

# Chapter 1

## Religion Challenging the Myth of Secular Democracy

José Casanova

For the last two to three centuries it was religion that was on the defensive, being constantly challenged by secular modernity. Today it is Western secular modernity, another of our mental constructs, that feels intellectually and politically challenged by religion. In this presentation, I would like to examine this political challenge coming from religion under three separate headings: the challenge of ‘de-privatization’, the challenge of ‘confessional de-territorialization’, and the challenge of ‘global denominationalism’. It would be misleading, however, to view those challenges as if they were coming from religion per se. Rather, religions and the secular across the world are being transformed in multiform ways by global historical processes that we tend to conceptualize under the shorthand category of globalization. In other words, contemporary global historical processes are creating conditions of possibility and opportunity structures for religions to be transformed in manifold ways that challenge our received conceptions of Western secular modernity. This is particularly the case in Western Europe, where secular modernity as a construct had become hegemonic, a kind of ‘unthought’ *doxa*, the taken-for-granted assumption of elites as well as of ordinary people.

### The Challenge of ‘De-privatization’

It has been over a decade now since the publication of my book *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994), and it can be asserted with some confidence that the thesis first presented there that we were witnessing a process of ‘de-privatization’ of religion as a relatively global trend has been amply confirmed. The most important contribution of the book, in my view, was not so much the relatively prescient empirical observation of such a new global trend, but the analytical-theoretical and normative challenge that my thesis presented to liberal theories of privatization claiming that religion in the modern world was and ought to remain an exclusively ‘private’ affair. I argued that such a claim was no longer defensible either empirically, as evidenced by global historical trends, or normatively, since there was no valid justification, other than secularist prejudice, to exclude religion from the democratic public sphere. In a certain sense, the best confirmation of the validity of the ‘de-privatization’ of religion can be found in the heartland of

secularization, that is, in Western European societies. It is here that the challenge of 'de-privatization' is most keenly felt.

To be sure, there is very little evidence of any kind of religious revival among the European population, if one excludes the significant influx of new immigrant religions. At most one could say that the general precipitous decline in individual religious belief may have come to a halt throughout much of Europe and we may be witnessing a slight upward trend in 'belief' among the younger generations. But this is a form of 'private' religion, of 'believing without belonging', in Danièle Hervieu-Léger's apt characterization, that does not translate into greater participation in public religious ceremonies of any kind, much less does it present a political challenge to secular democratic structures.

But religion has certainly returned as a contentious political issue to the public sphere of European societies. It may be premature to speak of a post-secular Europe, but certainly one can sense a significant shift in the European zeitgeist. At first, the thesis of the de-privatization of religion found practically no resonance among Western European publics, academic and non-academic alike, with the exception of small groups within the sociology of religion or of small intellectual religious publics. The privatization of religion was simply taken too much for granted both as a normal empirical fact and as the norm for modern European societies. The concept of modern public religion was still too dissonant, and religious revivals elsewhere could simply be explained or rather explained away as the rise of fundamentalism in not yet modern societies. But recently, in the last four to five years at least, there has been a noticeable change in attitude and attention to religion throughout Europe. Every second week one learns of a new major conference on religion being planned somewhere in Europe, or of the establishment of some newly funded research center or research project on 'religion and politics' or on 'immigration and religion' or on 'religion and violence' or on 'inter-religious dialogue'. None of this would have been thinkable even a decade ago. Most tellingly, there are very few voices in Europe today simply defending the old thesis, unrevised and unadorned, that religion is and ought to remain an exclusively private affair. Even the self-assured French *laïcité* is on the defensive and ready to make some concessions. The question is no longer whether religion will remain private, but how to contain the de-privatization of religion within acceptable limits, so that it does not present a major threat to our modern secular liberal democratic structures.

The terrorist attacks of September 11th, successive terrorist bombings in London and Madrid, and the many foiled attempts elsewhere, as well as the resonance of the discourse of the clash of civilizations in light of the 'global war on terror' pursued by the Bush administration and the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq – all of these developments have certainly played an important role in focusing European attention on issues of religion. But it would be a big mistake to attribute this new attention solely or even mainly to the rise of so-called Islamic fundamentalism and the threats and challenges that *jihād*ist terrorism poses to the West and particularly to Europe. Internal European transformations contribute

equally to the new public interest in religion. General processes of globalization, the global growth of transnational migration and the very process of European integration, particularly the possibility of Turkey joining the European Union, are presenting crucial challenges not only to the European model of the national welfare state but also to the different kinds of religious–secular and church–state settlements that the various European countries had achieved in post-World War II Europe, as well as to the civilizational identity of Europe.

My own analysis of the de-privatization of religion tried to contain, at least normatively, public religions within the public sphere of civil society, without allowing them to spill over into political society or the democratic state. Today I must recognize my own modern Western secular prejudices and the particular hermeneutic Catholic and ‘ecclesiastical’ perspective on religion that I adopted in my comparative analysis of the relations between church, state, nation and civil society in Western Catholic and Protestant societies. The moment one adopts a global comparative perspective, one must admit that the de-privatization of religion is unlikely to be contained within the public sphere of civil society, within the territorial boundaries of the nation-state, and within the constitutional premises of ecclesiastical disestablishment and juridical separation of church and state. We need to go beyond the secularist discourse of separation and beyond the public sphere of civil society, in order to address the real issues of religious democratic politics across the world. Alfred Stepan’s model of the ‘twin tolerations’ offers in my view one of the most fruitful approaches.

