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Beyond the (post-)secular discourse on religion in the global age

Abstract: In the global age a significant number of people across the world are losing a religious point of reference. Socio-religious ties weaken especially among Europeans but a hybrid secularization pertains to American society as well. The study seeks some new theoretical frames to understand better the phenomena of globalized religion. Therefore the author acknowledges a renewal of individual spirituality, hybrid but also traditional forms of religion, or some permanently liquid, nomadic dimensions of religiosity. Either way whilst analyzing religion one should avoid, however, superficial presuppositions of both kinds: secularism and a wishful-thinking postsecularism.

Key words: religion, globalisation, secular, post-secular, nomadic religiosity.

Introduction

Modern societies of the Global North tend to think of themselves as secular in their organization since a vast majority of Western contemporary democrats pushed religion into the private sphere. Notwithstanding this matters of belief, worldview and *Lebenswelt*¹, morality that is a vague glimpse of religiosity at least, or individualised-like spirituality continue to encompass everyday lives and to form the shape of society. Moreover, in the Global South at most, including the United States of America as an exemption, one can discern a “furiously religious world” as Peter Berger stated in

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¹ A. Schütz, *Life forms and meaning structure*, H. Wagner (trans.), Routledge & K. Paul, London 1982.

consequence of his 'conversion' into the de-secularization idea². Anyhow a group of theorist is still stressing on the progressive way of secularization while referring to the decline in the social role of religion (but at most or exclusively in Christianity?). On the other hand, it is not uncommon for to indicate that "a glance around the world today does not offer a picture of a secular and secularizing world: The continued intensity of churchgoing in the United States, the rapid growth of evangelical churches in Latin America, the spread of New Age spirituality through western Europe, the renewal of faith in postcommunist eastern Europe, and the rise in fundamentalist Islamist movements in the Middle East and beyond suggest a reenchantment of the world in some cases and/or a desecularization of the observer's lens"³.

Either way the term "post-secular" is often used to point out a renewal of the idea of religion as a factor of social, political and cultural influence⁴. Yet in many ways, the term remains unclear, and its usage incoherent. "Post-secular" can refer to the return of religion not on a social scale, but as a discursive aspect of modernity⁵; or it can specify a deconstructive critique of the secular, as well as of its opposite, religion, or an ambivalent discourse about secularity and religion in literature and the arts. Is the condition of up-to-date religion post-modern or post-secular? But the question is rather whether we have ever fully been secular? Notwithstanding that, have we ever purposively been religious? With regards to such questions we are about to consider how useful or meaningless is the discourse on either the secular or non-secular post-modern world. In this article the author wishes to provoke a metatheoretical discussion on the phenomena of religion referring to its intrinsically nomadic character⁶.

Religion in the global age

If one seeks to explore the condition of (post-)modern world one ought to explore ways in which religion and globalization are intertwined. Consequently, if religion is one of the most essential means of organizing social life, then the seeds of globalization may lie within religion itself. We cannot then talk about globalization without talking about religion, but we cannot either talk about religion without considering how it might have laid the foundations for the inception of globalization. Religion, in diverse

² *Religion and World Politics*, P. Berger (ed.), Ethics and Public Policy Centre, Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans Publishing Company, Washington 1999.

³ E. Fokas, *Secularization*, in: *Encyclopedia of Global Religion*, M. Juergensmeyer and W. C. Roof (eds), vol. 2., Sage Publications, Los Angeles and all: 2012, p. 1144.

⁴ J. Habermas, *Secularism's Crisis of Faith: Notes on Post-Secular Society*, "New perspectives quarterly", 2008, vol. 25.

⁵ Ch. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge – London 2007.

⁶ M. Lisak, *Jenseits der (De)Säkularisierung. Entwicklungen zu einer nomadischen Religiosität*, in: *Himmelwärts und weltgewandt. Kirche und Orden in (post-) säkularer Gesellschaft*, T. Dienberg, T. Eggensperger, U. Engel (eds), Aschendorff Verlag, München 2014.

contexts, may serve as an agent of homogenization and social integration, what is a very Durkheimian approach, or as an agent of heterogenization and social separation (or even disintegration). Thus, religion fosters but also resists globalization. Therefore, it is useful to explore typological theories on globalization for the purpose of further analysis on religion.

