriate as an analytical tool within a sociological research process. It does not help us explain or predict social phenomena.

The different concepts can be basically divided into two groups, depending on which definitional approach to religion one uses. The functionalists tend to conclude that religion changes its location and manifestation in society (Parsons), whereas those scientists using a substantive definition expect a decline in the importance and significance of religion in the modern world. Hence, each of the five concepts we have discussed briefly can be evaluated in this respect. However, since it is not our goal to discuss the right ordering of these concepts, we want to end our discussion of them here at the risk of being incomplete. Moreover, before we concentrate especially on the societal implications of secularization, we shall take a look at another theoretical problem - the problem of levels of analysis.

Levels of Analysis

It is not only the definitional approach to religion that makes secularization nominally and connotatively ambiguous,

but also the different levels of analysis. Dobbelaere⁴⁸ has discussed four different scientists, two of them working on the basis of the social definition paradigm (Berger, Luckmann) the other two on the basis of the social fact paradigm (Wilson, Luhmann). The difference between them is that scientists using the first paradigm are interested in the engagement of human beings within the process of creating and maintaining social facts that are conceived to be coercive, whereas scientists following the latter paradigm just analyse those coercive social facts and their impact on humanity. Discussing both paradigms thoroughly, Dobbelaere observes, first, not only that the social definition paradigm works on the cultural and individual level of analysis, whereas, by contrast, the social fact paradigm rather focuses on organizations - their role structures - and the social system and its various subsystems. In addition, Dobbelaere seeks for a theoretical element appropriate to link both paradigms. With this linkage, it should be possible to arrive at an even more cohesive and comprehensive knowledge in the sociological study of religion. Along with the features these two para-

⁴⁸ Dobbelaere, Karel "Secularization Theories and Sociological Paradigms: A Reformulation of the Private-Public Dichotomy and the Problem of Societal Integration", Sociological Analysis, Vol.46, No.4, 1985, p.377ff.

This can be no means be a thorough discussion of Dobbelaere's article. Here, we stress our interest on the theoretical problems and limitations of the secularization theory in the broadest sense, focusing on questions which are immediately related to our own study.

digms have in common (the two-dimensional object of research on the societal level as well as the change in religion itself, the similiar though not identical societal level of analysis, and at last the proposition of a functional differentiation of society both paradigms use), the crucial difference between them becomes obvious as well; it concerns the discussion of the public and private sphere.

The major problem for both paradgims is the private sphere. In limiting their understanding of secularization entirely to the idea of a funtional rationalization, something that takes place particularly in the public sphere, Berger and Luckmann⁴⁹ bypass the actions that occur in the subsystems of society. In contrast, Wilson⁵⁰ has shown that the secularizing process is not limited to the public sphere but is to be observed in the private sphere as well. In addition, he has demonstrated that the private sphere and its motivation are quite relevant for the public secular process of functional rationalization. Since Berger and Luckmann merely conceive the public as opposite to the private sphere and, moreover, concentrate in particular on the former, they leave out an important factor in their analysis, and hence their analysis remains both incomplete and inaccurate.

⁴⁹ Berger, Peter L. and Luckmann, Thomas, The Social Construction of Reality, New York 1966
Also: Berger, Peter L., The Sacred Canopy, New York 1969, p.107ff.

⁵⁰ Wilson, Bryan, Religion in the Sociological Perspective, Oxford 1982, p.166

Though it is not correct to speak of a simple dichotomy between private and public spheres, these spheres are referred to as if they were objective structural elements of society. Thus, for example, it appears to be easy, in particular for politicians, to separate, properly and apparently legitimately, the public from the private sphere. Since these spheres are, however, to be understood as social definitions and by no means as social facts, another point to criticize in the work of Berger and Luckmann is that they make a de facto switch of paradigms, leaving their analysis behind in a distorting, confusing and misleading manner. Dobbelaere concludes, having discussed some other, more detailed aspects of Luckmann's analysis, that both Berger and Luckmann went wrong in taking social definitions as structural features of modern society. The reason this has happened is that the two scientists made an analysis of social definitions instead of a structural analysis of society. Had they offered the latter, Dobbelaere is convinced, they would have arrived, as Luhmann⁵¹ did, at completely different, correct interpretations, not only of the private and public sphere but also of the related terms of individuation of religion and the individuation of decisions. Since in a modern civic society people cannot be simply assigned to particular segments of society, as was the case

⁵¹ Luhmann, N., Funktion der Religion, Frankfurt/Main, 1977

in former times, the individual has access to all possible subsystems. (This is the concept of inclusion⁵²). There, again, a differentiation takes place in terms of the functions an individual can assume in this subsystem. As everybody is eligible to perform these functions, specialization occurs. Complementary roles for a single individual are possible, and even necessary, since there is the possibility of simultaneous membership in different societal subsystems. That means, for example, that one can be at the same time an officer in one subsystem and a mere member in another. Since, however, the separation of these two roles is difficult to control and to maintain, the individuation of decisions serves as a functional equivalent:

Through the individuation of decisions a statistical neutralization of certain role-combinations, which are possible in complementary roles, is aimed at. Such combinations should only occur at the personal level, otherwise they would destroy functional differentiation, and hold only for micro-motives.⁵³

From this point of view, it is clear that (1) individuation is not a private matter but a structural consequence of modern society and (2) secularizing processes occurring on the

⁵² Inclusion can also be understood, however, in another way. On a societal basis, it would mean that, besides religion, other subsystems also exist. Religion has given up some of its genuine functions, and is now itself simply included among the societal subsystems.

⁵³ Dobbelaire, K., op.cit., p.382

individual (private) plane are an important factor for the entire society and not a particularly public matter.

All this has an important consequence for religion. Religion can no longer control or direct the 'micro-motives' of its members by symbolic or normative rules of conduct. The only possible role for religion is a reactive and adaptive as well as a correcting and compensating one. Here we find one reason for a demystification or desacralization of religion, as has already been mentioned; religion has to react according to its members' demands and needs.

In a functionally differentiated society religion is nothing but one social phenomenon among others, hence a subsystem of society. Understood like this, religion does not necessarily have, in opposition to Durkheim's evaluation, an integrative function, since the individual, without suffering social, repudiative damage, can share social life within society and its subsystems while being, for example, essentially unreligious. Religion is in a modern society no longer capable of changing or controlling societal development. Rather, religion finds its reduced role in self-reflection and in its limited relation to the societal environment.

The fact that religion plays a new role in modern society throws, in turn, new light on the integration debate, i.e. on the above-mentioned decline-conformity discussion. Luhmann's suggestions go beyond the Parsonian new role and new location of religion in society, and even extend the meaning of the

integration debate:

...a new approach to the problem of integration of society, which Parsons's stress on 'value pattern' did not...According to Luhmann, civil religion offers on the level of total society - and consequently not on the level of the religious subsystem - an implicit consensus on basic values.⁵⁴

These basic values are, however, difficult to articulate explicitly, since no specification adumbrates them so clearly that a complete consensus becomes possible. And even if that were possible, then, according to Luhmann, there are still problems of 'translation', i.e. the formulation, for example, of these values in party platforms. Party platforms are concrete political programs "...which can't be logically transferred from such core values as freedom, solidarity and justice. There is no way of deducing them on the basis of rational decisions."⁵⁵

If there are, then, problems in the explicit articulation and in the translation of these values, value intergration cannot be looked upon as a major integrative mechanism of society. In contrast to societies in which integration was managed by assigning the individual to a certain social class, according to whether highborn or lowborn, this is no longer possible in

⁵⁴ Dobbelaere, K., op. cit., p.384

⁵⁵ Luhmann, Niklas, Grundwerte als Zivilreligion,
Cologne 1981
cit.by Dobbelaere, K., op.cit. p.384

a highly complex and functionally differentiated society. In modern society subsystems form an "inner-societal environment for each other" (Dobbelaere), mediating integration.

As complementary roles and societal subsystems play an important part not only in the integration process but also in the search for a more comprehensive understanding of religion, two results stand at the end of this discussion. Firstly, the bridging element between the two paradigms seems to be the study of complementary roles. This ties the two levels of analysis in their research context together. Secondly, the artificial separation of the individual, cultural and subsystematic analysis of religion is eliminated and offers, therefore, the possibility of a more cohesive study of religion, since, as it has been shown, all approaches to the study of religion discussed here, are inter-related and interdependent.

Since we are not concentrating on a comprehensive understanding of religion per se, but are trying to outline some general implications of religion for the individual voter's decision, we needn't stress our discussion of the societal level in particular. Hence, before we turn to the religious voter's decisions, certain causes or consequences of secularization, - rationalization, privatization and pluralism - with respect of their influence on the individual now take a central place in our discussion.

Rationalization

Rationalization, basically, appears in Max Weber's⁵⁶ work in two different dimensions. The first type of rationalization, in short, is Weber's key feature for the development of capitalism. Only with the rationalized form of mercantile action (e.g. cost-benefit calculation, bookkeeping, etc) as it was developed in the West, was today's rationalized capitalism possible. The second dimension of rationalization, which operates on a more individual level, Weber called "disenchantment" of the world (Entzauberung)⁵⁷. This is the basis for the third model of secularization we discussed above. Disenchantment can be conceived, firstly, as a rationalization of the Roman-Catholic belief, beginning manifestly with Luther's reformation. Protestantism abolished the belief in saints, took away blessed water, etc. and established a religion that was to some extent freed from suspicious rituals and mediators between God and the believer. On the other hand, science opened the way to a more rational and causal description and explanation, not only in terms of religion, but embracing every realm, discussing and evaluating things in a rational-causal fashion. Seen in this

⁵⁶ We refer here, of course, to Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.

⁵⁷ Berger's term for the same phenomenon is "demystification".

way, everthing, it seems, could be explained⁵⁸ according to this new view of the world. In short, there was a switch from a mere religiously backed plausibility structure to a more scientific, rational and clear-headed understanding of the world. This understanding was aimed at providing answers to questions about the meaning of life in an fashion appropriate to an emancipating, "for the time being", protestant humanity. It is clear that, unavoidably, religion wasn't excluded from this development; it was discussed and questioned, too. The consequence has already been mentioned; religion declined from being an overarching explanatory and legitimizing backbone of society to becoming merely one subsystem among others.

Functional differentiation on the societal level and rationalization on the individual level gave way to a de-emphasis of traditional "nonrational" values like honesty, kindness, meaningfulness, self-realization, but stressed the meaning of effectiveness and efficiency. This split Bell⁵⁹ called the separation of the techno-economic realm, which emphasises efficiency and effectiveness, and culture, within which meaningfulness and self-realization have a central position.

⁵⁸ or perhaps only "described". It could be argued that modern science offers no real explanation of phenomena but only the increasingly successful means to describe and predict. On this view real explanation must address the question of why the world is ordered as it is.

⁵⁹ Bell, Daniel, "The Return of the Sacred ?" British Journal of Sociology, Vol.28 No.4, p.419-449

If these two realms do indeed exist, then, according to Bell, a new role for religion has to develop in modern society. This, in turn, is a similar result, considering Luhmann's evaluation, of the adaptive role of religion in the future. Thomas Luckmann described the shift of traditional religion from a legitimizing authority to a mere subsystem, and its declining importance on the societal level, as follows:

Institutional segmentation of the social structure and the dissolution of the traditional, coherent sacred cosmos affected not only religion as a specialized institution but also the relation of the traditional, specifically religious representations to the values of other specialized institutional domains. The prevalent norms in the various institutional areas, especially economics and politics, were increasingly legitimated by functional rationality.⁶⁰

Hence, in a system in which individual expectations and goals, stemming genuinely from a religious background, are only of marginal interest for the entire system, individual and societal interests clash. Tasks or roles an individual has to fulfill within an institution as a so-called "corporate actor" (Fenn⁶¹) stand in high contrast to the individual's own interests and rights. The function or role the

⁶⁰ Luckmann, Thomas, The Invisible Religion, New York 1967, p.101

⁶¹ Fenn, Richard, Towards a Theory of Secularization, Monograph Series of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. No.1, 1978, p.66

individual performs, not the personality of the actor, is what is interesting for the societal system. Thus, processes that integrate subjective interests into the techno-economic realm seldom take place. This separation of interests has almost no consequences for the corporate world, since control of the individual is always possible.

The individual, however, seems to respond to this anonymous situation, recognizing that a replacement of the incumbent corporate actor is always possible, by becoming irresponsible and alienated as a person. Separating the private "irrational" or "cultural sphere" from the public "rational" or "techno-economic" sphere, the individual seems to gain autonomy, which makes a fulfillment of personal interest and self-realization possible.