The ‘secular’ nature of the modern European state and the ‘secular’ character of European democracy serve as one of the foundational myths of the contemporary European identity. There is a frequently heard secular European narrative, usually offered as a genealogical explanation and as a normative justification for the secular character of European democracy, that has the following schematic structure: Once upon a time in medieval Europe there was, as is typical of pre-modern societies, a fusion of religion and politics. But this fusion, under the new conditions of religious diversity, extreme sectarianism, and conflict created by the Protestant Reformation, led to the nasty, brutish and long-lasting religious wars of the early modern era that left European societies in ruin. The secularization of the state was the felicitous response to this catastrophic experience, which apparently has indelibly marked the collective memory of European societies. The Enlightenment did the rest. Modern Europeans learned to separate religion, politics and science. Most importantly, they learned to tame the religious passions and to dissipate obscurantist fanaticism by banishing religion to a protected private sphere, while establishing an open, liberal, secular public sphere where freedom of expression and public reason dominate. Those are the favorable secular foundations upon which democracy grows and thrives. As the tragic stories of violent religious conflicts around the world show, the unfortunate de-privatization of religion and its return to the public sphere will need to be managed carefully if one is to avoid undermining those fragile foundations.

But how 'secular' are the European states? How tall and solid are the 'walls of separation' between national state and national church and between religion and politics across Europe? To what extent should one attribute the indisputable success of post-World War II Western European democracies to the triumph of secularization over religion, as is usually done? If one looks at the reality of 'really existing' European democracies rather than at the official secularist discourse, it becomes obvious that most European states are by no means strictly secular nor do they tend to live up to the myth of secular neutrality.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, France appears to be the only Western European state that is officially and proudly 'secular,' that is, that defines itself and its democracy as regulated constitutionally by the principles of *laïcité*. By contrast, there are several European countries with long-standing democracies that have maintained established churches. They include England and Scotland within the United Kingdom, and all the Scandinavian Lutheran countries – Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Finland and, until the year 2000, Sweden. Of the new democracies, Greece has also maintained the establishment of the Greek Orthodox Church. This means that, with the exception of the Catholic Church, which paradoxically has eschewed establishment in every recent (post-1974) transition to democracy in Southern Europe (Portugal, Spain) and in Eastern Europe (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia), every other major branch of Christianity (Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Orthodox) is officially established somewhere in Europe, without apparently jeopardizing democracy in those countries.

Since on the other hand there are many historical examples of European states that have been secular and non-democratic, the Soviet-type communist regimes being the most obvious case, one can, therefore, safely conclude that the strict secular separation of church and state appears to be neither a sufficient nor necessary condition for democracy, despite the frequently repeated cautionary warnings directed didactically at non-Western cultures undergoing processes of democratization, as if implying 'do as we believe, not as we actually do'.

Indeed, one could advance the proposition that, of the two clauses of the First Amendment to the US Constitution, 'free exercise' of religion, rather than 'no establishment', is the one that appears to be a necessary condition for democracy. One cannot have democracy without freedom of religion. In fact, 'free exercise' stands out as a normative democratic principle in itself. The 'no-establishment' principle, by contrast, is defensible and necessary only as a means to free exercise and to equal rights. Disestablishment becomes politically necessary for democracy wherever an established religion claims monopoly over the state territory, impedes the free exercise of religion, and undermines the equal rights of all citizens. This was the case of the Catholic Church before it officially recognized the principle of 'freedom of religion' as an unalienable individual right. In other words, secularist

<sup>1</sup> In the following section I am going to rely heavily on Alfred Stepan's analysis of the 'Twin Tolerations' and democracy, particularly on the section 'Separation of Church and State: Secularism? Some Empirical Cases', in Stepan, 2001 (218-25). GEORGETOWN

principles per se may be defensible on instrumental grounds, as a means to the end of free exercise, but not as an intrinsically liberal democratic principle in itself.

Alfred Stepan has pointed out how the most important empirical analytical theories of democracy, from Robert Dahl to Juan Linz, do not include secularism or strict separation as one of the institutional requirements for democracy, as prominent normative liberal theories such as those of John Rawls or Bruce Ackerman tend to. As an alternative to secularist principles or norms, Stepan has proposed the model of the ‘twin tolerations’, which he describes as ‘the minimal boundaries of freedom of action that must somehow be crafted for political institutions *vis-à-vis* religious authorities, and for religious individuals and groups *vis-à-vis* political institutions’ (Stepan 2001: 213). Religious authorities must ‘tolerate’ the autonomy of democratically elected governments without claiming constitutionally privileged prerogatives to mandate or to veto public policy. Democratic political institutions, in turn, must ‘tolerate’ the autonomy of religious individuals and groups not only to complete freedom to worship privately, but also to advance publicly their values in civil society and to sponsor organizations and movements in political society, as long as they do not violate democratic rules and adhere to the rule of law. Within this framework of mutual autonomy, Stepan concludes, ‘there can be an extraordinarily broad range of concrete patterns of religion–state relations in political systems that would meet our minimal definition of democracy’ (ibid.: 217).