Considering a functional Mendieta typology of globalization theories we may differentiate three main forms of definition. The type one is monistic or in other terms mono meta-structural. The type two is the matrix rearrangement. The type three is the metatheoretical self-reflexivity. All that three types will be to some extent helpful in the further reflexion on religion.

a) A primary level of defining refers to the scale of processes and rediscovers modernization as the main factor that transforms the meta-structure. Every one subsystem develops and reconfigures under the pressure of the dominant subsystem that is predominantly economy if we see from the globalization's vintage point. In an age of globalization we observe nothing more than diffusion (enlargement) of a particular agent of modernization which is economy. It overwhelms other subsystems like religion, culture, science, jurisprudential principles and others. „The difference between globalization and modernity is one of quantity and not of kind or type“⁷ – how Mendieta states. Hence globalization is understood as intensification of modernity, in other words a more and most accelerated stage of development. Subsequently, globalization is an expansion of modernity that refers to the diffusionist perspective like for Immanuel Wallerstein that underlines the development of the world-economy divided into core, periphery and semiperiphery what is characteristic for modernization approach.

Modernization theory present world development as a process where modern countries helped traditional societies to develop and modernize through the transfer of new technology, values or financial and social capital. In contrast, dependency theory challenged it arguing that the transfers were primarily in the opposite direction, from the poor to the rich. Underdevelopment of former colonies is an effect of their dependency to colonizers. Thus many independent, dominant and developed countries exploited other ones to speed up their own development. Therefore, if we acknowledge secularization as a function of modernization we can adopt both: modernization theory and dependency theory. The former is a simplification of a complex process of advance modernization with secularization as a by-product. The latter is linked to the growth in economy and fostering the social security level that comes with the development and also with secularization as a by-product. The oversimplification is, however, that other factors can play a more important role.

⁷ E. Mendieta, *Society's Religion: The Rise of Social Theory, Globalization, and the Invention of Religion*, in: *Religions/Globalizations. Theories and Cases*, D. Hopkins (ed.), Duke University Press, Durnham – London 2001, p. 48.

Nonetheless, a diffusionist perspective has an impact on the wide spreading of secularization if we assume that the starting point is a religious world. On the other hand, a monistic approach correlates to the religious market theory that takes into account the supply of religion and its compensations. The market competition in religious services between the varied denominations and traditions is a factor of religious progress. A vitality of religion depends thus on a unique market-like meta-structure.

b) The other part of three-fold typology is matrix rearrangement that is anintegrationist point of view with regards to globalization. On this level of analysis a starting point is the presupposition of a planetary whole. Since the wholeness of the globe occurs at first, the matrix of thinking is to be rearranged towards unity, wholeness, consciousness of "globality", a new stage of qualitative change but not a mere aggregation of quantity. As Roland Robertson says, there are two dimensions of globalization: empirical and mental (reflexive). Whereas globalization is „the increasing acceleration in both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole in the twentieth century"⁸. With regards to religion one may follow Robertson when he underlines a growing awareness of the global interrelations. The increasing global connectivity between the diverse religions, including their mutual conflicts and competitiveness, may lead to the intensified reflexive consciousness of a religious dimension of the world. All that notwithstanding, one must call the wholeness of the world into question what undermines either the integrity of religious traditions and their global range. On the other side, it is fairly questionable that we can interpret the condition of a globalised world in (post-)secular terms neither of Habermas' collapse of modernity nor of Taylor's entirely secular age since the world is far from integration.

c) A metatheoretical reflexivity can widen the operating mode while analysing the nexus of globalisation and religion. Through the prism of metatheoretical reflection globalization is seen as a way in which society rediscovers and observes its own integrated structure. Society becomes a self-observing system and cannot be split into aggregation of elements. As Mendieta notes "the global order is different not just in quantity and order but in kind from what has preceded it. The diffusion or expansion of one subsystem is seen by this type of theory as already a function of a global order. If the economy expands and extends to every corner of the planet, this is because we are already part of a planetary whole, similarly with the cultural and religious realms"⁹.