Privatization

Thus the consequence of rationalization for the individual, it appears, is a frustration of the individual in the public sphere, since there is no place for individual interests that do not fit the public interest perfectly. The more the individual suffers from the notion of anonymity and the possibility of job replacement, the more this frustration can manifest itself in an expression of growing irresponsibility in the task performed as a corporate actor. As a result of this feeling of anonymity and fear of replacement, the

individual finds in the private sphere a refuge in which self-realization, self-determinism, and "irrational" values can assume central importance.

This autonomy of the private sphere is, nevertheless, only seemingly private and autonomous. Since the means, which this private world is built up with, are not of autonomous nature, that is, an individual finds inspiration and motivation by personal friends or family members, who are themselves, in turn, influenced or inspired by wider social circles. As the features or characteristics that might influence an individual are, therefore, either objects of an entirely private sphere, nor autonomously to be adapted, a private sphere is, seen from this perspective, neither private nor autonomous.

In the search for a private world, new individually determined meaning systems are developed. This "tailoring of an individual religion" and world is called privatization. Luckmann sees privatizations as "assortments of 'ultimate' meanings", which differ significantly from the traditional, sacred cosmos. Whereas, according to Luckmann, the traditional view formed a sacred cosmos that was a coherent and well articulated universe, the modern cosmos is characterized as a loose edifice of explanatory models that are appropriate to offer meanings of 'ultimate' significance. However, the latter modern cosmos is rarely, in contrast to the sacred one, internalized by the individual, nor does the modern

cosmos represent a coherent universe. Modern believers tailor their belief system in a consumatory form according to their individual needs and demands, taking bits and pieces from the former assortments of 'ultimate' meaning. Individual religion is therefore, not to be taken as "...a replica or approximation" of the traditional "official" model of religion. This new form of individual religion is neither based on the primary institutions of traditional religion nor on the political or economic secular system:

Our analysis of church religion in modern society sharply pointed up the fact that the modern sacred cosmos as a whole no longer rests on institutions specializing in the maintenance and transmission of a sacred universe. On the basis of our observation on the "secular" institutional ideologies we may say, furthermore, that the sacred cosmos as a whole does not rest on other primary and specialized institutional areas whose main functions are not religious - ... The effective social basis of the modern sacred cosmos is to be found in neither the churches nor the state nor the economic system... It is the direct accessibility of the sacred cosmos, more precisely, of an assortment of religious themes, which makes religion today essentially a phenomenon of the "private sphere."⁶²

Since the demands and needs of the individual for religion have their origin in private experience, resting on emotions and sentiments, individual religions are highly subjective. Luckmann conceives these conceptions as being in a high

⁶² Luckmann, T., op.cit. p.103

degree unstable, and therefore not easy to articulate. Since primary institutions are not the bases of these individual religions, secondary institutions try to articulate the topics and concerns arising in the private sphere and offer their articulations as perfectly reproduced suggestions of "private, 'ultimate' meaning. Hence, "inspirational literature" as Luckmann calls it, like popular psychological publications such as "Reader's Digest" or "Playboy Magazine", can serve as secondary institutions offering an appropriate individual articulation of personal 'ultimate' meanings and concerns.

Of course, a purely private sphere simply does not exist. Still, primary public institutions, since they are not the bases of individual religions, cannot maintain a common sacred cosmos. Moreover, and in consequence, these primary institutions can merely regulate only the economic and legal frame in which privatization takes place. And thirdly,

the diffusion of the sacred cosmos through the social structure characterizes societies in which the "private sphere" in the strict sense of the term does not exist and in which the distinction between primary and secondary institutions is meaningless.⁶³

The shape of individual religion in modern society, formed by rationalization and privatization has therefore changed

⁶³ Luckmann, T. op.cit., p.104

considerably in comparison to a traditionally conceived religion. There is no longer an "official" model of religion for an entire society, performing legitimizing and moral conduct functions. Religion is degraded and subject to a "buyer's choice", which in turn is itself highly dependent on the personal, individual, to use Luckmann's term, "social biography" of the religious consumer. Individual religion, unless it is not highly reflected and consciously deliberated to create an individual micro-universe, is likely to include in its meaning system "more or less appropriate rhetorical elements from the (traditional) sacred cosmos". Hence, Luckmann suggests that

the assumption seems justified, therefore, that the prevalent individual systems of "ultimate" significance will consist of a loose and rather unstable hierarchy of "opinions" legitimating the affectively determined priorities of "private" life.⁶⁴

Privatized religion is completely detached from the functionally differentiated, rational society. Since there is no support from rational society, those who surround the individual in his/her private sphere gain importance. These persons offer a stabilizing feature for privatized religion by only partially sharing a religion with others or even constructing a religion of their own. This move towards stability is useful, because the conflict with the rational

⁶⁴ Luckmann, T., op.cit., p.105

character of the functionally differentiated sphere is unlikely to occur in this private, nonrational sphere. The family assumes in this process an important role. But also other persons who are in immediate contact with the private sphere of the individual have a considerable value in this respect:

Friends, neighbors, members of cliques formed at work and around hobbies may come to serve as "significant others" who share in the construction and stabilization of "private" universes of "ultimate" significance. If such universes coalesce to some degree, the groups supporting them may assume almost sectarian characteristics and develop what we earlier called secondary institutions... Nevertheless, it is safe to assume that the family remains the most important catalyst of "private" universes of significance".⁶⁵

If private religion is constructed, stabilized and maintained by a partial, if not complete, reflection and discussion with other persons within the private sphere, another feature of modern, privatized religion becomes likely. That is, the privatized religion may appear to vary considerably in respect of its contents; nevertheless, it is not too much to assume that the structures of meaning and explanation within these individual religions are very similar. In addition, because a permanent reflection and change in these structures is possible, individual religion is relatively unstable or,

⁶⁵ Luckmann, T., op.cit., p.106

to formulate the matter more positively, flexible.

In sum, privatization is a way of creating not only a meaning system of ultimate significance but, more important, a process of self-legitimation within a complex and rational, functionally differentiated, society. This conclusion appears to be not too venturesome; what else can be behind such an enormous individual effort to find meaning for one's life? Individual religion serves to define one's situation in society and clarifies the individual's self-understanding in the daily life of social interaction. The traditional, overarching religion had offered modes of moral conduct and has given plausibility structures in the form of a cohesive universe. In a modern secular society, individual religion has to serve both functions. Hence, it seems plausible to understand individual religion, as a form of self-legitimation as well as a meaning system of ultimate significance. Finally, Luckmann's conclusion is no contradiction to our interpretation of this phenomenon. He sees individual religion as an appropriate expression of religion in a contemporary, modern society.

Pluralism

The possibility of choosing among a certain number of available "assortments of 'ultimate' meanings" is one feature of a phenomenon we want to stress in our discussion of secula-

rization: Pluralism. Since we have already discussed implicitly, anyway, the consequences of pluralism for the individual, we now complete the discussion with a look at the "social-structural dimension", as the following authors have called what we previously referred to as the 'societal level'. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann⁶⁶ give us a detailed idea of their understanding of pluralism in the following definition:

We would define pluralism as a situation in which there is competition in the institutional ordering of the comprehensive meanings for everyday life. Historically, such competition generally succeeds a situation in which it was more or less absent. That is, pluralism is the consequence of a historical process of de-monopolization.⁶⁷

Pluralism as defined here is thus, as a consequence of a historical process, particularly to be found in highly differentiated societies. If there are legitimizing problems on the individual level, so are there also on the social-

⁶⁶ Berger, P. and Luckmann, T. "Secularization and Pluralism", International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion, Vol.2, 1966, p.73ff

⁶⁷ This definition is ambiguous in two respects. Firstly, if de-monopolization can be conceived as a phenomenon within the general process of secularization (which seems to be the case), then Berger and Luckmann explicitly avoid defining pluralism as a consequence of secularisation. They do so for good reasons, we agree. Secondly, it is quite possible to understand pluralism as the result of secularization. However, as this problem does not immediately touch our present concern, we intend to stay with the definition given. Suffice it to say here that this issue invites thorough discussion.

structural level. Berger and Luckmann conceive this process of the declining importance of religion in society as the perpetual decline of the state as an enforcement agency for religious institutions. Globally this decline appeared, particularly, of course, in Christian belief. Even in states in which political power was based partially on religion, a tendency towards this development was clearly observable. The role of the state in a pluralistic society ends up in the form of an "impartial traffic policeman, setting down certain regulations for the competing religious groups" (Berger & Luckmann), but is, beyond this function, reluctant to interfere in the clashes and competitions among these groups. This laissez-faire behavior of the state can assume a more active or a more passive role, depending on the ideological and pragmatic interests of the state itself, as well as depending on these factors: the degree of pressure a religious group can put on the state, how much importance this religious group has in society, what historical role this group has played in history, and so on. Thus, for example, in the United States every religious group, no matter of what interest to the state, enjoy the same tax status whereas in Germany religions that have gained the status of 'corporations of public law' enjoy particular privileges. (This, besides, is hold to be one reason for the absolutely different developments of churches in parts of Europe - Scandinavia, West Germany, Italy - and the United States, where a

properly separated church-state relationship caused secularization of the churches from inside⁶⁸). As a general effect of the side-by-side existence of religious groups without any form of monopolized status of the one or the other religion, every religion was forced to set up its own bureaucracy, not only to deal with the state in a most effective way but also to gain new members for the group and to inform, maintain and keep its older membership. In short, the establishment of a religious market was the consequence of the abolishment of the state's role as an enforcement agency of one particular religion. Hence, even the world of religions has been conducted by the rules of rational-causal calculation of effectiveness and efficiency. It is important to see that this market situation is only one part of the efficiency and effectiveness-measurement that the executives of the appropriate religious groups have to undergo; on the one side there is the religious market situation, on the other side, in addition, the expectations, demands and needs, in short, the adaptive role of religion towards its members. These executives are not the traditional religious "prophetical" men one might expect of a person working in a religious group as an executive:

⁶⁸ Wilson, B., Religion in Sociological Perspective, New York 1982, p.152. Wilson states that "...in America secularizing processes appear to have occurred within the church, so that although religious institutions persist, their specifically religious character has become steadily attenuated."

Public relations and salesmanship become more important than the diplomatic arts, procedures are streamlined in accordance with the business rationality, the human type of eminences grises is replaced by that of brisk sensible organization men.⁶⁹

The religious market situation and the relationship of the religious groups to each other also have some consequences. As Luckmann has argued, privatized religions are similar in their structures. In addition, an individual religion does not exclude membership in a religious group, given that there is a fit between the individual's and the group's religion. That, in turn, would mean that the religious groups on the religious market differ only to a limited extent from each other. Luckmann and Berger have called this similarity in the contents of religious meaning a marginal differentiation. This marginal differentiation serves two purposes. Most important, this differentiation is the legitimation of all marginally differentiated groups. It is their *raison d'etre*, within which both the theologian and the religious organization man have equally important jobs. The theologian provides the religious argument as to why a certain group differs from another and why this is so essential theologically. The religious organization promotes and markets the religion. On the other hand, this marginal differentiation has a second

⁶⁹ Berger, P. and Luckmann, T., *op.cit.*, p.77

effect. Economic and psychological necessities force religious groups to carry out an economic market policy with fixed regulations. A laissez-faire policy on the religious market is as costly and unbearable as it was in other (secular) markets. Hence regulations governing competition as well as cooperation among somewhat more related religious groups (creation of cartels) are also to be found on the religious market. The reason for this is simple:

Put crudely, it is not only too expensive to go on cutting each other's throat, but it doesn't look so good. Both economic and public relation suggest that "prices be fixed".⁷⁰

No matter how perfectly this differentiation develops, certain tasks that are not easy to performe still remain for each religious group. One of these we have already mentioned; it concerns the maintaining of older membership. Even these older members of the religious group have to get used to this market situation. Put differently, as a consequence of pluralism, the religious groups must simultaneously stress their differences and importance in comparison to other religious groups, while they at the same time have to cultivate and emphasize the traditional religious heritage. In addition, members of different social classes, target groups, and particular societal circles must also be kept

⁷⁰ Berger, P. and Luckmann, T., op.cit., p.78

interested, since these persons are important for the religious group, not only in economic, but also in repudiation terms.

That all these features of pluralism have implications and consequences for the individual is more than obvious. How these consequences are dealt with, and in what manner, we need not discuss again, since this was already a focus of attention while we were discussing privatization. We have now arrived at the very beginning of the interrelated set of terms we wanted to stress. Therefore, there could be no better moment to end the debate concerning rationalization, privatization and pluralism, in particular, and the secularization debate in general. To complete the latter within the framework of our unpretentious project, a basic look at the limits and limitations of secularization should not, however, be left out.