This is precisely the case empirically across Europe. Between the two extremes of French *laïcité* and Nordic Lutheran establishment, there is a whole range of very diverse patterns of church–state relations, in education, media, health and social services, and so on, that constitute very ‘unsecular’ entanglements, such as the consociational formula of pillarization in the Netherlands, or the corporatist official state recognition of the Protestant and Catholic churches in Germany (as well as of the Jewish community in some *Länder*).<sup>2</sup> One could of course retort that European societies are de facto so secularized and, as a consequence, what remains of religion has become so temperate that both constitutional establishment and the various institutional church–state entanglements are as a matter of fact innocuous, if not completely irrelevant. But one should remember that the drastic secularization of most Western European societies came after the consolidation of democracy, not before, and therefore it would be incongruent to present not just the secularization of the state and of politics, but also the secularization of society as a condition for democracy.

<sup>2</sup> John Madeley has developed a tripartite measure of church–state relations, which he calls the TAO of European management and regulation of religion–state relations by the use of Treasure (T: for financial and property connections), Authority (A: for the exercise of states’ powers of command) and Organization (O: for the effective intervention of state bodies in the religious sphere). According to his measurement all European states score positively on at least one of these scales, most states score positively on two of them, and over 60% of all states score positively on all three. (Madeley 2007)

In fact, at one time or another most continental European societies developed confessional religious parties that played a crucial role in the democratization of those societies. Even those confessional parties that initially emerged as anti-liberal and at least ideologically as anti-democratic, as was the case with most Catholic parties in the 19th century, ended up playing a very important role in the democratization of their societies. This is the paradox of Christian Democracy so well analyzed by Stathis Kalyvas (1996). Catholic political mobilization emerged almost everywhere as a counter-revolutionary reaction against Liberalism and its anti-clerical assault on the Catholic Church. Political and even social Catholicism was in many respects fundamentalist, intransigent and theocratic. Focusing on Catholic ideology and doctrine, one was bound to conclude that Catholicism and democracy were indeed antithetical and irreconcilable, as the liberal and Protestant anti-Catholic discourse never tired of stressing throughout the 19th century (Casanova 2005). Yet, somehow, the dynamics of electoral competition led to the transformation of Catholic parties everywhere. Those parties, in turn, by embracing democratic politics made a fundamental contribution to the consolidation of democracy in their respective countries. With important variations the similar story repeats itself in Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium and Italy, the countries where Christian Democracy became dominant after World War II.

Kalyvas's conclusions concerning the role of non-liberal Catholic parties and, as he also points out, the role of similarly non-liberal Social-Democratic parties in the democratization of Western European societies, are poignantly relevant at a time when the alleged incompatibility of Islam and democracy and the supposedly anti-democratic nature of Muslim parties are so frequently and publicly debated. Equally forgotten is the fact that the initial project of a European Union was fundamentally a Christian-Democratic project, sanctioned by the Vatican, at a time of a general religious revival in post-World War II Europe, in the geopolitical context of the Cold War when 'the free world' and 'Christian civilization' had become synonymous. Indeed, ruling or prominent Christian Democrats in the six signatory countries of the Treaty of Rome – Germany, France, Italy and Benelux – played a leading role in the initial process of European integration. But this is a history that secular Europeans, proud of having outgrown a religious past, from which they feel liberated, would apparently prefer not to remember.

When Europeans today observe with dismay different types of political religious mobilization elsewhere throughout the world, whether Muslim political parties in Turkey, religious mobilization in American electoral politics, or religious nationalism in India, to give some prominent examples, rather than remembering their own recent past recognizing in them typical historical European patterns that have become globalized along with many other aspects of European modernity, they prefer to view these phenomena as manifestations of the otherness of non-Western cultures that have not yet learned to live up to the standards of European secular modernity, or alternatively they prefer to recall the forgotten histories of their own religious wars centuries ago, finding solace in the fact that they at least have been able to overcome such irrational religious passions.

## The Challenge of ‘Confessional De-territorialization’

The most astounding aspect of the European secular foundational myth is the often repeated assertion that the secularization of the European state system was a felicitous response, a kind of positive learning from the catastrophic experience of confessional inter-religious warfare. It should be obvious that such a historical narrative, grounded in the self-understanding of the Enlightenment critique of religion, is indeed a historical myth. The religious wars of Early Modern Europe and particularly the Thirty Years’ War (1618–48) did not ensue, at least not immediately, into the secular state, but rather into the confessional one. The principle *cuius regio eius religio*, established first at the Peace of Augsburg and reiterated at the Treaty of Westphalia, is not the formative standard of the modern secular democratic state, but rather that of the modern confessional territorial absolutist state. Nowhere in Europe did religious conflict lead to the secularization of state and politics, but rather to the confessionalization of the state and to the territorialization of religions and peoples. Moreover, this early modern dual pattern of confessionalization and territorialization was already well established before the religious wars and even before the Protestant Reformation. The Spanish Catholic state under the Catholic Kings serves as the first paradigmatic model of state confessionalization and religious territorialization. The expulsion of Spanish Jews and Muslims who refused to convert to Catholicism is the logical consequence of such a dynamic of state formation. Ethno-religious cleansing, in this respect, stands at the very origin of the early modern European state.

From such a perspective, the so-called ‘religious wars’ could also more appropriately be called the wars of early modern European state formation. Religious minorities caught in the wrong confessional territory were offered not secular toleration, much less freedom of religion, but the ‘freedom’ to emigrate. The Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, with its multi-confessional Catholic, Protestant–Lutheran and Orthodox ruling aristocracies, offers the unique exception of a major early modern state that resisted the general European dynamic of confessionalization and offered refuge to religious minorities and radical sects from all over Europe, well before North America and other overseas colonies offered a safer haven.