A theoretical reflection on the global leads to Niklas Luhmann's view of a social world that consists of three components: functional subsystems (for example religion),

⁸ R. Robertson, *Globalization. Social Theory and Global Culture*, Sage Publications, London 1992.

⁹ E. Mendieta, *Society's Religion: The Rise of Social Theory, Globalization, and the Invention of Religion*, op. cit., p. 50.

organizations (private, non-governmental), national states. A functional subsystem has neither intrinsic limit to growth nor centre or spatiotemporal position. The private organizations thus oppositely have no interest in the unlimited expansion of any kind subsystems because they are profit orientated. Moreover, the organizations have no solidarity link to the nation state which is supposed to control over the other components. But in fact all three components are in the state of a permanent conflict to each other, even though they are intertwined in a globalised world. Therefore religion, as a functional subsystem, constitutes a part of self-observing system. In the context of globalization religion is seen as an integration force and a separation mean since the structure of the world has been reflected as confrontational. That is underpinned by Anthony Giddens: "Globalization is not a single process but a complex mixture of processes, which often act in contradictory ways, producing conflicts, disjunctures and new forms of stratification. Thus, for instance, the revival of local nationalisms, and an accentuating of local identities, are directly bound up with globalizing influences, to which they stand in opposition"¹⁰. In consequence, we can speak nowadays of the emergence of a "post-traditional social order" with references to a post-traditional meta-theoretical reflexivity on religion.

A critique of mono-structural theories

On the ground of a secularization thesis that refers to the process of modernization and disenchantment of the world, the Euro-American divergence has captured scholars' attention. Even though there are many attempted explanations and diverse interpretations, as Nelson and Gorski¹¹ accurately illustrate, the case of American vigorous pluralistic religiosity and the case of Polish vigorous homogeneous religiosity seem to be inexplicable and abnormal in the light of either secularization models or the market religion thesis. Nonetheless, in both that cases close observers of the global North (Western) religiosity will probably find neither secular interpretation nor market theory of religion convincing. While considering the scale of secularization one should consider the condition of American religiosity. Many social scientists indicate the United States as an exemption to the secularization thesis. Moreover, a substantial number of sociologist, including proponents of religious market theory and the desecularization thesis, points out the rejuvenation of religion in the country. Nevertheless it is rather complicated to interpret the following data in that way.

In the United States in 2007 a vast majority believed in God absolute certain (71%) and further 17% fairly certain. However only seven years later in 2014 the Pew

¹⁰ A. Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right*, Stanford University Press, Redwood City 1994, p. 5.

¹¹ S. Nelson and P. Gorski, *Conditions of religious belonging: Confessionalization, de-parochialization, and the Euro-American divergence*, "International Sociology", 2014, vol. 29(1).

Research Center has surveyed that 63% believed in God absolute certain and 20% fairly certain. If we put the data on the decline is about 5 percent points, from 88% of believing Americans in 2007 to 83% in 2014, but it is far more symptomatic in decreasing in the group of absolute certain faith (by 8 percent points). A slight fall regards religious practices. In 2007 39% of adult Americans declared they attended at religious services at least once a week. That figure dropped to 36% for seven years. However the indicator is still very high when we include the percentage of attending once or twice a month with its 33% in 2007 as well as in 2014. One can evaluate a similar alternation in frequency of prayer. A least daily prayed 58% Americans in 2007 and respectively 55% in 2014. The percentage of at least weekly prayer was 17% in 2007 and respectively 16% in 2014.

There was no sign of revitalization in religious beliefs in the past either. According to the General Social Surveys, 35% of the American adults reported attending religious services nearly every week or more often in 1973; in 1983, that figure had risen slightly to 37%, but in 1993 it was still 35%. The index is of 33% currently. Thus looking at the data one can conclude that there is no evidence to suggest that secularization, meaning a decline in the strength of American church-going, was taking place. On the other hands, there is no evidence to suggest that a revival of religion draws near. Already in the year 2000 Robert D. Putnam has concluded that there had been “a sharp rise in church attendance in the first several decades after World War II, followed by a decline in church attendance of roughly one-third between the late 1950s and the late 1990s”¹².