Limits and Limitations

There are several perspectives from which to criticize "secularity", as we may term the result of the process of secularization. One may discuss the development of secularization

up until recently, looking, as Peter Berger⁷¹ did, at changes and weakenings of the theoretical predictions that had been made. Or, as Larry Shiner did, one might discuss the variety of the uses of the term itself and conclude that it is better to drop the term completely from a scientific discussion because of its unbearable ambiguities. Another reasonable approach to criticize a theory is to examine the various approaches scientists have followed in studying the secularization concept, as David Lyon⁷² has recently done.

In any case, one comes to interesting and valuable points of criticism, which sometimes reveal the worth and validity of these studies only to scholars who have been dealing with secularization in a most concentrated, detailed and highly theoretical fashion. Since we have discussed secularization, here only in a limited way, we take ourselves to be neither competent nor entitled to judge, in the present study, the contribution the concept of secularization can make to the understanding of modern society. Some basic remarks should suffice here, noting that there are several aspects within

⁷¹ Berger, Peter L. "From the Crisis of Religion to the Crisis of Secularization", On Religion and America: Spiritual Life in a Secular Age, Douglas, Mary and Tipton, Steven (eds.) Boston, Beacon Press, 1982

⁷² Lyon, David, "Rethinking Secularization: Retrospect and Prospect", Review of Religious Research, Vol.26, No.3, 1985

the secularization concept⁷³ which are in need of reform or even correction. This implies that we do not intend to discuss the limitations of secularization on the social-structural or subjective level; doing that would mean violating our rule against detailed critique. Hence the goal is to think, briefly, of some limits and limitations of secularization in general.

One question which is surely among the major ones in secularization theory is whether secularity is indeed capable of replacing religion completely. Reviewing the development retrospectively, Peter Berger answers this question negatively. Referring to Weber's theodicy thesis, Berger concludes that secularization was never able to offer an equally effective, or even convenient, alternative to the theodicy-function of traditional religion. Theodicy gave a convincing and consoling interpretation of the suffering and injustices of everyday life, which were interpreted as being parts of the this-worldly life of (at least Christian) humanity. Therefore, since secularization isn't able to substitute this "mental tranquillizer" by using rational-causal explanations

⁷³ Maybe it is too late to pay attention to the question of whether one should speak of a theory, or only of a concept, of secularization. It should be mentioned that one can think of secularization in either way. However, if one speaks of a theory of secularization, then there must be a model of the theory. To fulfill the scientific expectations of a theory, the model must explain, describe and predict the consequences and effects of secularization.

and descriptions or offering the prospect of an age of never ending progress, religion didn't fade away as was predicted, but, to the contrary, gained new credibility.

Secularity understood as a phenomenon of modernity raises the question of the viability of secularization. With the phenomenon of secularization as a part of modernity goes the common conclusion that pluralism is also a modern phenomenon. Though this proposition is not quite true - there were, in fact, earlier forms of secularity and pluralism independent of each other in Confucian China and in pre-Muslim India - modern secularity and pluralism are subjects of strong attack and countermovements in modern society. The main difference lies in the fact that today secularity and pluralism do not exist independently of each other, but encourage each other:

In modern society, in contrast, secularity and pluralism are mutually reinforcing phenomena. Secularization fosters the civic arrangements under which pluralism thrives, while plurality of world views undermines the plausibility of each one and thus contributes to the secularizing tendency.⁷⁴

The viability of secularization is hence in doubt, if, even with such a fecund soil for both secularity and plurality in modern society, fanatical and extreme countermovements arise

⁷⁴ Berger, Peter L. "From the Crisis of Religion to the Crisis of Secularization", op.cit., p. 15

in response. The Ajatollah Khomeini's militant and brutal Iran is not an unique phenomenon. Islamic revivalism, neo-Buddhist activism and Hindu traditionalism, not to leave out the new Christian sects in Latin America, also have this global, countersecular motivation in common.

The paradox in all these developments is that secularization both arises out of, and also opposes, pluralism. This fact needs explanation. Plurality understood as the simultaneous coexistence of various, equally acknowledged, world views hampers the institutionalization of one particular world view as well as all kinds of secular dogmatism. Hence, plurality can also serve as a source of countermovements against secularity. These countermovements against can assume "hot" or "cool" forms of reaction⁷⁵. Hot reaction tends to be fanatical and frenetic, trying to re-establish the one or other form of traditional religion, thus fighting both secularization and pluralism; cool reaction, in turn, rather assumes an adaptive role in dealing with secularity, trying to limit secularity's influence on the appropriate religion. The deterministic view of secularization, which predicted the gradual cessation of religion the more secularity was established, needs, therefore, considering all the countermovements, thorough discussion, if not correction:

⁷⁵ Berger P. and Luckmann T., "Secularization and Pluralism", op.cit. p.81

It not reasonable to expect a definitive victory for either secularization or countersecularization in the foreseeable future. Rather, the prospects are for a continuing uneasy coexistence of religion and secularity under the conditions of a pluralistic "market"⁷⁶

If one takes into account, in addition, the various concepts of secularization as Shiner has discussed them, and the different possible levels of analysis, knowing that neither problem is not yet completely solved, the concept or theory of secularization used as a scientific-analytical instrument suffers severe damage. Both the operational basis of secularization and the factual development of secularity offer solid reasons to debate the theory as a whole. A theory, as Greeley said, has to be broad to be general. This may be true. But if, as is the case with secularization, the essential assumptions and propositions of a theory are repeatedly quasi-falsified through empirical observation, then a reasonable person will question or reject the entire theory. The admonition of Shiner and Rendtorff is appropriate; first, describe thoroughly what you mean by secularization (concept and level of analysis), then ask yourself to what extent you can use it. As Rendtorff puts the matter:

Die Säkularisierungsthese ist dann...nicht mehr materialiter interessant, sondern als ein Moment in der Analyse der gegenwärtigen Selbstausslegung der

⁷⁶ Berger, P. "From the Crisis of Religion to the Crisis of Secularization", op.cit., p.23

Gesellschaft und in der Bestimmung der gesamtgesellschaftlichen Verflechtung der Religion.⁷⁷

In other words, the secularization concept is appropriate as a descriptive instrument within the analysis of secularity in modern society. But it is, on the other hand, as an analytical tool no longer interesting.

Nietzsche's famous pronouncement, "God is dead," especially with the added comment "and we have killed him"⁷⁸ has been widely taken to herald the secularization of Western society and culture. We have not discussed in this chapter either the theological or the philosophical merits of Nietzsche's thesis. But we have considered in some detail the various models of secularization recent social theorists have offered us. We have examined whether their models might help us describe the changing role of religion in modern society and perhaps even explain some of the changes that have taken place and predict others that are imminent.

However, the various models show that even these theorists do not always agree about the phenomenon "secularization". As a result, the secularization-image remaining of this scientific theoretical quarrel appears as a "misty entity" nobody really

⁷⁷ Rendtorff, Trutz, "Zur Säkularisierungsproblematik", International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion, Vol.2, 1966, p.61

⁷⁸ Nietzsche, F. Die fröhliche Wissenschaft, III (125), in: Colli, Giorgio, Montinari Mazzino, Nietzsche Werke, Vol.2, Berlin 1973, p.153

knows how to describe precisely. What, can one, nevertheless, take as a general idea of secularization? Bryan Wilson, we think, has paraphrased the matter in a way that the maybe the smallest, common basis of all the approaches to secularization we have discussed; it is certainly a really wide depiction of secularization being simultaneously close to all approaches:

by the term secularization I mean that process by which religious institutions, actions, and consciousness, lose their social significance.⁷⁹

This description covers both the individual and societal, and the private and the public context of the discussed concepts and approaches of secularization.

Our goal was, therefore, twofold; for one thing, we intended to demonstrate the development, problems, contexts, concepts and analytical models of secularization. Secondly, we tried to outline certain features of secularization as they were conceived in the scientific discussion that deals with this phenomenon and its forms in modern society.

Now we have reached at a point where we see both confusion and controversy. We see confusion, since we might be insecure as to what concept and what analytical approach we ought to take for our further study. We see also controversy among the scientists, but we are told that this is a normal and fecund

⁷⁹ Wilson, B., Religion in Sociological Perspective, Oxford, 1982, p.149

state of affairs in all sciences and no one should worry about it. Hence, we modestly like to stick to our genuine goal of a general idea of secularization, which, we believe, is reasonably and most unproblematically met with Wilson's paraphrase. Since even Wilson finds no reason to change his own description after a decade of his study of secularization, we can not err to much with this decision.

Nevertheless, for our own study, we are in need of a analytical concept that enables us to continue our own study. Hence, we shall discuss, in the following, ways and means to analyze secularization.

CHAPTER III

ANALYZING SECULARIZATION

Methodological Considerations

Secularization, as we know the term now, is a controversial and ambiguous word for a theory or concept in the study of religion. What we have also learned, is that it fails to be simultaneously both an analytical tool and a descriptive concept. If it is precisely defined in its connotation so as to be a descriptive tool to demonstrate secularity, it can't be applied as an analytical tool. The reason is obvious: even if we set up a distinctive level of analysis and an accurate interpretation of our secularization concept, the most important part is still missing; that is, how we proceed in our analysis methodologically and what measures for what kind of variables we should use. In other words, we need a recipe, an analytical model that helps us to clarify both the object of our study and the way we can approach it.

Analytical models of secularization are not easy to find. Many authors have tried analytically to show some evidence of secularization in modern society. They have asked themselves questions, either on the societal or on the individual level of analysis, questions that seemed to be helpful to make some aspects of secularity visible. However, they haven't con-

structed a generally applicable analytical framework which, with only slight changes, could be applied in the one or other case. Rather, the reverse development has been the case. Different models, appropriate to answer these specialized questions have been established, with the result that these models perfectly fit their creator's purpose, but are not, unfortunately, compatible among each other. One can think of this as a vice in the secularization concept, though at least two scientists, Fenn⁸⁰ and Wuthnow⁸¹, tried to offer analytical recommendations as to how secularization should be analyzed. Fenn made the point that an essential distinction between the structural-functional approach and the Parsonian action-theory approach is to be made before one starts off to analyze secularization. Wuthnow recommended a "logit-regression analysis" stemming originally from biology, while he, simultaneously, limited the range of the method by insisting that it shouldn't be used all alone without another analytical method.

Almost a decade before Fenn and Wuthnow, Gerhard Lenski⁸² used, instead of one of the before-mentioned approaches, a

⁸⁰ Fenn, Richard, The Secularization of Values, Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, Vol.9, 1970, p.112ff.

⁸¹ Wuthnow, Robert and Blackwood, Larry, Logit Regression Techniques in the Study of Religion, Review of Religious Research, Vol.19, No.1, 1977 p.112ff

⁸² Lenski Gerhard, The Religious Factor, New York 1961

sample survey that resulted in quite powerful and understandable figures and tables explaining the relationship and influence of religion on economics, politics, family, and science. Even if his study is criticized today in respect of its representativeness - one point among others is that the distribution of the denominations in Detroit was not quite normal - it is surprising that this commonly acknowledged empirical methodology wasn't also used by other scientists of the same discipline.

The logit-regression model is an useful method if one surveys a particular phenomenon and its changes over time. This is an important supplement for the study of religion in particular. Our question here would fit perfectly the requirements of the logit regression analysis. The problem, however, is the data. For an accurate analysis over time, the same variables should be analyzed to gain precise indications of a change over time. Particularly if one deals with religious attitudes and the individual's identification with his/her denomination and their change over time, identical items of the different time periods should be used. Unfortunately, as many scientists have complained, such data over a reasonable period of time are hardly available for ready use in the sociology of religion. Hence, as a kind of substitute, the logit-regression analysis was developed and acknowledged to allow at least certain implications for a religious change over time. In a comprehensive analysis of change in German politics, Kendall Baker,

Russell Dalton and Kai Hildebrandt⁸³ have profited from the huge data pool of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPR) in Ann Arbor, the Zentralarchiv für empirische Sozialforschung in Cologne, and the Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen in Mannheim to research the political transformations in Western Germany from 1953 to 1972. They have also focused, of course, on religious aspects, but not in the detail we would need for our purpose here, simply because they have concerned themselves with quite different aspects in their research.