The pattern of confessionalization of European peoples, states and nations, and the pattern of territorialization that it entails, has lasted well into the 20th century. In many respects it is still present today throughout Europe despite its advanced secularization. The territorial confessional boundaries between Catholic and Protestant, Lutheran, Calvinist, Presbyterian and Anglican communities have remained basically stable until today, and peoples’ identities throughout Europe remain confessional even after they cease believing. Thus, Danièle Hervieu-Léger’s characterization ‘belonging without believing’ captures equally well the European religious–secular situation, and nowhere more so than in Nordic Lutheran Europe.

Denmark offers a perfect example. It combines one of the lowest rates of regular church attendance – in the single digits, as low as East Germany, and in this respect it is one of the most secular societies of Europe – with one of the highest rates of membership affiliation in the national established church and one of the highest rates of participation in religious rites of passage such as baptism, confirmation and burial of the dead, almost as high as those one finds in much more religious societies such as Catholic Poland or Ireland. It is not only that atheists in Denmark, like Professor Sven-Eric Liedman from neighboring Sweden, may recognize themselves to be Lutheran atheists, as a kind of cultural negative photograph that they unavoidably carry in their minds. More striking is the fact that, judging from the numbers of self-declared atheists and of self-declared affiliated members of the Danish Lutheran Church, at least one-third of Danish atheists still claim to be members of the Danish Church. One may retort that this is just the innocuous expression of an implicit national confessional identity, a residual manifestation of a long historical pattern of fusion of church, state and nation. But this is precisely my point, that this is a deeply sedimented European pattern of confessional territorialization that may not be so innocuous historically if one considers the serious problems that modern and supposedly secular nationalism throughout Europe had with the ‘Jewish question’ and if one considers the apparent problems that European societies have in integrating Muslim immigrants today.

This is the fundamental political challenge that Islam represents for European societies as well as for European secular and religious confessional identities today. Not the geopolitical territorial clash of confessional civilizations depicted by Samuel Huntington, but rather the challenges that both Muslim immigrants within Europe and a modern Muslim democratic Turkey hoping to join the European Union present to the European pattern of confessional territorialization as well as to the pattern of European secularization. Western European societies are deeply secular societies, shaped by the hegemonic knowledge regime of secularism. As liberal democratic societies, they tolerate and respect individual religious freedom. But due to the pressure towards the privatization of religion, which among European societies has become a taken-for-granted characteristic of the self-definition of a modern secular society, those societies have a much greater difficulty in recognizing some legitimate role for religion in public life and in the organization and mobilization of collective group identities.

Muslim organized collective identities and their public representations become a source of anxiety not only because of their religious otherness as a non-Christian and non-European religion, but more importantly because of their religiousness itself as the other of European secularity. In this context, the temptation to identify Islam and fundamentalism becomes the more pronounced. Islam, by definition, becomes the other of Western secular modernity. For that very reason, the prospect of Turkey’s joining the European Union generates much greater anxiety among Europeans, Christian and post-Christian alike. The paradox and the quandary for modern secular Europeans, who have shed their traditional historical Christian identities in a rapid and drastic process of secularization that has coincided

with the very success of the process of European integration, and who therefore identify European modernity with secularization, is that they observe with some apprehension the reverse process in Turkey. The more 'modern', or at least democratic, Turkish politics become, the more publicly Muslim and less secularist they also tend to turn out to be.

In its determination to join the EU, Turkey is adamantly staking its claim to be, or its right to become, a fully European country economically and politically, while simultaneously fashioning its own model of Muslim cultural modernity. It is this very claim to be simultaneously a modern European and a culturally Muslim country that baffles European civilizational identities, secular and Christian alike. It contradicts both the definition of a Christian Europe and the definition of a secular Europe. Turkey's claim to European membership becomes an irritant precisely because it forces Europeans to reflexively and openly confront the ambiguities and contradictions in their own civilizational identity.

Moreover, the question of the integration of Turkey in the EU is inevitably intertwined, implicitly if not explicitly, with the question of the failed integration of Muslim immigrants. What makes 'the immigrant question' particularly thorny in Europe, and entwined inextricably with 'the Turkish question', is the fact that, in continental Europe at least, until very recently immigration and Islam have been almost synonymous. This entails a superimposition of different dimensions of 'otherness' that exacerbates issues of boundaries, accommodation and incorporation. The immigrant, the religious, the racial and the socio-economic disadvantaged 'other' all tend to coincide. Moreover, all those dimensions of 'otherness' now become superimposed upon Islam, so that Islam becomes the utterly 'other'. Anti-immigrant xenophobic naturism, the conservative defense of Christian culture and civilization, secularist anti-religious prejudices, liberal-feminist critiques of Muslim patriarchal fundamentalism, and the fear of Islamist terrorist networks, are being fused indiscriminately throughout Europe into a uniform anti-Muslim discourse that practically precludes the kind of mutual accommodation between immigrant groups and host societies that is necessary for successful immigrant incorporation.