In addition, Robert Wuthnow, whilst taking into consideration the myths about American religion, points out the decline of participation in religious services. The author stated just a decade ago that “between 5 and 6 percent fewer Americans participate regularly now than in the early 1970s”. The downturn tendency is even more clear when we analyse the different age groups. It is evident that older people attend more often than younger people. But in general “the decline among younger adults is more severe than we might have supposed. Consider the following: Among adults in their 30s who were surveyed between 1972 and 1976, 35 percent attended services regularly, but among adults in the same age group surveyed between 2002 and 2006, only 28 percent did so. Those younger adults in the 1970s were the baby boomers that we heard so much about. We worried then that boomers were going to church less. But now the next wave – the boomers’ children - are attending even less, so that does not bode well for the future”¹³. Hence, the American author claims that the belief “There is no secularization in the USA” is a myth.

¹² R. D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon & Schuster, New York 2000, p. 71.

¹³ R. Wuthnow, *Myths About American Religion*, Available online: www.heritage.org/civil-society/report/myths-about-american-religion [accessed date: 01.12.2017].

The analyse of the recent Pew Research Center surveys gives evidence on that. Among adults 30-49 year olds 33% attended religious service on regular basis at least once a week but respectively 36% in 2007. Among younger adults the rate is much lower yet. In 2007 33% of 18-29 year olds attended at least once a week but yet in 2014 only 27% did so. Simultaneously one can observe a rise in practicing seldom or never among the age group 18-29 year olds: 30% in 2007 and 35% in 2014. Similar figures have the age group 30-49 year olds in the attendance seldom or never: 28% in 2007 but as much as 32% in 2014. As a result my interpretation comes towards the conclusion as follows: one can observe rather a hybrid secularization of the American society than any post-secular revival of religion.

Respectively, in the context of the West, it is rather Europe an exemption to re-sacralisation of the world than the United States that used to be a classic exemption to the overwhelming secularisation thesis. Apart from the secularization hypothesis one may reconsider the explanatory value of religious market theory¹⁴. Consequently, the weaknesses of the market model soon became apparent. Gorski and Nelson underpin this: "the new theory seemed to provide a simple explanation for the Euro-American divergence. In the US, it appeared, free markets had led to high levels of »religious vitality«, while in Europe, uncompetitive markets had led to low levels of »religious participation«. But there were major deficits as well. For instance, the model proved unable to account for regional variations within the US and cross-national variations within Europe (...). In both cases, one of the confounding factors was Roman Catholicism. Contrary to the expectations of the model, predominantly Catholic regions of the US and predominantly Catholic countries in Europe tended to have higher levels of religious vitality than Protestant ones, even relatively pluralistic ones, despite the fact that their religious markets were fairly monopolistic"¹⁵.

Besides that, if we even take religious vitalisation for granted it does not correspond to just de-secularisation. So far re-sacralisation across already laicized or secularized societies has not been observed. Desecularisation is not going on among secular societies. On the other hand, it is a myth to deny any secularisation and to claim that secularisation has been replaced by desecularisation that understood as a religious renaissance¹⁶. Hence I would rather admit the traditional secularization thesis needs to be updated and moreover secularization processes shall not to be understood as an 'iron law' but only as a tendency. Thinking of a secularization tendency I agree with Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart in regard to the following conclusion: "the e

¹⁴ A. Blasi, *A Market Theory of Religion*, "Social Compass", 2009, vol. 56(2).

¹⁵ S. Nelson and P. Gorski, *Conditions of religious belonging: Confessionalization, de-parochialization, and the Euro-American divergence*, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁶ P. Gorski and A. Altinordu, *After Secularization?*, "Annual Review of Sociology", 2008, vol. 34.

that importance of religiosity persists most strongly among vulnerable populations, especially those living in poorer nations, facing personal survival-threatening risks"¹⁷.