An analysis of religious change can't be observed at one particular point in time. That means, in other words, that if we wanted to use the logit-regression method to see to what extent religious voters have changed their behavior concerning secularity and secularization, we would have to accumulate the appropriate data from this data pool for at least one decade. After we had accumulated these data, the next step to take would be to pick the variables touching religion and politics and test their accountability. Only after this filtering (the most direct way would probably be cross-tabulations) could we start with the logit-regression method to look for our phenomena and their changes over time. In short, using the same data pool for a religious change in time would still be an enormous, maybe in some sense even

⁸³ Baker, Kendall, Dalton, Russell and Hildebrandt, Kai Germany Transformed - Political Culture and New Politics, Harvard 1981

inappropriate, effort within our study's framework. There are several reasons for this inappropriateness. The huge amount of data which would have to be analyzed is not the major point here. Rather, it is whether these data are a useful answer our question as to whether there are some aspects of secularization in voting behavior. The data, unfortunately, do not include the information over time needed for an accurate religious-change-over-time-analysis. For example, personal characteristics like religious preference, age, sex, etc. have always been included as questions. Yet, essential data for our study weren't collected for the entire time range of the data pool from 1953 to 1972, nor even, for our purposes, for any significant part of it. Certain questions promising for our concern were sometimes only asked once; for example, it was asked only in 1953 whether the respondent was married in a church ceremony, or how strong his participation in church activities were. These and others are questions, that surely could have helped to demonstrate the declining or increasing church affiliation of the respondents. Another question, whether church influence should be curtailed was asked in two different waves in 1969 but never before, nor in the following polls. We could go on here to complain about the missing data in this fascinating three-decade data set. At the end, however, we would simply have to recognize that neither the socio-economic identifications with religious groups or the community, nor the moral and religious issues

are as continuous and detailed as would be needed for such an analysis. Nevertheless, there are data available that offer convenient information for research of aspects that are fairly close related to our problem. Since we intend to use these studies to show some evidence of our own problem, we will return to those researches later.

Meanwhile, we are, whether we like it or not, dependent on other models and methods to make our point. Our special question is, firstly, to what extent voting decisions in Western Germany can be taken as an indicator of secularizing processes. If this indicator is significant, secondly, whether there is a constant vote, or whether some developments to be observed disturb this constancy. This set of questions then, if they can be answered positively should be appropriate to show one aspect of secularity. But before we can discuss the latter, several absolutely essential things, without which our concern wouldn't be conceivable nor understandable, remain to be done; first, since our question is very specialized, a model must clarify our approach, and secondly, as important as the first point, a basic survey of the development of the German parties and their adherents is necessary. That the denominations have to be discussed in this political context, goes without saying.

Finally, before we start to create our own model, some remarks about the voting decision as one possible indicator, out of a infinite number of others, are needed to justify our

project.

That religion and politics are (closely) related was shown by a large number of studies. One of the most prominent is Lenski's Detroit study which not only undoubtedly demonstrated the close relationship between religion and politics empirically, but also suggested that regular church attenders were more likely to vote than those who infrequently saw a church from inside. Macaluso and Wanat⁸⁴ - with their own method and model - showed further evidence of what Lenski has suggested, namely that church attendance and voting are closely related. Other studies, the 1952 study by Miller⁸⁵ or the 1977 project by Cohen and Kapsis⁸⁶ showed similar supportive results. However, a few studies⁸⁷ indicate the opposite, that is, that church attendance influences the political participation negatively. Nevertheless, enough evidence is available that religion and politics are related, whether

⁸⁴ Macaluso, Theodore F. and Wanat, John, Voting turnout and Religiosity, Polity, No.12, 1979, p.158ff

⁸⁵ Miller, Mungo, The Waukegan Study of Voter Turnout Prediction, Public Opinion Quarterly, No.16, 1952, p.381ff.

⁸⁶ Cohen, Stephen S. and Kapsis Robert E., Religion, Ethnicity and Party affiliation in the U.S.: Evidence from pooled Electoral Surveys 1968-1972, Social Forces, No.56, 1977, p.637-653

⁸⁷ for example see Madron, Thomas W., Hart, M. Nelson, and Raytha L. Yokley, "Religion as a determinant of Militancy and Political Participation among black Americans, American Behavioral Scientist, No.17, 1974, p.783ff.

negatively or positively⁸⁸ . As voting is one of the most important opportunities the individual has to articulate her or his political affiliation and thus to participate in the political process, we think that the voting behavior is, or might be, a proper indicator even for secularizing processes. Of course, this implies our assumption, that a voting decision is made by the individual in accordance to his religious belief and political value system. However, mere church attendance as an indicator for religious attitudes or for religiosity in general is a controversial thing, too. Church attendance may properly do the job if one is researching religion and voting turnout. If one, however, tries to find some relationship between voting decision and religious attitudes, then the mere frequency of church attendance is a helpful indicator in this latter respect, but it is by no means valid as an exclusive indicator. If one relied on it alone, privatized religion would be entirely left out of the analysis, and thus a major feature of secularization would simply not be considered. Therefore, additional aspects of this particular question must be taken into account.

⁸⁸ For an extensive discussion of the relationship between religion and politics, see J. Milton Yinger's book, The Scientific Study of Religion, particularly chapter 18. In short, he develops three kinds of relationship: (1) the identity of religious-group membership and political-group membership; (2) the use of religion by political powers; (3) religious challenge to political powers. For a jurisprudential discussion of the relation of church and state in Germany, see Fischer, E. Trennung von Staat und Kirche, Frankfurt/Main, 1971

An Analytical Model

Dobbelaere tried to tie two levels of analysis together. Now, in contrast to his approach, we shall try here to clarify our object of research as much as possible, and in doing so, isolate one aspect within a certain level of analysis and separate it from all others.

The level of analysis is the individual level, as we are dealing primarily with the voting decision of an individual. However, the approach to this individual level can take place in various ways. First, one might investigate the variety of meanings religion can have for different individuals. On the other hand, one person might think of religion as being too orthodox-conservative or too liberal, whereas another might conceive it as too neutral and objective, or even too influential in some respect.

The contextual perception of religion by the individual is also variable. One may think of religion in a dichotomous relationship, for example, church against state; or, merely concerning the individual alone, as to the nature of the relationship between the individual and the church. Another quite important context is the church's impact on the individual's relation to society, or, succinctly, church affairs themselves. If one connects the items in this incomplete list of possible meanings and contexts to each other, a huge field

of research is created. To keep a clear concept of the object being examined, one again has to reduce the field to a more handy model to make it more comprehensible. For our project of trying to show some aspect of secularity and secularization in respect to voting decision, we are in need of a model capable of giving us information about the strength of a person's attachment to the church, and how significant church and religion are for this individual.

Hence, we are dealing, to stick to our meaning-context analogy, with the influence of the church on the individual; contextually, the primary interest is the religion's or church's political influence on the individual. Since this can only take place through a religion-related channel, the influence a church might have on the individual religiously cannot be excluded from a serious analysis. To be sure, both aspects can't be conceived to be perfectly independent of each other, but the reverse case, that they are absolutely dependent on each other, is even less likely. Therefore, since our immediate interest is the political side of this matter, we shall concentrate in the following on the question, how this question can be properly answered, that is, first of all, operationalized. To demonstrate our point graphically, we briefly sum up our previous discussion in the following table:

meanings of religion

contexts	conservative	liberal	neutral	influential
church and state				1
church affairs				
church's impact on the individual's relation to society				2
relationship of the individual to church and religion				3

This sixteen cell table is by no means complete in respect of the possible aspects that might be interesting to the student of secularization. But it gives at least an idea of how many fields have to be covered to get a more or less comprehensive picture of secularizing features in modern society. Considering our own project, we might pick three aspects from the table. (1) An influential religion within the church-state dichotomy is surely related to this question; (2) the religious influence and the impact of the church on the individual is very likely to determine the relationship an individual has to society. In this latter

field we see the voting decision located, since voting decision is an expression as to whether one agrees or disagrees with the policy a political party is pursuing. Last but not least, we consider (3) the relationship of the individual to church and religion, since there many of Shiner's secularization concepts fit in. Generally, the last two lines of the table might cover the majority of problems which can be discussed on the individual level of analysis in the secularization theory. By contrast, the first two lines cover to some extent the major questions on the societal level of analysis. To be sure, the society, as we already know from Luckmann's contributions, also has a big impact on the individual in this respect. Corporate actors have a great deal of influence on the individual in every form of social interaction, regardless of whether the action is intentional or not. In short, companies, parties, associations and clubs the individual is linked with, or aware of, have an influence on his/her personal relationship to this corporate side of life. Moreover, the corporate actors determine to a decisive extent the form of private world the individual is to build up as a reaction to the corporate world. To a considerable extent, therefore, this aspect, too, has to be included in a comprehensive analysis.

Each of the three fields we have picked, is independent of the others. Indeed each of the sixteen cells is independent of the rest. The fields can be examined individually, with,

possibly, some additional information to be gained from neighboring cells or even from other cells of the table.

In our concrete case, we take one particular cell, namely the one we indicated with (2), influential religion / church's impact on the individuals's relationship to society. Additional information, we think, can be gathered from the neighboring cell (3). The basic fact "voting behavior" or, more accurate, the turnout of the vote, plus some information about the individual's background in respect to church and religion in general is supposed to give us some ideas about the state of secularity. These cells might then give us an answer to questions which are touched in the first two "societal" lines of our table, or, again more accurate, to evaluate some aspects of the development of secularity in the Federal Republic of Germany. The outcome of this development, whether it is significant or not, is what we would like to call political secularization. To follow Shiner's recommendation, we want to clarify the term in advance before we then use it later in our further discussion. Taking for granted that there is a close relationship between politics and religion, it is obvious that both poles have some influence on each other. This influence can express itself in a more direct way, and also in a more indirect fashion. For example, as a direct influence of religion on politics might be the pope's threat to excommunicate (1076, Pope Gregor VII. excommunicated Henry IV.) the German Emperors during the

early middle ages in the Holy Roman Empire of German Nations. Examples of the direct influence of politics on religion are easy to find. In the same time period, the middle ages, there were for a short period two popes (1080, Klemens II. and Gregor VII) - a development which represents the direct political impact of politics on religion in two respects; firstly it was an attempt to break the power of the Pope in Rome, and, secondly, it was an effort to weaken the ties of the Roman-Catholic church to Germany, or, as a serious weakening was in those times hardly possible, at least to split the religious community into two different camps. Another example in our times would be the establishment of the Ajatollah Khomeini's regime in Iran. This is the most extreme example of a direct impact of religion on politics. In this particular case, a not even areligious political dictatorship was replaced by an extremely religious dictatorship ruled with a close orientation to the Koran and to orthodox practice.

The indirect impact of both poles on each other is of a different nature. Here, religious corporate actors, e.g. the German Catholic Bishop's Conference, try to have some impact on politics by having letters of support read out in church in advance of every federal election. These letters have become less forceful from the post-war period up to now. This development shows how the explicit call to vote the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) as the only eligible party for

Christians in the beginning, has changed until today the bishops simply appeal to the Christian conscience of every voter to vote in an appropriately responsible way. The indirect impact of politics on religion can assume multiple forms. There is a de-emphasis of church schools conceivable (in its extremest forms during the time of the Second and Third French Republic) with the goal of minimizing the religious influence on children and the public in general (laicism). A disregard of ecclesiastical interests in the political decision-making processes in general is likely to weaken the church's position in society and also to limit the church's scope of action.

Now either form of religious or political influence, of course determines the individual's relation to church and state. But this by no means implies that if a person deviates from religion, or disagrees with the policy set by a certain state, that this is a victory for the influence of one over the other. There are many other reasons for such an individual, deviational, development. However, the term "political secularization" is to some extent related to the individual's deviation from the church. The term describes the individual's emancipation from the political influence and authority of the church, not because of a restricted policy of the state against the church, but for reasons we discussed when we were looking at the phenomena of rationalization, privatization and pluralism.

Having come this far with our concept or model of a possible analysis of secularization, the next question is how we can operationalize our problem.