I want to insist, however, that secularist anti-religious prejudices make the problem of Muslim immigrant integration particularly difficult. It is indeed astounding to observe how widespread is the view throughout Europe that religion is intolerant and creates conflict. According to the 1998 ISSP public opinion survey, the overwhelming majority of Europeans, practically over two-thirds of the population in every Western European country, holds the view that religion is 'intolerant' (Greeley 2003: 78, Table 5.2). Since people are unlikely to expressly recognize their own intolerance, one can assume that in expressing such an opinion Europeans are thinking of somebody else's 'religion' or, alternatively, present a selective retrospective memory of their own past religion, which fortunately they consider to have outgrown. It is even more telling that a majority of the population in every Western European country, with the significant exception of Norway and Sweden, shares the view that 'religion creates conflict'. Interestingly enough, the

Danes distinguish themselves clearly from their fellow Lutheran Scandinavians in both respects. They score higher than any other European country, as high as 86 per cent, on the view that religion creates conflict, and score the second highest (79 per cent) after the Swiss (81 per cent) on the belief that religion is intolerant. Along with most other former communist countries, the Poles score well below the Western European average on both issues, which is striking given the widespread perception of Polish Catholicism as ‘intolerant’ and the fact that religion in Poland has in fact been a source of conflict.

What would seem obvious is that such a widespread negative view of ‘religion’ cannot possibly be grounded empirically on the collective historical experience of European societies in the 20th century or on the actual personal experience of most contemporary Europeans. It can plausibly be explained, however, as a secular construct that has the function of positively differentiating modern secular Europeans from ‘the religious other’, either from pre-modern religious Europeans or from contemporary non-European religious people, particularly from Muslims. Most striking is the view of ‘religion’ in the abstract as the source of violent conflict, given the actual historical experience of most European societies in the 20th century. ‘The European short century’, from 1914 to 1989, using Eric Hobsbawm’s apt characterization, was indeed one of the most violent, bloody and genocidal centuries in the history of humanity. But none of the horrible massacres – not the senseless slaughter of millions of young Europeans in the trenches of World War I; nor the countless millions of victims of Bolshevik and communist terror through Revolution, Civil War, collectivizations campaigns, the Great Famine in Ukraine, the repeated cycles of Stalinist terror and the Gulag; nor the most unfathomable of all, the Nazi Holocaust and the global conflagration of World War II, culminating in the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – none of those terrible conflicts can be said to have been caused by religious fanaticism and intolerance. All of them were rather the product of modern secular ideologies.

Yet contemporary Europeans obviously prefer to selectively forget the more inconvenient recent memories of secular ideological conflict, retrieving instead the long-forgotten memories of the religious wars of early modern Europe to make sense of the religious conflicts they see today proliferating around the world and increasingly threatening them. Rather than acknowledging the common structural contexts of modern state formation, inter-state geopolitical conflicts, modern nationalism and the political mobilization of ethno-cultural and religious identities, processes central to modern European history that became globalized through the European colonial expansion, Europeans prefer seemingly to attribute those conflicts to ‘religion’ – that is, to religious fundamentalism and to the fanaticism and intolerance that are supposedly intrinsic to ‘pre-modern’ religion, an atavistic residue that modern secular enlightened Europeans have fortunately left behind. One may suspect that the function of such a selective historical memory is to safeguard the perception of the progressive achievements of Western secular modernity, offering a self-validating justification of the secular separation of religion and politics as the condition for modern liberal democratic politics.

## The Challenge of Global Denominationalism

Processes of globalization are challenging simultaneously the patterns of European secularization as well as the patterns of confessional territorialization. Trans-societal migrations and the world religions, at times separately but often in conjunction with each other, have always served as important carriers of processes of globalization. In a certain sense, one could argue that the successive waves of migration of *homo sapiens* out of Africa some fifty thousand years ago and the subsequent settlements throughout the globe constitute the point of departure of the process of globalization. But these migrations had no subjective dimension of reflexive consciousness and can only now be reconstructed objectively thanks to advances in DNA and other scientific technologies. By contrast, the subjective dimension of imagining a single humanity sharing the same global space and the same global time was first anticipated in all universalistic world religions. Yet, these imaginary anticipations, while serving as a precondition for the civilizational expansion of the world religions, lacked a structural, that is, objective and material global base.

Until very recently, the civilizational *oikoumenē* of all world religions had very clear territorial limits, set both by the very world regimes in which those religions were civilizational and thus territorially embedded, and by the geographically circumscribed limitations of the existing means of communication. What constitutes the truly novel aspect of the present global condition is precisely the fact that all world religions can be reconstituted for the first time truly as de-territorialized global imagined communities, detached from the civilizational settings in which they have been traditionally embedded. Paraphrasing Arjun Appadurai's image of 'modernity at large', one could say that the world religions, through the linking of electronic mass media and mass migration, are being reconstituted as de-territorialized global religions 'at large.'

For that very reason, Huntington's thesis of the impending clash of civilizations is simultaneously illuminating of the present global condition and profoundly misleading. It is illuminating insofar as it was one of the first prominent voices calling attention to the increasing relevance of civilizations and civilizational identities in the emerging global order and in global conflicts. But it is also profoundly misleading inasmuch as it still conceives of civilizations as territorial geopolitical units, akin to superpowers, having some world religion as its cultural core.

This process of dissociation of territory, religion and civilizational culture is by no means uniform or homogeneous across world religions and civilizations; indeed, it encounters much resistance on the part of states that still aspire not only to the monopolistic control of the means of violence but also to the administrative regulation of religious groups and cultural identities over their territories, as well as on the part of 'churches', in the broad Weberian sense of the term, as religious institutions or as religious imagined communities that claim or aspire to religious monopoly over their civilizational or national territories.