If we observe a vitality of religion it is neither a direct proof of religious revival in up-to-date secularised societies nor a denial to secularisation. In that context, the secularisation-desecularisation debate seems to be rather an example of ideological clash and wishful thinking on both sides. The mainstream world religions, including Christianity, still play an important role in the world, and religion, in general, if understood as the need for meaning, unity and identity is one of the key factors for constructing and pertaining both individual and group identity, and in consequence a vehicle for public or political actions in a post-modern world. The traditional religions remain a hub-port for popular or new spirituality. The crisis affects, however, Christianity in its traditional structures and functions, and the process of de-secularisation is not replacing secularisation in a simplistic way.

A critique of the awareness of global wholeness

Due to the limits of this study I restrict my response, at this point, to a few mainline remarks. At the risk of some oversimplification, the approaches of various scholars and several analyses can be put together. The map of religious factors in civil society that is being worked out is becoming a complex and multidimensional one. The term 'secularization' is not up to the task of providing an explanation of the (post-)modern world. The human social condition is still open to religiosity. The diversity and complex trends should not be restricted to one determinate influence or factor. Modernization of civil societies, even in Western culture, is not correlated coefficiently to a reduction of some religious practices and identity. Religion, privately and publicly, is alive and a rather influential factor in social behaviour. Simultaneously, the face and shape of religion is changing significantly.

According to Beyer's analysis, most future social subsystems will have a "virtual religious quality" or some of them will be "expressly religious" because "global civic religion is both possible and likely; but there will be more than one of them and these will simply be more religious offerings besides others, both systemic and cultural. (...) the perspective of the whole is not a privileged one in our society. We live in a conflictual and contested social world where the appeal to holism is itself partisan. That paradox alone is enough to maintain the religious enterprise, even if with more risk and less self-evidence"¹⁸. Thus secularization, as one of the holistic claims, is not

¹⁷ P. Norris and R. Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and all 2011, p. 4.

¹⁸ P. Beyer, *Religion and Globalization*, Sage Publications, London 1994, p. 227.

useful for the evaluation of civil societies of the 21st century in the global age that reflects the world's unity.

Besides that Philip Jenkins may pay our attention towards a transfer of 'Christian gravity' from the traditional, healthy and wealthy global North into the global South. When juxtaposed the North and South are different, but not diametrically opposed. Assuming that the equator between the North and South are distinctly liberal and conservative would be an overly generalized assumption. The use of the terminology North and South should always be seen as an overview or an average, for neither is clearly a distinct entity, but rather an outline of a diverse expression of religious and political perspectives. The key difference in practice and faith that divides Northern and Southern Christians, is the belief in spiritual forces and the way those forces effect society (including a political society) on a daily basis¹⁹.

Jenkins claims that the global North accepts the "Enlightenment driven assumption that religion should be segregated into a separate sphere of life, distinct from everyday reality. In the Western view, religion may influence behavior in what is often, revealingly, termed the real world, and faith might even play a significant role but the spiritual life is primarily a private inward activity, a matter of the individual mind"²⁰. Hence the global North is committed to the separation of the sacred and secular. On the contrary, Southern Christians strongly believe that there should not be a separation in the church and state, while they seem to "live in an intellectual world far closer to the medieval world rather than to western modernity"²¹. In other words, Christian believers of the Southern hemisphere do not recognize any functional differentiation of social subsystems nor many "western" issues like secularization, desecularisation or other demands of post-secular world.

Furthermore, the American sociologist evaluates the nature of worldwide religious disagreement that lasts over many regions for decades. He endeavours to foresee alternatives for a clash between the main religions. Nonetheless his prognosis is biting: by the mid twenty-first century nine largest nations are likely to be predominantly Muslim, eight predominantly Christian, and further three mostly and deeply divided on the matter of religion. Jenkins named already 15 years ago (the first edition of his book published in 2002) as potential regions of conflict the following: Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Europe, and the Middle East²². These hitherto conflict are happening now. These conflicts are: the worldwide clash between Christianity and Islam and the regional clashes between Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity in Asia, including Myanmar very recently.

¹⁹ P. Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: the Coming of Global Christianity*, Oxford University Press, New York 2011, p. 152.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 152.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 171.

²² *Ibidem*.

Paradoxically thus, the rise of the new Christendom on the Global South can be one factor of feuding.