It seems to us that one can determine the impact of the church's influence on the individual with the help of three different categories of question. We want to term them the religious, political, and social aspects of church influence.

a) The religious aspect of church influence

The questions asked in this category are supposed to give us information about the strength of the individual's adherence to his/her church. The agreement with religious teaching is one of the questions. This agreement can be weaker or stronger for each single member of a religious group. The age of the respondent might in this case be a helpful bit of additional information. Also, religious-moral values, as, for example, honesty, may also be of different importance for different religious individuals. The frequency of church attendance is of course a valuable indicator of religious adherence. However, it is important to make a distinction between church attachment and religiosity. The frequency of church attendance is, as we feel, not, by itself, an adequate indicator of religiosity, since using it alone would exclude some essential phenomena of secularization from being a part or a form of individual religiosity. Church attendance, it seems to us, is rather a legitimate measure to indicate the individual's attachment to the church, in particular to his

own parish. We would not, therefore, like to go as far as Macaluso and Wanat⁸⁹ who take the frequency of church attendance as a proper indicator of religiosity, because we already know that there are many kinds of strong religiosity possible unrelated to the frequency-of-church-attendance measurement. Nevertheless, frequency of church attendance is an important tool worth using in an analysis. A final question in this section is whether the respondent could imagine his life without religion. This question might appear fuzzy at first sight; it indicates, however, whether the overarching bow of religion as something to be resorted to for an ethical and moral life has kept its strength or has been weakened even among religious individuals.

b) The political aspect of church influence

This section contains questions thought to be appropriate to indicate the conceivable extent to which the church might manipulate her members politically. All of these questions are supposed to be aspects that might influence the individual member's voting decision. There is, firstly, the individual's evaluation of the political importance of the church. Do members of a church think that a church is politically important? Secondly, does the church have political authority? And if so, in what terms can one think of this ecclesiastical political authority? A third question asks whether religious meanings guide voting decisions. The answers should

⁸⁹ Macaluso, Th. and Wanat, J., op.cit. p.160

indicate whether religious content has an impact on the voting decision. Finally, the respondents can be asked whether there is generally a place for religion in politics. This question can indicate whether the separation of church and state is also perceived on an individual level or whether this separation is merely thought of as being a jurisprudential necessity without any consequences in modern society.

c) The social aspect of church influence

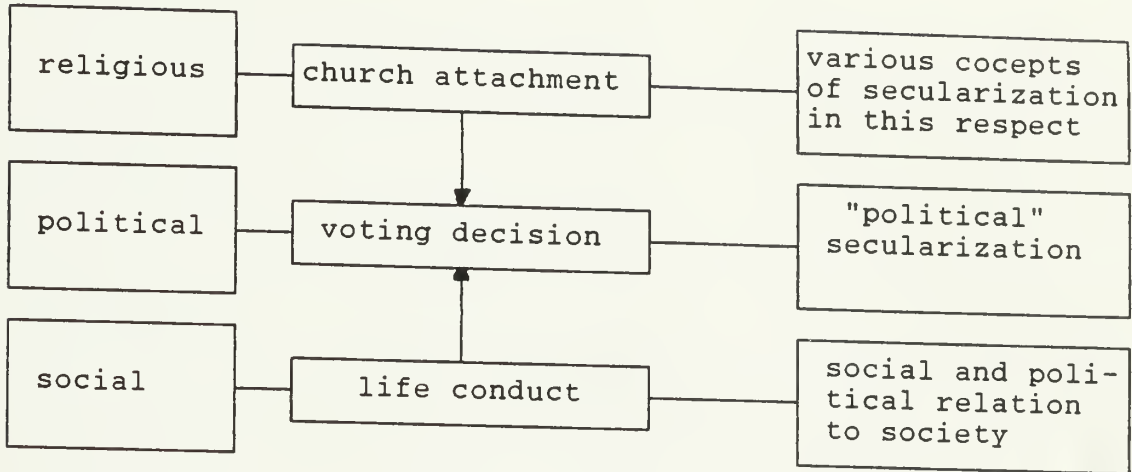
This last category is the one which seems to be the most problematic in our analytical model. Since the social influence of an institution is generally difficult to isolate from other's influence, we have some considerable hesitation about whether the following set of questions really represents adequately the church's social influence on the individual. The questions asked here are conceived to influence an aspect, namely the individual life conduct that is much broader in its dimension than the other two aspects we would like to determine. Since we know that corporate actors, private friends, family members etc. play an important role in an individual's life conduct and view of the world, it is a somewhat suspicious enterprise to reduce significantly this huge life conduct area, even partially, to the church's influence. However, since the church, on the other hand, is undoubtedly an essential element in this question, we can't do wrong if we include her in our analytical model as at

least one source of social influence among other sources. Hence, we would like to know in this context whether a respondent is religiously educated, and also to what extent he participates socially in the parish life. In addition, an answer to the question of the respondent's relationship to other members of the religious group, and his personal evaluation of his/her attitude towards a closer, even professional, contact with other members beyond the parish life seems helpful while trying to indicate the church's social impact on the individual.

Up to this point we have discussed the factors that seemed to be important in the evaluation of the church's political influence. The actual question we are interested in is, as we have already mentioned, to what extent voting decisions can be an indicator of secularization. Hence, what is missing in our model is the time dimension. That means that the previously discussed model only then makes sense in respect to our real question, if we examine the above mentioned items over time, during different periods.

A not immediately necessary but surely informative aspect can be included if one also separates again the age and the educational status of the respondent. Hence, our analytical recipe or model would graphically look like this:

Church impact Possible outcome Concepts of secularization



The above table is an outline of our attempt to analyze the church's impact on the individual. It shows also the different aspects which might contribute to the individual voting decision as far as it is related to religion and to the extent the church might have an influence on it.

Given that the religious impact weakens over time, we think that most of Shiner's concepts of secularization fit in the first line of the scheme. Whether this necessarily has to happen via a declining church attachment is a question as to how one understands secularization. In our study we have chosen to use church attachment both because data concerning it is readily available and also because the concept of secularization we are dealing with appear reasonable.

The second line of the table leads via the voting decision to political secularization. The voting decision is, as the

upward arrow indicates at least partially determined by the social environment of the individual, in our case the religious group, private friends and corporate actors. It is also influenced, as the downward arrow indicates, by church attachment. Since we have already explained the term political secularization, there is no need to repeat the rationale behind this this form of secularization. Finally, since the social impact of the church is apparently also declining, the church's influence on the individual may be replaced by other elements of the individual social environment. One can easily imagine that religiously transmitted moral and ethical values may be replaced by others of a more secular origin. That by no means implies that the individual then has turned to a less moral or ethical life conduct, but rather that his life conduct is not in the same form influenced by religious values as it had been before this replacement. In any case, what we have termed in our scheme "social and political relationship to society" is simply this replacement of religious by secular values. As we do not intend to contribute to the secularization debate with additional confusing neologisms, we confine ourselves to this description, and refrain from inventing the new term "social secularization". Since the data available, unfortunately, carry the appropriate information we would need only partially, as the frequency of church attendance, the age, the religious preference, the socio-economic and social environ-

ment, but no information about the participation in a religious community nor the affiliation to the religious taught or the individual's evaluation of the church's authority (religious, social, political) in general, we do not try to use the data to end up with an incomplete survey of our concern without being able to see at least some basic developments. Rather, we shall use studies closely related to our own project and shall try to gain some valuable information from these for our own project. For the time being, however, we shall first have a look at some essential aspects of the denominational and the party development after the second world war in Germany, and then take a look at the before-mentioned studies.

CHAPTER IV

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: PARTIES, CHURCHES, AND POLITICAL SECULARIZATION ?

Catholicism, Protestantism and Parties 1870 -1945

From the very beginning of this chapter it should be clear that there are, of course, also other religions besides the Catholic and the Protestant in Germany. Since, however, about 85 percent⁹⁰ of the German population belongs to one of these two, we concentrate in the following discussion on these two churches. A more important reason for our focus is that, all over Europe towards the end of the 19th century, as Lipset and Rokkan⁹¹ have pointed out, the denominational cleavage was a decisive aspect in the development of political parties. Since Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany at this time play a major role in the formation of political parties, it is clear that the focus must lie on these two denominations. We by no means undervalue the significance of the other major religions in Germany such as the Jewish or Islamic belief. But since these two religions are the biggest

⁹⁰ According to Der Spiegel, No.23, 1984, p.78

⁹¹ Lipset, S.M. and Rokkan, S. Party Systems and Voter Alignment: Cross-National Perspectives, New York 1967, p.10ff

groups among those remaining 15 percent of religions and religious sects, we consider them in their political weight as far as the voting turnout is concerned as a negligible dimension.

Though we shall confine our discussion of the two biggest German churches to the post-war period, it is not possible to understand the development without the historical context, starting, at least, with the unification of the second German Empire in 1870 and the Kulturkampf under Bismarck's rule. In this period, German Catholicism was the religion of the minority in an overall Protestant Empire. The Kulturkampf represents clearly a conflict between the Catholic Church and the secular state. Starting roughly with the infallibility dogma of the Pope in 1870, the conflict between both the Protestant German government and political Catholicism (ultramontanism) is a conflict concerning the basis of sovereign state power. In short, political Catholicism in this period took Catholic belief and the papal primacy as a basis for all state affairs and the doctrine of divine right as the source of all governmental power and action. Against this political Catholicism, the Bismarck government passed various restrictive laws during the Kulturkampf, and, thereby, tried to minimize every possible influence of Catholic belief in state affairs. This included the, on the whole, unsuccessful attempts to gain control over Catholic priests by making them civil servants, the prohibition of the

Jesuit congregation, governmental rules concerning the training of Catholic priests and ecclesiastical disciplinary power. Also laws were passed which forbade political misuses of sermons from the pulpit or made civil marriage possible, or culminated in a salary freeze for certain Catholic officials. All these actions restricted Catholic adherents in their politico-religious existence in Germany, but the same actions failed on the whole in their effectiveness, due to passive resistance not only by clerical incumbents, but also because of the same resistance by lay Catholics in Germany and the so-called Center-party (Zentrumspartei). Between 1879 up to 1903 all these political restrictions were finally abandoned again under Pope Leo VII; however, a general bilateral distrust between the Catholic church and the state remained.

The Kulturkampf alone is, nevertheless, not the only reason for the separation or alienation of the Catholics in the second German empire. Rather, both alienation and segregation are to be understood in the context of a clear circumscription of the Catholic religion that had begun already at the time of the Reformation. In this period there occurred a distinctive separation of Catholics from the other German religion, a common consciousness of all adherents of the Catholic church, regionally as well as culturally, within the entire German nation. In addition, the institutionalized and structurally differentiated Catholic church organization and

administration helped to secure and stabilize the religious borders within German society.

The Kulturkampf being finished, Catholics remained during the entire life of the Weimar Republic an almost segregated social group, which was, as we will see in turn, mobilized and represented by one single bourgeois-conservative political party, the Center-party (Zentrumspartei).

The Center-party itself was established by the Catholic minority in 1871 "...in order to have a political organization that would protect its interests in what it conceived to be a hostile atmosphere..."⁹². As Urwin has pointed out, the Kulturkampf and such associations as the Zentralkomitee für deutsche Katholiken (est.1868) and the Volksverein für das katholische Deutschland (est.1890) helped to mobilize and integrate Catholics within this political sphere:

The Zentrum was based on the Catholic religion: thus it sought to embrace all economic interests. Whenever Catholic interests conflicted with government policy, the party presented a united front to the outside world. However, it experienced internal tensions similar to those of other Christian democratic parties when it considered economic issues, which emphasized the differences between its conservative and social democratic sections.⁹³

⁹² Urwin, Derek W., "Germany: Continuity and Change Electoral Politics" in: Rose, Richard (ed.) Electoral Behavior: A Comparative Handbook, New York 1974, p.109ff.

⁹³ Urwin, D.W., op.cit. p.119

During the second German empire, the Center party played a minor role, being apart from the government and from other political parties. In the Weimar Republic, after the first World War, Catholic support of the party was still big enough to make the party a considerable force; the party participated in governments more than other political parties of the Weimar Republic. However, the support of the party by Catholics declined in the 1920s. Urwin explains the drop in support as being "...probably secularization"⁹⁴. The number of Catholics voting for the party declined from a high 86.3 percent in 1886 of all Catholics to a low 48.3 percent of Catholic support in 1924. It is surprising that Urwin sees secularization to be responsible for this large drop, although he concedes that the support of the Center party is strong in agrarian areas and low in urban areas, and also that the party was the more successful, where there were more religiously discriminating factors. With the internal tensions in terms of economic policy in mind, we think that secularization is too simplified an explanation of this fact. Rather, since "a substantial Catholic vote was given to other parties", we think that the better representation of individual economic interests by other parties account for this decline much more than simply secularization, which might, nevertheless, have occurred. This economic issue as well as the gradual disappearance of discrimination against Catholics

⁹⁴ Urwin, D.W., op.cit. p.121

might, in contrast, explain more than a simple reference to secularization. In any case, the important point here is that the conservative Center-party was almost entirely supported by Catholics, constantly, as Urwin has pointed out, since the Center party, together with its Bavarian section (Bayerische Volkspartei - BVP), are the two parties among all other political parties of the Weimar Republic that have the most stable strength during the entire time period. Speaking of the range of elasticity of voting strength and the fluctuation of party support, Urwin has observed that

...only the Zentrum/Bavarian People's Party during the Weimar Republic was inelastic...Only four results are below 4 percent, those for the two conservative parties of the Second Empire and those for the Zentrum in each time period. The relative consistency of those four results emphasizes the limited but constant electoral base of these parties.⁹⁵

The Protestants, by contrast, never were in need of, nor able to create, such a strongly organized, political, religious attitude. They were not in need of it, because they represented the religious majority at the time and were in close linkage to the politically powerful circles. In addition, the denominational borderline could not appear to them, as it did to the Catholics, as a major social or political threat. Hence, the motivation for such a social mobilization was

⁹⁵ Urwin, D.W., op.cit., p.125

simply missing on the Protestant side. But even if there had been such a motivation, the Protestants would not have been able to mobilize in such a concentrated form, since their administrative organization and the ecclesiastical hierarchy was not comparable to that of the Catholic church. In short, a comparable development of a genuinely Protestant political party did not occur, nor out of the denominational conflict which appeared during the first decade of the second German empire.