There is a fundamental tension in the modern world between two well-recognized principles. There is on the one hand the principle of the inalienable right of the individual person to freedom of conscience and therefore to freedom of religion, but also to freedom of conversion. This principle has assumed in all modern democratic societies the form of an unquestioned universal human right. Nobody should be coerced or forced to believe or not to believe any particular religious doctrine. Consequently, everybody has also the right to believe or not to believe any particular religious doctrine, including the right to conversion to any particular religion. On the other hand, there is also the increasing recognition of the collective rights of peoples to protect and preserve their traditions and their cultures from colonial, imperialist and predatory practices. Such recognition is enshrined primarily in United Nations documents on the rights of indigenous peoples. But it could easily be turned into a general principle of the reciprocal rights and duties of all peoples of the world to respect each others' traditions and cultures, constituting the basis of what could be called an emerging global denominationalism.

Actually, one finds practically everywhere similar tensions between the protectionist impulse to claim religious monopoly over national or civilizational territories and the ecumenical impulse to present one's own particular religion as the response to the universal needs of global humanity. Transnational migrations and the emergence of diasporas of all world religions beyond their civilizational territories make this tension visible everywhere. Of course, neither transnational migrations nor the resulting diasporas is a novel phenomenon per se. It is the general, almost universal character of the phenomenon under novel global conditions that makes it particularly relevant for all world religions.

For obvious historical reasons this process of dissociation of world religion, civilizational identity and geopolitical territory is most pronounced in the so-called 'Christian' West, but it is emerging as a general global phenomenon. We are accustomed to think of Western Christianity as a 2000-year-old civilization, but sociologically speaking the core institutions and social forms of Western European Christendom that form one of the foundations of modern Western civilization are only one thousand years old: the first five hundred years as Medieval European Christendom centered around the Papacy and the next five hundred years as modern Western Christianity both in its post-Reformation multi-denominational forms and in its expanded Western colonial and post-colonial forms. As we are entering the third millennium, however, we are witnessing the end of hegemonic European Christianity due to a dual process of advanced secularization in post-Christian Europe and the increasing globalization of a de-territorialized and de-centered Christianity. Thus, the thousand-year-old association between Christianity and Western European civilization is coming to an end. Western Europe is less and less the core of Christian civilization, and Christianity in its most dynamic forms today is less and less European or even Western.

The transplantation of Western Christianity beyond its European territories was at first a function of the European colonial expansion. European Christianity became de-territorialized overseas by displacing either the natives or their religions,

in Catholic Latin America, in the Philippines, in Catholic Quebec, in Protestant North America, and in Afrikaans (Dutch Calvinist) South Africa, to name only the most obvious cases. Irish immigrants, themselves colonized by the British, further transplanted Catholicism throughout the Anglo-Saxon colonial world. Other European Catholic immigrants, Germans and Italians, Poles and other Slavs, would follow. But until the 20th century overseas Catholicism had been primarily a transplanted European institution. Today, however, world Catholicism has been reconstituted as a global religious regime ‘at large’ under papal supremacy.

Protestant Christianity is undergoing similar transformations throughout the globe. Following the Reformation and the consolidation of the European system of states, all the Protestant churches underwent similar processes of national territorialization. The dissident sects and all the branches of the English Reformation found a new home in North America. If the territorial parish is the naturalized form of the local church, the congregation is the characteristic form of the local sect. In America, the sectarian principle of voluntary, individualistic, religious association became generalized into the ‘denomination’. It is the pluralist denominational structure of the American religious subsystem that transforms all religions in America, Christian and non-Christian alike, irrespective of their origins, doctrinal claims and ecclesiastical identities, into de-territorialized denominations. At the local level, all adopt the congregational form of a voluntary association.

As in the Americas, the growth of Christianity throughout Africa and Asia could have been viewed at first as simply the transplantation of European Christianity throughout the colonial world. But colonial Christianity soon underwent diverse processes of indigenization and acculturation. Indeed, it is in the religious sphere where it is most evident that to reduce cultural globalization in all its many-sided complexities to Westernization is simply short-sighted.

If the transformation of contemporary Catholicism illustrates the opportunities that the process of globalization offers to a transnational religious regime with a highly centralized structure and an imposing transnational network of human, institutional and material resources, which therefore feels confident in its ability to thrive in a relatively open global system of religious regimes, contemporary Pentecostalism may serve to illustrate the equally favorable opportunities that globalization offers to a highly decentralized religion, with no historical links to tradition and no territorial roots or identity, and that therefore can make itself at home anywhere in the globe where the Spirit moves.

We may take Brazil as a paradigmatic example. The transnational character of Brazilian Pentecostalism is inscribed in its very beginnings. It arrived from the United States as early as 1910, just a few years after the Azusa Street Revival, brought by European immigrants, by an Italian and two Swedish missionaries who had encountered Pentecostalism in Chicago. Yet almost immediately Pentecostalism assumed an indigenous Brazilian form. In this sense, Brazilian Pentecostalism represents a dual process of de-territorialization: North-American Christianity is de-territorialized by taking indigenous roots in Brazil, a Catholic territory, that therefore leads to the de-territorialization of Catholicism from Brazil.

Copyright © 2010. Ashgate Publishing Ltd. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher, except fair uses permitted under U.S. or applicable copyright law.

This is the most important consequence of the explosive growth of Pentecostalism throughout Latin America. Latin America has ceased being Catholic territory, even if Catholicism continues to be for the foreseeable future the majority religion of all Latin American countries. It is estimated that currently two-thirds of all Latin American Protestants are Pentecostals–Charismatics. Latin America, particularly Brazil, has become in a very short time a world center of Pentecostal Christianity, wherefrom it has now begun to radiate in all directions, including back into the United States.