In correspondence to that a German political scholar, Hans Kippenberg, considering some monotheistic cases of violence, shows that they all give the lie to the idea of any kind of necessary link between monotheism and violence. One should not deduce a practice from the language of violence that is used in many cases of aggression as its justification or acceleration. Nonetheless, the opposite statement is false also. Acts of apostasy and of the violent defense of religious principles show up that, in contrast, monotheistic religions are intrinsically peaceful (by self), and religion-based violence is only an abuse to religion itself. "There is a link between monotheism and violence, but one must call this contingent: it is neither necessary nor impossible. It depends on the current situation of a faith community"²³. All of that give us the proof how vague is an idea of universality and awareness of a globalised but integrated world.

A new meta-theoretical proposal: nomadic aspect of religiosity

Globalization as a self-reflecting term leads to the notion of hybridization. The latter is the process and result of "multiple elements from diverse backgrounds combining and interacting to create something new. Religions, identities, peoples, social practices, cuisines, music, the arts, and styles of dress and speech can all be hybridized through the meeting and intermingling of various cultural practices and social products". Diverse and differentiated elements and identities become fused, combined and are melding into each other that lead to new forms of identity and create new elements of social interactions. Hence for religious institutional structures hybridization does mean the reshaping of traditional forms. However, for the purpose of our study a changing on the individuals level is far more interesting.

A considerable amount of empirical facts standing behind the hypothesis that cultural relativization, in the global age, leads to the moral shifts; it builds up deeper awareness of the global trends and different local cultures and styles of life; or it produces a mixture of interdependencies. Diverse networks, like market economy, the electronic media and Internet, and means of transport all together link the distant localities in such a way that local events are outlined by experiences occurring in the remote corner of the world and vice versa. Therefore the individuals and the groups quite easy confront the shifting and relativization of the reference point²⁴. As result, Zygmunt Bauman (1997) claims that living in the state of liquid postmodernity does generate a demand for cultural and existential security but not for any religious

²³ H. Kippenberg, *Violence as Worship: Religious Wars in the Age of Globalization*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 2011, p. 22.

²⁴ Wnuk-Lipiński, *Świat międzyepoki*, Znak, Kraków 2004.

reference. The traditional religions cannot supply that demand since religion is an awareness of human insufficiency. By contrast, according to Bauman, “people living in ‘risk society’ do not appreciate the religious message of vulnerability, but are longing for the reassurance that they are able to deal with the uncertainties and need a short introduction in the way they can do this. They need experts” (De Groot 2008: 279).

Notwithstanding with Bauman’s neglecting of the role of religion - except three dimensions of it: fundamentalism, instant and aesthetic communities, and association of individuals – we observe that a counter-reaction to relativization of reference points may provide through religion. Many individuals are seeking for strong identity that can be found in different paths of religious traditions, including even hybrid ones. One may find how religion is present in the middle of liquid modernity as Keet de Groot demonstrates persuasively: “Church based religion seems to be of continuing importance in liquid modernity” (2008: 291). Besides that religion may hope to have some future forms advance though without a metaphysical character then different to traditional and institutional ones²⁵.

Following this reflection I would like to consider a nomadic dimension of religion that is one of intrinsic characters of religious experience. Due to the limits of that study I will present only few main assumptions taking as the reference point Beyer notion on “the relativization of particularistic identities along with the relativization and marginalization of religion as a mode of social communication”²⁶. Thus, in the matrix of global, a growing awareness of nomadic nature of religion can be an outcome of theoretical reflection.

What is the usage of the term ‘nomadic’? then nomadism and how it can be conceptualised as a sociological hypothesis? How theoretical reflection on a nomadic religiosity can stand in for the analysis of religious transformation in the contemporary Western world or even enclose some solutions? Traditionally, a nomad society is on the move wandering in regions where they are not enough resources to remain in one place longer. The Greek term *νομάδες* connotes individuals roaming about for pasture. In today’s context a nomad is referred to an itinerant who moves, with his or her community, from one location to another, rather than settling permanently in one place. However, in cultural studies and sociological anthropology nomadism refers neither to primordial form of social/human experience nor to pastoralism. It does transcend these meanings as tending towards social adaptation and eagerness of searching. Nomads have special and efficient ways of adapting to arid and unpredictable climatic local conditions. In cultural terms, nomads are eager to shifts and exchange in social life but persistent in their tendency towards strong convictions and determined to confirm chosen identity²⁷.