Parties developed in the Protestant German population not because of the denominational conflict, but within this major religious part of the German society. As Oberndörfer, Rattinger and Schmitt have pointed out⁹⁶, liberalism and conservatism developed within the democratic or constitutional movement, whereas, by contrast, social democratic politics and bourgeois politics developed as a result of Industrialization. Thus three political groups, with, as the authors emphasize, entirely Protestant adherents had developed: conservatives, liberals and social democrats. None of the three political forces, however, wanted to be, nor could represent itself as being the typical Protestant party,

⁹⁶ Oberndörfer D., Rattinger, H. and Schmitt, K. Wirtschaftlicher Wandel, religiöser Wandel und Wertwandel, in: Oberndörfer D., Rattinger H. and Schmitt, H. (eds.) Wirtschaftlicher Wandel, religiöser Wandel, Wertwandel. Folgen für das politische Verhalten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Ordo Politicus Vol. 25, publications of the Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, 1984, p. 23

since, as we already mentioned, party affiliation was, on this side, simply not a matter of religious membership. Said in a nutshell, whereas the Protestants developed political parties and movements according to the socio-economic statuses among this denominational majority in a diffuse fashion, the Catholic political expression and representation developed due to its discriminated political existence at the end of the 19th century clearly as a consequence of the religious conflict in a homogenous, clear-cut subsystem of the German society.

Since it can be observed that the Catholic German population maintained this cohesive group existence, it is a good idea to trace the post-war period up to until recently from the Catholic perspective. Several facts speak for this proceeding; first of all, Catholicism gained political weight as a consequence of the division of Germany after the second World War. Secondly, the political conflict between the Catholic church and other political movements was re-established and contributed a great deal to the party-political as well as political development of the Federal Republic. Thirdly, as a consequence, Catholicism became a decisive force in the political discussion. Finally, as Catholicism remained a cohesive religious group after the second World War and during the following three decades, the societal and political development of the Federal Republic and the Catholic religious impact can properly be seen from this perspective.

Needless to say that there are other perspectives well worth to use as a general guideline to the political development in this country - for example the unions' perspective. Since we are dealing, however, with religio-sociological questions, we can meet two goals at one time; to learn about some basic political and social developments of the Federal Republic absolutely necessary for an understanding of the voting behavior of the population and, secondly, to observe the further development of Catholicism in the Federal Republic of the Germany.

Catholics, Protestants, and Politics since 1945

Due to their nature of the religious teaching, the goals of the Catholicism after the Second World War remained largely unchanged. Regardless of changes over time, the teaching of the Catholic church claims to set normative and compulsory ethical guidelines, not only for the individual adherent, but also for any political or governmental action. Questions of political and ethical concern are, therefore, not the business of the individual Christian conscience alone, nor a pure matter of a free Catholic decision, but questions that are to be solved by a believer in consideration of Catholic belief and the special teaching responsibility of the Catholic church itself. This is part of the Catholic church's understanding of herself; the church takes it for granted

that compulsory and definable ethical norms exist, norms which are to be determined according to revelation and the Bible. Gotto⁹⁷ has pointed out that the political and social dimension of Catholicism and also its particular Weltanschauung are to be explained with this background in mind.

After the Second World War, the political Catholicism of the Weimar Republic, which had become concentrated in unions, associations, and clubs partisanly gathered around the Center party, was not revitalized. As Gotto has observed, the differentiation between political and ecclesiastical Catholicism that was clearly to be seen in the Weimar Republic, had faded.

Catholicism at the beginning of Federal Republic (1949) did not, as during the empire, stand opposed to a development of the time, but stood rather right in the middle of a societal and political renewal in which the Catholic population of West Germany was almost equal in quantity to that of the Protestants. Therefore, the question of the relationship between the Catholic church and the state had to be redefined, too. An overall consensus existed between the Catholic Church and Catholic political circles that a renewal of a confessional party, as well as the participation of priests

⁹⁷ Gotto, K., Wandlungen des politischen Katholizismus seit 1945. in: Oberndörfer D., Rattinger H., and Schmitt, K. (eds.) Wirtschaftlicher Wandel, religiöser Wandel und Wertwandel. Folgen für das politische Verhalten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Ordo politicus, Vol.25, 1984, publications of the Arnold-Bergstreasser-Institute, Freiburg, p.221ff

in political offices would be out of question. Agreement on both sides also existed that a clear-cut distinction had to be made between the political task of the party and the theological healing task of the church. As a consequence of these decisions, the successor to the old Center party was the CDU (and, in Bavaria the sister-party CSU), an interconfessionally designed Christian catch-all party, which showed a clear attachment to religious commitment but also a clearly influential separation between religious and political power. The Catholic church thought optimistically of a future party system, in which the church would be equally close to every political party in the Federal Republic, taking for granted that the political parties would be friendly towards the churches. The Catholic church conceived the political events that culminated in the end of World War II in 1945 as the result of a false secular, historical, and political development, showing evidence against the politico-materialistic ideas of socialism and liberalism. According to the Catholic Church, in short, the traditional conflict of world views had to diminish according to the experience of the advancing decades. By contrast, however, both liberals and social democrats emphasized anew their liberal and socialistic programs. For the church, an equidistance to all three major parties - the CDU, SPD, FDP - was therefore hardly to be realized. The strong support of the CDU by the Catholic church is thus to be understood as a reaction to the anti-

ecclesiastical programs of the two other major German parties. This reaction of the Catholic Church expressed itself firstly during the development of the Grundgesetz in 1948/49, when the Catholic population was mobilized in view of this anti-Catholic threat to submit numerous addresses to the Parliamentary council to insure that Catholic interests were considered. As these interests were obviously considered, the Catholics found themselves able to agree and identify widely with not only a constitutional law and a governmental system but also with a political party that generally pursued their social, economic and political interests. In addition, the charismatic person of the first Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, who was, in fact, a Catholic, symbolized to a considerable extent the new identity of the Catholics insofar as

die Herrschaftsorganisation der Bundesrepublik, das Rollenverständnis der politischen Eliten und die Amtsauffassung Konrad Adenauers auf dem Hintergrund der überwundenen Minderheitssituation der Katholiken, selbst das der katholischen Kirche verändert haben.⁹⁸

The identification of Catholicism with the CDU culminated in the late 1950s with the Catholic ecclesiastical statements declaring that even a Catholic worker could not vote for the

⁹⁸ Wildenmann, R. Die soziale Basis der Ära Adenauer. in: Blumenwitz D., Gotto, K., Maier, H., Repgen K., Schwarz, H.-P., (eds.) Konrad Adenauer und seine Zeit. Politik und Persönlichkeit des ersten Bundeskanzlers, Cologne 1976, p.279

SPD. The next decades can be characterized as a change in the Catholic Church from within, a de-ideologizing tendency of the German political parties, and a general drop in the Catholic church attachment.

The papal encyclical "ater et magistra" and the pastoral constitution "gaudium et spes" were meant to open the Catholic Church to a greater society. On the side of the political parties, the SPD de-ideologized insofar as it abolished the Marxist teaching from its platform (1959, Godesberger Program). In Lower Saxony a concordat in 1965 between the Catholic church and the SPD guaranteeing the continued support of state supported-religious elementary schools "...was taken as a concession of the SPD to church interests⁹⁹. The CDU, on the other side, started discussions about the appropriateness of the "C" in its party name in a time of a general political objectification. As Baker et al. have pointed out, these developments did not meet the expectations which had been expected:

It was expected that the social democrats' policies of rapproachment with the Catholic church and the general secularization of society would produce a decline in religious polarization, but this has not occurred...¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Baker K., Dalton R., and Hildebrandt D. op.cit., p.181

¹⁰⁰ ibidem

General secularizing tendencies, as Gotto interprets the matter, and a generational change in the Catholic support, contributed to the decline of the ecclesiastical political influence of its adherents. In the 1969 federal elections this distancing of Catholics from direct influence and the changed evaluation of the political authority of the Catholic church became visible for the first time. Over a third of the Catholic voters casted their ballot for the SPD.

Paradoxically, the Catholic church is herself accountable for this decline in authority. The church's effort to give new impulse to the religious life, coupled with a simultaneous fading of religious value convictions and societal norms has produced the result, curiously enough, that the Catholic church has been attacked quite generally and blamed for an alleged tendency to clericalisation. Hence it is not surprising that the Catholic Church has spent the following period up to the present, in thinking and debating her disillusionment and simultaneously grasping for possibilities as to how her lost influence and political importance could be regained. There were two extreme positions in this discussion; pluralism and an open dialogue, being understood as the foundation for a new self-understanding of the church, or at least as a minimal consensus, was one of the positions. The Political Catholic theology argued, on the other side for a new social-critical role for the church, presenting the picture of the Catholic church as a partner in questions

"limited" to matter of common moral and ethical concern. It goes without saying that with such an imprecise and unstable theological und social self-understanding the church was unable to bring about a satisfactory clarification of her position to the political parties.

At the same time, that is, after the federal elections of 1972, the SPD underwent a process of re-ideologization in questions concerning divorce, as well as in its the general position and the FDP became more ideological concerning, for example, abortion. Also, programmatic statements of both parties defining their relationship to the churches made clear that these parties conceived the church to be at the margin of the German society. Party pronouncements in this period confirmed the Catholic Church's suspicion that the opening of the parties in 1960s to the Catholic church had primarily been a party-political attempt to gain access to religious, Catholic voters. The Catholic Church's more recent attempt to redefine her political goals has focused on the question of how religious values, their validity and justification can be made independent from temporal societal developments and societal evaluation of those values through electoral majority decision. This discussion and re-orientation to those parties that come closest to meeting the norms and limits determined from revelation and the Bible is recognizable in recent pastoral letters of the German Catholic Bishop's Conference to their religious communities

in 1980 and 1983.

Since we have reached the very most recent state of affairs, it is now time to make a few remarks in conclusion concerning an appropriate direction for further study. There is a meandering motion in the Catholic church's relation to the German society. Starting with an unsuccessful attempt to take a more or less neutral position to each German political party in the young Federal Republic, the church has slowly come to realize that its policy has been too idealistic and too optimistic. A close linkage to the interconfessionally designed CDU has been an easily understandable reaction to this new ideological polarization. The consideration of the church's interests from the very beginning by the Parliamentary Council in its design of the Grundgesetz and the later representation of Catholic interests by the charismatic Konrad Adenauer have given way to a rapid identification of Catholics with the new state as a major force in the establishment of the political system. That with this development a solid majority for the CDU was guaranteed is no accident but an intended consequence of the political assurance of the Catholic church's interests. This can be seen in statements of the Catholic Bishop's Conference in their pastoral letters in advance of every federal election. The generational change in the late fifties which was accompanied by a generally observable decline in religious memberships and church attachment, in other words the secularizing process, was the

main reason for the crisis in authority of this time. The loss in authority was strengthened by general societal developments in the mid sixties and the failed or misunderstood attempt to open the church to a bigger part of society. One should view the approach of the Catholic church to the Social Democrats, and vice versa, with the de-ideologization and platform-change in mind. Having dramatically lost in terms of societal importance (through sinking numbers of adherents) the Catholic church has faded considerably from her former political position and from her location at the center of public interest. By the end of the seventies, finally, the religious definition of the relationship of parties to the Catholic Church has again produced an ideological polarization, but one that is not as strong as in the beginning of the Federal Republic.

Thus the Catholic church continues to emphasize a fundamental orientation of politics to norms which can be determined from revelation and the Bible, but she has considerably lost political influence and importance, even among her own adherents.

Finally a look to the Protestants seems appropriate. A general survey of the Protestant church's political engagement should finish the discussion of the religio-political history and recent background of the Federal Republic.

Basically there can be seen to be two traditional strains in German Protestantism, both of which can be traced back to

Luther and the Reformation. The Reformed and "United" strain draws on the writing of the young Luther ("On the liberty of a Christian"), and therefore expresses a religiously and politically more progressive and emancipatory interpretation of Protestantism. The Lutherans, by contrast, orient themselves to the elder Luther and his model of the two kingdoms. Put in a nutshell, the model of the two kingdoms explains divine authority acting in two different worlds - in the first, the secular, God rules in manifold ways in the form of the laws and governmental actions. A given government is therefore to be accepted and respected by every Protestant believer. In the other world, the ecclesiastical, God rules by his divine love and by giving teaching responsibility to pastors, priests, and ministers who interpret the divine will by a close interpretation of the Bible. The worldly nature of this tradition leans towards a conservative political point of view, supporting civil obedience according to the governmental structure of the state and its system of law and order.