The growth of Pentecostal Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa (Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa) is no less explosive. Moreover, African Pentecostalism is as local, indigenous and autonomous as its Latin American counterpart. The same could be said about Pentecostalism in Korea or in China. Korean missionaries, for instance, are becoming ubiquitous in evangelical missions throughout Asia. Indeed, Pentecostalism's expansion must be seen as a multi-source diffusion of parallel developments across the globe. Pentecostalism is not a religion with a particular territorial center like the Mormon Church, which is rapidly gaining worldwide diffusion. Nor is it a transnational religious regime like Catholicism with global reach. As Paul Freston has pointed out, 'new churches are local expressions of a global culture, characterized by parallel invention, complex diffusion and international networks with multilateral flows.' Pentecostalism may be said to be the first truly global religion. Moreover, Pentecostalism is simultaneously global and local. In this respect, it is historically unique and unprecedented. It is the historically first and paradigmatic case of a de-centered and de-territorialized global culture.

Similar illustrations could be offered from other branches of Christianity and from other world religions. The dynamic core of Anglicanism no longer resides in post-Christian England. But today, immigrants from all over the British post-colonial world are reviving Anglicanism in secular England. The Patriarch of Constantinople is re-emerging, at least symbolically, as a de-territorialized global center of Eastern Christianity, in competition with the Moscow patriarchate and with the other territorial autocephalous national Orthodox churches. For the world religions globalization offers to all the opportunity to become for the first time truly world religions – that is, global –, but also the threat of de-territorialization. The opportunities are greatest for those world religions like Islam and Buddhism that always had a transnational structure. The threat is greatest for those embedded in civilizational territories like Islam and Hinduism. But through worldwide migrations they are also becoming global and de-territorialized. Indeed, their diasporas are becoming dynamic centers for their global transformation affecting their civilizational homes.

When it comes to Islam, we in the West are naturally obsessed with state Islamism and *khilafist jihādism* as the two contemporary dominant forms of globalized Islam. Yet the majoritarian currents of transnational Islam today and the ones likely to have the greatest impact on the future transformation of Islam are transnational networks and movements of Muslim renewal, equally disaffected

from state Islamism and transnational *jihādism*. They constitute the networks of a loosely organized and pluralistic transnational *ummah*, or global Muslim civil society: from the ‘evangelical’ Tablighi Jama’at, a faith movement highly active throughout the Muslim world and in Muslim diasporas, whose annual conferences in India represent the second largest world gathering of Muslims after the *hajj*, and other transnational *dawa* networks, to the neo-Sufist Fethullah Gülen’s educational network, active throughout Turkey, Turkish diasporas and the Turkic republics of Central Asia, and other Sufi brotherhoods such as the Mourides of West Africa who have also expanded their transnational networks into the Muslim diasporas of Europe and North America. One could make a similar analysis of the formation of a global Hindu *ummah* linking the civilizational home, ‘Mother India’, with old diasporic colonial Hindu communities across the former British Empire from South East Asia, to South Africa, to the Caribbean, and with new immigrant Hindu communities throughout the West, from the British Isles, to North America, and to Australia.

It is this proliferation of de-territorialized transnational global imagined communities, encompassing the old world religions as well as many new forms of hybrid globalized religions such as the Bahais, Moonies, Hare Krishnas, Afro-American religions, Falun Gong, and so on, that I call the emerging global denominationalism. To a certain extent, this global denominationalism is most clearly visible in the new global immigrant societies of North America, the United States and Canada. American religious pluralism is expanding and incorporating all the world religions in the same way as it previously incorporated the religions of the old European immigrants. A complex process of mutual accommodation is taking place. Like Catholicism and Judaism before, other world religions, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism are being ‘Americanized’ and in the process they are transforming American religion, while the religious diasporas in America are simultaneously serving as catalysts for the transformation of the old religions in their civilizational homes, in the same way that American Catholicism had an impact upon the transformation of world Catholicism, and American Judaism has transformed world Judaism.

America is bound to become ‘the first new global society’ made up of all world religions and civilizations, at a time when religious civilizational identities are regaining prominence at the global stage. At the very same moment that political scientists like Samuel Huntington are announcing the impending clash of civilizations in global politics, a new experiment in intercivilizational encounters and accommodation between all the world religions is taking place at home. Indeed, this emerging pattern of global denominationalism within the United States presents a challenge not only to Huntington’s vision of the clash of civilizations but also to his American nativist anti-immigrant and anti-multiculturalist posture, which tries to protect the Western civilizational purity of the United States from civilizational, particularly Latino-Mexican, hybridization.

But the pattern of global denominationalism presents equally frontal challenges to European models of secular cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism is used here

in the broad sense of any worldview that envisions the future global order as a single relatively homogeneous and unified global economic, political and cultural system or as a single human ‘universal civilization’. To a certain extent, most theories of globalization share similar cosmopolitan assumptions insofar as they assume that economic and technological globalization will determine the shape of global society and of global culture. Though more complex, Luhmannian theories of ‘world society’ are based on similar assumptions.