²⁵ R. Rorty and G. Vattimo, *The Future of Religion*, Columbia University Press, New York 2005.

²⁶ P. Beyer, *Religion and Globalization*, op. cit., p. 4.

²⁷ P. Alabarces, *Culture and the periphery: Nomadic wanderings in the Argentine sociology of culture*, “Current Sociology”, 2012, vol. 60 (5).

A substantial number of nomads, as independent individuals, have their own extraordinary sense of superiority and firm conviction that they are sole master of their actions but not subjects to external authority unless that of their own choice. Nomadic bands and tribes are based on kinship and marriage ties or on formal agreements of cooperation. Furthermore, in sociological terms, nomadism is characterized by high mobility – spatial and social, horizontal and vertical - individual independence but simultaneously group solidarity, eagerness to change, and deterritorialisation. Nomads, as solitaire individuals or small affiliations, can easily cross spatial and time borders to make new homes in new religious movements and forms of societal institutions or rediscover old homes of ancient, traditional, golden-age like conventions.

At this point, I want to emphasise the mobility of religiosity-based affiliations and religious experience that move easily across denominations, traits of spirituality, modes of religious rituals, ethics, beliefs and opinions. Hence nomads can organize *Gemeinschaft*-like (community) type of social association. In the contemporary post-industrial world, nevertheless, a new model of community association that is engulfed into a post-Durkheimian society. “The secular age is schizophrenic – writes Taylor – or better, deeply cross-pressured. People seem at a safe distance from religion; and yet they are very moved to know that there are dedicated believers (...) It’s as though many people who don’t want to follow nevertheless to hear the message of Christ, want it to be proclaimed out there. The paradox was evident in the response to the late Pope. Many people were inspired by John Paul’s public peripatetic preaching, about love, about world peace, about international economic justice. They are thrilled that these things are being said. But even many Catholics among his admirers didn’t feel that they must follow all his moral injunctions. And in an expressive, post-Durkheimian world, this is not a contradiction. It makes perfect sense”²⁸.

Alongside that, even Polish practicing Catholics do represent a post-Durkheimian society which allows every person to live on his or her own, in freedom to construct spiritually one’s own identity. Anyone can also express his or her beliefs and convictions publicly. A new form of subjective (but not just privatized nor individualistic) religion can then play a significant role, not in the traditional Durkheimian sense (religion offers societal ties on the large scale of country or nation) but in one’s individual choices and so produces a civil, vicarious spirituality. At the same stage, such a post-Durkheimian society is a place where the sense of the belonging to a group becomes fused with one’s confession. Nomadic religiosity through its mobility and eagerness to change can explain thus inter-denomination swaps, the growth of integristic and fundamentalistic trends – like for example levfebrism, biblical fundamentalism or creationism²⁹.

²⁸ Ch. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, op. cit., p. 727.

²⁹ M. Lisak, *Jenseits der (De)Säkularisierung. Entwicklungen zu einer nomadischen Religiosität*, op. cit.

If religious nomads cannot find enough spiritual resources in their primordial local environment they migrate in seeking for plausible reservoirs of meaning or for groups they are willing to belong to. The journey might be geographical and spatial as well as ideological and historical – diachronic. In cities that provides variety of spiritual resources many urban migrants commute for religious purposes on a regular basis. Deterritorialization and diminishing of the role of local affiliation (like a territorial parish) are being fostered. Ethnic chaplaincies and personal parishes attract emigrants supporting their separation from the local religious communities. Pilgrims and religious-orientated tourist travel to so-called “magic places” or “loci sacri” what gives a temporal satisfaction to them³⁰. Busy agents of market economy look for some relief from the routine of day-to-day work and urban rush hours in retreats offered in an asylum of peace far away from traffic and workplace. Young believers, including clergy and religious women and men, quite often try to return to abandoned liturgical and theological traditions from the past like for example: Latin mass according to the Tridentine rite, resurgence of the medieval theologies, pope Pius X like anti-modernism, ritualistic emphasis of pope Benedict XVI.