While the Lutheran tradition dominated Germany in the 19th century and with it a God-given, Prussian consitutional monarchy, a difficult and ambiguous situation confronted the Protestants during the Weimar Republic. Suddenly there was no longer a government with God-given authority, but a purely political system, which gained its legitimation and sovereignty through a mere human, civic constitutional process.

Even if the Lutheran tradition did not lose not its basic theological model of explanation, Protestantism on the whole experienced for the first time a considerable weakening. Although the Protestant Church lacked cohesive self-understanding and coherent political representation with mobilizing power throughout the second German empire and the Weimar Republic, the weakness became fatal only in the Third Reich. The Nazis had easy access to the Protestant church by founding a church seemingly appropriate to the time, the "Deutsche Christen", a Protestant movement with a clear orientation to, and dependency on, the Nazi government. Only after the establishment of this group did Protestantism see itself forced to respond in terms of a clearly defined political and theological position, namely that of the "Bekennenden Kirche" and the Barmen declaration of 1934. Stammler¹⁰¹ has summarized the whole Protestant experience of the Third Reich in a proportional analogy: "... What Bismarck had been for the Catholics during the Kulturkampf, Hitler was for the Protestants during the Third Reich." The post-war period saw a renaissance of the two traditional Protestant strains with a "United" Protestantism dominating. The necessaria, inner-ecclesiastical debate about the new

¹⁰¹ Stammler, E. Politische Strömungen im deutschen Protestantismus, in: Oberndörfer D., Rattinger, H., Schmitt, K. (eds.) Wirtschaftlicher Wandel, religiöser Wandel und Wertwandel. Folgen für das politische Verhalten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Ordo politicus, Vol. 28, publications of the Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, 1984, p. 238

structures after the church had regained a position guaranteed by the state, was, however, never completed. Instead, the Protestant Church, which, unable to negotiate with secular state power as the Catholic Church did, the Protestant Church has only imperfectly imitated the administrative and organizational structures of the Catholic church. Reformed Protestantism has acted without a clearly defined religio-political concept but participated opportunistically in the protest movements of the time. Regardless of the topic - whether rearmament and NATO, peaceful usage of nuclear energy, or abortion and divorce - political protest was backed by a Protestant Church that used this form of political participation as a substitute for the construction and/or renewal of her inner structures. With regard to the political parties, German Protestantism has divided along the lines of the socio-economic status of its members combined with adherence to one or the other Protestant traditional strains. Until today, Protestantism has remained in this ambiguous and undefined position, all the while actively participating in the peace-movement of the 1980s.

German Protestantism has simply never managed to develop a cohesive religious community nor its own, politically coherent and mobilizing force and identity.

It is easy to conceive that the declining importance of the Catholic church and the less coherent Protestant identity might have direct influences on the political perception and

participation of their adherents. Since this is a essential information, we shall now turn to the question, as to what extent religious traditions and convictions, as well as the impact of the church, determine the political party identification and the actual voting decision. Having answered this question, we shall then turn to a study which undertakes the attempt of a change-over-time-analysis, from which it should be possible to determine whether voting decision can be, generally, used as an indicator of secularization.

CHAPTER V

INDICATIONS OF SECULARITY ?

A study by Pappi¹⁰² dealing with the denominational-religious cleavage of the German electorate produced impressive results, which bear interesting implications for our own study. Even if the study was meant to focus on a better understanding of the denominational-religious cleavage, the data and results of this study are of great value for the argument in the present study. They show, to present them in advance, that church attachment has a much greater influence with respect to party identification on Catholics than it has on Protestants. Also, by contrast, Protestants are more influenced by their individual religious convictions in their party identification than are Catholics. Furthermore, the former denominational cleavage is still observable, but overlaid by a general religion-versus-secularity issue. Finally, an important but not decisive factor is represented by the regional denominational distribution of the adherents of both churches. On the Protestant side, the ratio of the

¹⁰² Pappi, F.U., Die konfessionell-religiöse Konfliktlinie in der deutschen Wählerschaft: Entstehung, Stabilität und Wandel. in: Oberndörfer, D., Rattinger, H., Schmitt, K. (eds.) Wirtschaftlicher Wandel, religiöser Wandel und Wertwandel. Folgen für das politische Verhalten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Ordo politicus, Vol.25, publications of the Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, 1984, p.263

to a certain extent the party affiliation. On the whole, the results produce useful information about the impact of religion on voting.

A 1982 representative German aggregate data survey is the basis for Pappi's study. He took the church attendance frequency as an indicator of church attachment, subdividing the adherents according to their frequency of their church attendance into four categories: core members (attend church at least once a month), marginal members (less than once a month), formal members (never attend church) and former members. Already here the difference in the meaning of church attendance for the two different denominations becomes obvious in the distribution of the adherents' church attendance frequency. For example, according to the given categorization, 47 percent of Catholics can be defined as core members, whereas, on the Protestant side, only 17 percent can be found in this category. The Protestant majority, by contrast, can be found in the group of marginal members representing two thirds of all Protestants.

The control for party identification shows the first result, that the impact of church attendance frequency on Catholics is bigger than that for Protestants. This becomes most clear if one looks at the core member columns of both denominations.

Table 1⁰³ Church Attachment and Party Identification

Party ID	Catholics				Protestants			
	core	marg	form	ex	core	marg	form	ex
	members %				members %			
CDU/CSU	80.3	48.4	34.4	18.5	60.7	37.4	36.0	14.9
SPD	15.6	44.2	51.1	44.4	23.6	51.8	53.6	51.4
FDP	2.9	4.5	7.8	22.2	12.9	8.3	5.6	14.9
GRÜNE	1.2	2.9	6.7	14.8	2.8	2.4	4.8	18.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Non-adherents	21.2	30.5	38.2	36.7	28.4	31.4	40.3	36.7
No answ.	8.1	8.3	7.3	8.2	9.3	11.9	10.3	8.2
N =	590	509	165	49	225	872	253	49

Source: Pappi, F.U., 1982

From the above table it can be determined that the degree of church attendance has a considerable impact on Catholic core members and their party identification with the CDU/CSU. 80.3 percent of the Catholic core members identify with this party. By clear contrast, the appropriate Protestant group does not identify that strongly with the same party. Concer-

¹⁰³ Pappi's table also includes the distribution of non-Christians and other Christians. This is to some extent necessary for his project; for our concern, we can, without falsifying the picture, concentrate in the following on only the appropriate results of the Catholic and Protestant respondents.

ning the marginal members, one can see that the identification of Catholics with the CDU is still higher in comparison with the same group's affiliation with the SPD. A look at the Protestant marginal member column shows the opposite result and confirms again the higher impact of church attendance on party identification among Catholics. Pappi interprets this fact as a remainder from the former denominational conflict. The greater importance of personal religious conviction in determining the voting decision of Protestants is the second result of the study, giving us again some insight into the two different denominational motivations for a voting decision. As it was discovered by a Dutch study¹⁰⁴ of religious convictions, which used 42 indicators of religious convictions, the most salient point was the belief in the existence of God, and the Christian interpretation of life, suffering and death. The questions asked in Pappi's study, therefore concentrated on both aspects. An equal distribution of answers to every question in both denominations among all four member categories excludes thus the hypothesis that the reason for the different party identification among the denominations is a consequence of a different religious

¹⁰⁴ Felling, A., Peters, J., Schreuder, Oswald, Identitätswandel in den Niederlanden, Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, Vol.34, No.1, 1982, p.26ff

Even if the results of this survey are strikingly significant, it remains a controversial question whether such an issue can really be examined in an empirical-analytical fashion.

convictions distribution. The second result we have already mentioned develops, however, from another consideration. Analyzing the relationship between church attachment, religious conviction and party identification, one can observe that both factors are equally important for the Protestants, whereas, on the other side, the significance of church attendance for Catholics assumes a value which is three times as high as for Protestants. Hence one can say, that the importance of the individual religious conviction for identification with a party is much more significant for Protestants than for Catholics. Note, however, that controlling for religious conviction shows a still considerable role of church attendance even for Protestants.

A last result from the Pappi study touches the regional distribution of Catholics and Protestants in the Federal Republic and the impact of region on the denominational voting decision. The geographic distribution of Catholics and Protestant goes generally along a North-South-line. Protestants concentrated more in the North than in the South. A division of the geographic distribution in three different types has therefore been undertaken. According to the primary administrative division of the Länder (Regierungsbezirke) these regions have been divided into predominantly Catholic or predominantly Protestant and mixed areas. The party identification controlling for regional distribution and church attachment shows the following results:

Table 2:

a) Protestant areas

members (percent)

Party ID	core	marginal	formal	total
CDU	72.1	40.9	44.7	46.4
SPD	23.3	51.8	50.0	47.1
FDP	4.6	7.3	5.3	6.6
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non adherents %	23.2	31.0	43.6	32.2
N =	69	352	94	515

Table 3:

b) mixed areas

members (percent)

Party ID	core	marginal	formal	total
CDU	61.0	38.2	39.1	42.9
SPD	23.4	52.3	53.1	46.6
FDP	15.6	9.5	7.8	10.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non-adherents %	30.0	30.1	39.2	31.8
N =	130	425	125	680

Table 4:

c) Catholic areas

members (percent)

Party ID	core	marginal	formal	total
CDU	43.7	29.2	17.6	29.6
SPD	31.3	62.5	82.4	60.5
FDP	25.0	8.3	--	9.9
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non-adherents %	34.6	38.9	35.3	37.4
N =	26	95	34	155

Source a) through c): Pappi, F.U., 1982

If one compares the contents of the tables, the importance of the regional distribution gains significance particularly in respect to the Protestant party identification. The regional denominational distribution has, by contrast, no influence on the party identification of Catholics. As we already know, church attendance is in this religion the significant indicator for a prediction of the party identification.

On the whole, the regional factor seems to be rooted in historical context. Pappi argues that the "catholic voting behavior" of Protestants in Protestant-dominated areas is due to the residual influence of the organizational structure

of the Center party. In mixed and Catholic areas the Catholic CDU adherents simply continued after World War II with the traditional policy of the Center party. Important decisions had already been made under particular consideration of Catholic interests and decisive functions and offices had been filled with Catholic incumbents. Protestant participation in, or identification with, the CDU, therefore, was very difficult and not very likely. Rudimentary parts of the denominational conflict remained, therefore, in these areas. In Protestant dominated areas another development took place. The Center party was not represented in every voting district of the second German empire or the Weimar Republic. Hence, the CDU could continue to build upon the Center-party's political legacy. In these areas, corresponding to the religious majority of the population living in them, Protestants were the movers and initiators of the CDU structure and organization. An identification and participation of Protestants was therefore a natural consequence in respect to the geographic distribution of denominations and party identifications.

The three aspects we have discussed here obviously do not explain every aspect of secularization. But they provide enough information to make certain reflections and suppositions possible. The data discussed have one striking aspect for our secularization question. They show, regardless of the fact that they are based on a aggregate data analysis at a

single point in time, that church attachment is a valid indicator for the religiously and denominationally determined voting decision and an important stabilizer of the religious vote.

If church attachment were to decline further, what consequences could then be expected? It seems very likely that the clearly religiously oriented voting today would then be in decline, too. This, in turn, would mean that the dichotomy, religiosity-secularity would increase advantageously on the secularity side. The considerable part of religious votes would fade, and thus have an enormous impact on general political conditions and the strength of the political parties. In other words, the contrast between the German political parties would diminish, due to the fact that probably only the orthodox ("core") members of a church would vote in a mainly religious fashion, and the majority of today's religiously motivated votes would disappear as a consequence of a decreasing tension between religion and secularism. That does not mean a deterministic development towards a "de-confessionalization" of the party system. It is, however, conceivable that religiously motivated voting only plays an important role in such moral and ethical issues as abortion, divorce, etc. One development has already pointed in this direction. It is the opening of both the SPD and the Catholic church towards each other in the mid-1960s. At that time, a formerly anti-ecclesiastical party became a

voting option even for the Catholic population. In short, if the close linkage of the Catholic church to the CDU were to decrease, then the denominational or confessional aspect of the party system in the Federal Republic would be very likely to change in the above-mentioned ways.

Surely, we have gone too far in the interpretation of our data, since they are not meant to predict possible new developments; however, we have gained significant information about two things that are highly interesting and important in the context of the present study; first of all, our recommendation to take the frequency of church attendance as an indicator for church attachment and not for religiosity has been proved to be correct, or at least more promising, as a way of approaching an analysis of secularization. And, secondly, we have some good reasons to conceive voting behavior analyzed over time - if that is done in an appropriate and careful fashion - to be one indicator among others, worth using, and looking at, in the analysis of secularization.