Cosmopolitanism builds upon developmental theories of modernization that envision social change as a global expansion of Western modernity, which is understood not as the hegemonic expansion of a particular social formation, but as a universal process of human development. In most cosmopolitan accounts, religion either does not exist, or it is simply ‘invisible’ in Thomas Luckmann’s sense of the term of being an individualized and privatized form of salvation or quest for meaning that is irrelevant to the functioning of the primary institutions of modern society. In its collective dimension, religion is simply reduced to just another form of cultural group identity. If and when religion emerges in the public sphere and has to be taken seriously, it is usually branded either as anti-modern fundamentalism resisting processes of secularization, or as a form of traditionalist collective identity reaction to the threat of globalization. In other words, religion in the eyes of cosmopolitan elites is either irrelevant or reactive. Indeed, when it comes to religion all forms of cosmopolitanism share at least implicitly the basic tenets of the theory of secularization that the social sciences and modern liberal political ideologies have inherited from the Enlightenment critique of religion. Cosmopolitanism remains a faithful child of the European Enlightenment.

It is time to revise our teleological conceptions of a global cosmopolitan secular modernity against which we can characterize the religious ‘other’ as ‘fundamentalist’. It is time to make room for more complex, nuanced and reflexive categories that will help us to understand better the already-emerging global system of multiple modernities. As long as we maintain this concept of a single cosmopolitan modernity as a general process of secular differentiation, indeed as a normative global project, we are compelled to characterize all forms of religion we cannot accept as our own as threatening ‘fundamentalism’, and we become ourselves unwittingly partisans in a supposedly worldwide secular-religious conflict perhaps even helping to turn the so-called ‘clash of civilizations’ into a self-fulfilling prophecy. What is at stake, ultimately, is the recognition of the irremediable plurality of universalisms and the multiplicity of modernities – namely, that every universalism and every modernity is particularistic. We are moving from a condition of competing particularist universalisms to a new condition of global denominational contextualism.

Cosmopolitanism, like the theories of modernization of the 1960s, is still based on a rigid dichotomous contraposition of tradition and modernity, assuming that the more of the one leads to the less of the other. But in fact, it is well recognized today that societies can become ever more modern while simultaneously reproducing or reconstructing their traditions (or inventing new ones). The clash of civilizations,

by contrast, emphasizes the essential continuity between tradition and modernity. Western modernity is assumed to be continuous with the Western tradition. As other civilizations modernize, rather than becoming ever more like the West they will also maintain an essential continuity with their respective traditions. Thus the inevitable clash of civilizations, as all modern societies basically continue their diverse and mostly incommensurable traditions.

The multiple modernities position rejects both the notion of a modern radical break with traditions and that of an essential modern continuity with tradition. All traditions and civilizations are radically transformed in the processes of modernization, but they also have the possibility of shaping in particular ways the institutionalization of modern traits. The model of *aggiornamento* is perhaps a more adequate image of the dynamic and reciprocal relations between tradition and modernity. Traditions are forced to respond to and adjust to modern conditions, but in the process of reformulating their traditions for modern contexts they also help to shape the particular forms of modernity. No modern culture is simply a continuation of pre-modern traditions, otherwise there would be no common modernity and no common modern traits. But modernity is not simply a homogeneous formation to which traditions have simply to adapt. There is a continuous dynamic relationship whereby multiple traditions help to shape multiple modernities while modernity radically alters all traditions.

Indeed, all world religions are forced to respond to the global expansion of modernity by reformulating their traditions in an attempt to fashion their own particular civilizational versions of modernity. Moreover, they are responding not only to the global challenge of secular modernity but also to their mutual and reciprocal challenges, as they all undergo multiple processes of *aggiornamento* and come to compete with one another in the emerging global system of religions. This is what I would call the emerging global denominationalism.

I repeat, what constitutes the truly novel aspect of the present global condition is precisely the fact that all religions, old and new, can be reconstituted for the first time truly as de-territorialized global imagined communities, detached from the civilizational settings in which they have been traditionally embedded. Through the linking of electronic mass media and mass migration, all world religions are being reconstituted as de-territorialized global religions 'at large'. In most instances, moreover, diaspora communities are playing a crucial role in the contemporary reconstitution of all world religions as competing global ummahs. Under conditions of globalization, moreover, the world religions draw not only upon their own traditions but increasingly upon one another. Intercivilizational encounters, cultural imitations and borrowings, diasporic diffusions, hybridity, creolization, and transcultural hyphenations are as much part and parcel of the global present as Western hegemony, cosmopolitan homogenization, religious fundamentalism or the clash of civilizations.

## References

- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at Large*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Casanova, J. (1994). *Public Religions in the Modern World*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Casanova, J. (2001). 'Religion, the New Millenium and Globalization', *Sociology of Religion*, 62:4, pp. 415–41.
- Casanova, J. (2005). 'Catholic and Muslim Politics in Comparative Perspective', *The Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, 1:2 (December), pp. 89–108.
- Greeley, A.M. (2003). *Religion in Europe at the End of the Second Millenium*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.
- Hervieu-Léger, D. (2000). *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Hobsbawm, E. (1994). *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991*, New York: Vintage.
- Luckmann, T. (1967). *The Invisible Religion*, New York: Macmillan.
- Kalyvas, S.N. (1996). *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Madeley, J.T.S. (2007). 'Unequally Yoked: The Antinomies of Church–State Separation in Europe and the USA', unpublished paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, 30 August to 2 September.
- Stepan, A. (2001). 'The World's Religious Systems and Democracy: Crafting the "Twin Tolerations"', in *Arguing Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 213–53.