Collective or group nomadism and its twofold mobility: diachronic and spatial is an option for the time of secularity, as understood by Taylor, who argues that religions are moving away from their strong community and institutional forms towards a new meaning of religion as “something on which we all have to have an ‘opinion’”³¹. Nevertheless, the notion of secularity is far any ideological form. On the contrary, secularity is rather a basic condition of life, it is the pre-ontological milieu in which any “belief in God is no longer axiomatic”³². Religion is just one alternative out of many possible ones and as an alternative can be adopted by groups of nomads or individual nomads wandering about. The cycle of wandering and searching for meaning gives, however, an impulse to integrate and protect spiritual beliefs and religiosity in nomadic forms.

Conclusions

Coming back to the segmentation given by Casanova, who is one of the prominent proponents of desecularisation and postsecularism, it is worth noticing that as a concept (not a theory, thesis or paradigm), secularization should be examined according to three independent analytical distinctions. Secularization as a differentiation of the secular realm from religious institutions and moral values seems to be rather

³⁰ L. Voyé, *The Need and the Search for Sacred Places. A Sociological Perspective*, in: *Loci Sacri. Understanding Sacred Places*, T. Coomans and all (eds.), Leuven University Press, Leuven 2012.

³¹ Ch. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, op. cit., p. 464.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

plausible. The specific point of that is a fading away of the privileged position of formal and traditional religions (especially Christian denominations) as a dominant social system (or subsystem). This observation is similar to an understanding of the concept of secularization as a decline of religious beliefs and practices. In that case a more explicable term is 'deinstitutionalization'. In turn, particularly unclear is the understanding of secularization as the marginalization of religion to a privatized sphere. Even in many regions of the world where there is no kind of public, official religion, the impact of religiosity (understood at least as a resource of symbolic meaning) on a personal *Weltanschauung* seems to be underestimated. Thus very many public agents, and citizens as well, are making decisions on a religion-like basis. Nevertheless, in any event we should examine every particular society and region individually, accordingly to a subsystemic role of some religion or religiousness, to evaluate a characteristic of both, using for example some concepts like "hard" or "soft" secularization³³, desecularization, or multidimensional transformation towards deinstitutionalization of "diffused religion".

The future of both religion and the formal churches and other religious institutions is never fully determined and cannot be exactly foreseen. A sociologist is neither a prophet nor future-teller, and predictions encompassing all social facts are rarely confirmed. The institutionalized churches may retain their influence upon their members, but this probably will tend to diminish. When one takes seriously into account the convictions of Americans or Poles, with a hybrid secularization³⁴ of the last numerous Catholic society in Europe, one can conclude that the ways of the institutional Churches and of independent believers are tending towards separation and maybe even towards mutual hostility³⁵. Both societies are witnessing a multi-dimensional transformation of religiosity which is closer to a hybrid secularization than to desecularization. Moreover, some new meta-theoretical categories like the aforementioned nomadism may

It seems to be evident that various people across the world are losing a religious point of reference. Socio-religious ties weaken especially among Europeans. On the other hand, one may acknowledge a renewal of individual spirituality, hybrid but also traditional forms of religion, or some permanently liquid, nomadic dimensions of religiosity. Either way whilst analyzing the religion's phenomena one should avoid superficial presuppositions of both kinds: secularism and a wishful-thinking desecularisation approach.

³³ G. Davie, *Europe: the Exception That Proves the Rule?*, in: *The Desecularization of the World. Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, P. Berger (ed.), Ethics and Public Policy Centre, Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans Publishing Company, Washington 1999; Davie G., *The Sociology of Religion*, Sage Publications, London 2007.

³⁴ M. Lisak, *Between Secularization and Desecularization. Draft of the Polish Case*, "Angelicum", 2009, vol. 86.

³⁵ I. Linden, *Global Catholicism. Diversity and Change since Vatican II*, Hurst, London 2009.

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