A study by Schmitt¹⁰⁵ examining the factors of religious voting also tries to deal with the further development of

¹⁰⁵ Schmitt, K. Religiöse Bestimmungsfaktoren des Wahlverhaltens: Entkonfessionalisierung mit Verspätung?, in: Oberdörfer, D., Rattinger, H., Schmitt, K., (eds.) Wirtschaftlicher Wandel, religiöser Wandel und Wertwandel. Folgen für das politische Verhalten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Ordo politicus, Vol.25, publications of the Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute, Freiburg, 1984, p.291

religious voting. Since necessary data for an analysis over time is missing, Schmitt tries to bypass this deficit by replacing the analysis over time with an analysis of age peers. Since he is aware of the implication of such a substitution, he uses a method that might also be worth using for a study not dealing with religious voting motives but with developing processes of secularization.

The assumption on which Schmitt's study is based, is that there is a certain development in the individual life cycle which can account for the stability (or instability) of religious voting. Accepting this assumption, one can select a several aspects which can describe probable developments over time. The decision to vote for the CDU in relation to age and denomination is the analytical starting point.

Table 5:

CDU-voting over denomination and age

Denomination	60 and older	30 - 59	18 - 29
Catholic	70 %	62 %	42 %
N =	125	291	110
Protestant	42 %	39 %	33 %
N =	155	304	95

Source: Schmitt, K., 1984

The data show that the difference between Catholic and Protestant voting for the CDU is decreasing, the younger the

respondents are. The question which one might ask, therefore, would be whether the religious voting motivation becomes less and less important the more the older generation drops out of the electoral process. And if that were the case, could a change in church attachment and in the individual's link to his denomination account for this decrease in the religious factor ?

To answer these questions, Schmitt performed a regression analysis controlling for church attachment and individual denominational relation in each of the three age groups; the results showed that the relation of voting for the CDU and church attachment, as well as the individual denominational link, decreases in the younger age groups. In addition, the respondent's evaluation of the political authority of the church was surveyed. If we include this evaluation in the regression analysis, it becomes obvious, again, that the younger the age groups, the less is the impact of the political authority of the church on the respondent's voting decision. However, it is important to note that the weaker support of the CDU from younger voters is not based on the decreased influence of church attachment or on the individual's relation to her/his denomination, but because the number of those respondents in the youngest age group who place value on the political authority of the church and who are closely linked to their denomination is drastically lower than in all other age groups. Given the fact that this number

would be roughly equal to those of the other age groups then the part voting for the CDU would be of roughly the same size.

If one keeps these results in mind, one can gain some ideas concerning future developments under two assumptions. First, a stabile church attachment (regardless of whether negative or positive) and a stable individual relationship to his/her denomination throughout life has to be assumed. Secondly, a constant individual development of church attachment and relationship to the denomination should be assumed. The two assumptions are important. If there is no constancy in individual development, nor any stability in the relation to both variables, then a reasonable analysis over time is not possible.

The two assumptions themselves are not necessarily the idealistic phantasy of a scientist gazing at figures and tables, that can be operationally specified.

The implication of the two assumptions is simply that it is less likely that church attachment or agreement with the political authority of the church will increase among the younger voters as they become older. Such a trend would only then be conceivable, if individuals were linked with the church early in their lives. Only for such people would it be possible during their youth or during their early adulthood, to deviate from their agreements and later turn back again to both their former acknowledgement of church authority and

their personal relationship to the denomination. In cases, where this early linkage to the church is missing, the above implication is less likely to occur. The important point now is that this early linkage with the church, termed religious socialization, is on the decrease, even among Catholics. If the question asked whether religion has played or plays an important role in their education, the results show that the role religion plays in education is steadily in decline:

Table 6:

Religious education, denomination, and age

Age cohorts (in percent)

Denomination	> 60	45 - 59	30 - 44	18 - 29
Catholic	56	52	31	25
N =	154	170	170	127
Protestant	35	20	14	11
N =	189	166	186	117

Source: Schmitt, K. 1984

This decline is, it seems, a generational process. As soon as a succeeding, less religiously educated, generation itself becomes the parental generation, their children, in turn, will again be less religiously educated. The development which seems to occur is, hence, that over time the succeeding generations will be less religious than their predecessors.

For our study that would mean a constant secularizing process has been observed. We can easily check this point. As we look at our last table, we see that the biggest decrease takes place in the Catholic age groups 45/59 to 30/44. We know that the data have been collected in 1982. Thirty years back from that is the year 1952. Assuming that not all of the respondents cannot exactly remember the days of their early childhood but, for example, some five years later, we also know that a secularizing movement developed in the late 1950s in which the Catholic church was also involved, losing as many as half of her adherents in the upcoming generation. Hence, at least for this age group, the socio-religious development seems to confirm the findings shown in the table. However, it still seems reasonable to insist on a cautious interpretation of the data. First of all, the model is based on the assumption of human constancy and stability. The reasons for these assumptions appear to be plausible; nevertheless the subject under study are human beings, who need not always be - certainly not throughout their entire lives - as constant as is assumed here. Secondly, we must not forget that this was a model dealing with change over time based on representative, aggregate data of 1982. The model has surely served its purpose if it points to several possible developments. In using different, yet equally sophisticated, statistical methods, it has been shown with data concerning one point in time that a decline of religion and its appropriate

influence on the voting decision is now appearing. Admittedly it is less likely, but is this enough evidence to believe-given the same political conditions - that the now older age groups didn't have the same political attitudes in their youth as the youth of today ?

Our point is simply that we do not take Schmitt's model for a completely reliable instrument to show that a change over time has occurred or is occurring. For a serious analysis of such a phenomenon and some reliable and valid conclusions drawn from it, only appropriate data, used and analyzed in the way of Pappi and Schmitt, covering a reasonably long time period can do the job. We agree, however, with Schmitt, since he also observes that the necessary data for a change-over-time-analysis is lacking, that certain promising indications were gained by substituting for the missing data an age-group-data-analysis. Even if we can draw no precise and detailed conclusions from all this, our point has again been confirmed through Schmitt's analytical change-over-time model; religious voting can be a valid and additional, though limited, indicator of secularization.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

Secularization, it seems, remains both difficult to discuss as a theoretical concept and also hard to describe analytically as a social phenomenon. Several concepts have been debated in this study, but not one, it appears, seems to be able to account for all the things that have to be included in the term secularization. But this is no vice. Rather, it is a consequence of the scientific quest to get a definite hold of this phenomenon. Let's put it for a moment in another context: Secularization is a two-headed "animal". The first head consists of two parts named the "private" and the "public sphere"; the second is divided into an individual and a societal part. Scientists are the specialized "battlers" of this hydra, trying to give special martial advice to every one trying to attack one part of one of the two heads. Unfortunately, the scientific warriors always become embroiled in strategic debates among themselves about the right way to attack the monster; although their debates are, on the whole, very helpful in the effort to deal with each of the four parts, they finally miss the original target of their quarrel: to gain control over the two-headed beast. In the end, even if the best strategies have been found, the animal has escaped.

This scenario, admittedly a bit exaggerated, captures,

however, we fear, an important truth. The theorists of secularization discuss conscientiously and resourcefully the levels of analysis, and the different forms and outcomes of secularization. Analyses actually carried out in the proposed ways, however, rare as they are, show only disappointing results. Most of them are entirely descriptive. They give ratios of denominations in a country at different times, changing connotations of rituals, frequencies of church attendance, and so forth - all properly listed; but none of them is capable of even a rough explanation of secularization. Is there really, in the end, no way to show an unmistakably empirical evidence of secularization? Surely there is none, as long as there is such a confusing variety of conceptions of what has to be understood as secularization. These various conceptions are like the confusing array of martial advices we referred to in our parable above. The escaping animal, to stick for a moment to this picture, is a perpetually changing society that might never be caged in a single concept of secularization. Hence, the scientific, theoretical, discussion is bound never to reach an end. Dobbelaere tried to tie two main strains together, namely the individual and the societal levels of analysis, and he thereby gained a huge mosaic of all the parts of secularization; but simultaneously he demonstrated with his approach that one can never sufficiently adumbrate secularization in one single analysis. Hence, like it or not, analytical

patchwork must remain. Specialized analyses have to be made - thus tearing apart Dobbelaere's work -, in order to supply the entire secularization mosaic with its necessary parts. Our patchwork here was an attempt to develop a schematic model as to how one can use the individual's political decision as an indicator for secularization. We created a model that tried to refine certain traditional measurements in a fashion that might give the desired information. During the construction of this model, it became clear that neither church attachment nor individual religious preference alone could be used without a more distinct differentiation to account successfully for secularization. Nor did it seem wise to use both variables, at least in this special context, as a more complex variable of religiosity¹⁰⁶. In our model some twelve additional questions were suggested that promise to complete the missing information. To be sure, this questionnaire is by no means operationalized nor does it pretend to be complete. Much more discussion, particularly as to whether these questions are received by the respondents in the implied way, will be required. Be that as it may, a foundation for further study has been the genuine goal of this model. This further study has dealt, in turn, with the

¹⁰⁶ If we had done so, we would have confirmed Luckmann's argument, who indicts the empirical analysts to make no difference between religiosity and church attachment, nor even more generally between church and religion itself.
in: Luckmann, T., The Invisible Religion, New York 1967, p. 14-20.

question as to what extent voting decisions can be used as an indicator of secularization.

The two studies discussed (Pappi's and Schmitt's) showed that voting decision can reasonably, but only in a limited way, be used as an indicator of secularization. Several reasons may account for this result. There is, first of all, the voting decision itself. The turnout by itself, taken as the sole indicator gives no helpful information simply because it is too general a measurement. Only in linkage with the additional information about the voter's church attachment, which is again subdivided in different levels of membership and the additional information about the voter's general religious and social background and environment (education, family) and her/his age, can helpful results be gained. This does not mean however, that one can simply take these bits of information one by one and immediately assign them an interpretation. By themselves, the variables referred to bear no more information than the voting turnout itself. Rather, it takes sophisticated statistical methods to relate them to each other. Then, and only then, can reasonably valid information about stable or changing developments of secularization be given.

Again, it has to be noted that the above described approach is nothing but a substitute for an analysis-over-time method. Were these data be available, a perhaps much clearer picture would emerge. For the time being, however, we have to satisfy

ourselves with the given data. But even with this indirectly gained information, certain suppositions can be offered. Election after election certain German political voices promised and even emphasized that the latest was the last election in which religion would play a decisive role in the voting turnout and that everything would be totally different in forthcoming elections. They have had to repeat themselves several times. What they had in mind was simply the same assumption that Schmitt made in advance of his analysis: there would be constant development of the individual and, additionally, constant political "enlightenment". The decisive mistake they made is that a constant individual development (in whatever religiously related direction) need not logically result in political change. Although such change is very likely according to the tables we have given above, it is not a necessary consequence of them.

It can be assumed, according to Schmitt's analysis, that with the development shown (religious education in decline and its implications for the party preference) a change in the voting turnout of the Catholic German electorate (de-emphasizing the CDU vote) might occur sometime in the future; - if we leave out of consideration religious revivalism as it appears today in the world in general, and to some extent in the German peace movement in particular. We have certain indications, that an emancipation from the church, and also a greater distance of the relationship between the individual and

her/his denomination will occur; in other words, we can then expect another secularizing wave like the one we already have observed in Germany in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. In any case, precise evaluations require, as it became obvious with Schmitt's attempt, observations of the same indicators over a long period of time. Looking at the German development from 1945 up to the present, we can see inconsistencies all over the place. The Catholic Church deviated from her hard-liner position and tried an opening to a bigger society, later redefined her position and has now approached a location again not too far from her original starting point. The only decisive difference is that she has lost, in the meantime, power, influence and adherents. The political parties, the CDU/CSU, the FDP, and the SPD first became de-ideologized the mid 1960s and then became ideologized all over again in the late 1970s. The population itself is still religiously oriented in its political evaluation. The denominational conflict has disappeared, however, moral and ethical questions are still closely discussed and considered religiously.

Seen in this particularly German context, a secularization analysis is indeed a complex enterprise, certainly if it tries to be more than a mere descriptive survey. Hence, scientific methods, even if they look suspiciously artificial to a green but critical, observer, have to be used to get interesting ideas out of all this. If one accepts this

methodological necessity, being sufficiently careful and reasonable in terms of the applied statistics, then voting behavior, coupled with necessary supplementary information and assumptions in mind, can be a valid and surely reliable indicator of secularization.

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