Christophe Monnot · Jörg Stolz *Editors*

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ISBN 978-3-319-77260-8 ISBN 978-3-319-77261-5 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018939422

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer International Publishing AG part of Springer Nature.
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Foreword: From the USA to Europe and Back

In the early 1980s, scholars studying religion in the United States noticed a curious absence. Amid all our attention to individual beliefs, changing theologies, and demographic shifts, we knew very little about local congregations. With two thirds of the US population claiming affiliation with a local parish or congregation, and nearly 40% claiming to attend with some regularity, the organizational forms and dynamics of the groups to which they belonged – some 350,000 of them, located more densely across the social landscape than any other voluntary organization – were not unimportant.[1] Nor, in the American voluntary system, could we assume that every local congregation was simply the franchise expression of a centralized religious authority. There was good reason to believe that congregations were enormously varied and that the variations might have real and interesting consequences.

That American social scientists should take the lead in studying this particular religious organizational form should not be surprising. Europeans settling the eastern part of the continent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were far from whatever religious authority had formerly governed their lives, and even those not theologically predisposed to autonomous congregations organized that way by default (Dolan 1987). The congregational form of religious organizing evolved into the disestablished form of religious governance that was eventually enshrined in the US Constitution. When the Congress gave up the role of establishing and regulating religious expression, the field was left open for the religious entrepreneurial energies of successive waves of pioneers and immigrants. Observing these historical patterns and their effects on the religious groups that found a home on US soil, R. Stephen Warner (1993) declared that the normative pattern of religious organization in the United States is "de facto congregationalism." That is, Americans of all

[1] The most complete data on American congregations are collected every 10 years by the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (http://www.rcms2010.org/). Data on religious affiliation and participation are collected via several national surveys, with the most comprehensive being the Pew Religious Landscape Survey (http://www.pewforum.org/files/2015/05/RLS-08-26-full-report.pdf).

religious traditions assume that they must (and can) voluntarily organize their own religious community and should have a say in its support and governance. Therefore, if one wishes to understand American religion, one has to take the congregation as a serious object of study.

By the 1990s, congregations were on the scholarly agenda – primarily among sociologists, but spanning social work, anthropology, history, and the emerging field of practical theology. We were documenting community involvement and social service delivery, internal conflict, ritual patterns, and the role of congregations in immigrant assimilation, among other topics.[2] By the end of the decade, we knew enough about the basic contours of congregational life to figure out what kinds of questions to ask on a National Congregations Survey (Chaves 2004). As Chaves's chapter in this volume shows, the successive replications of that statistically representative survey have now established an invaluable base for organizational and cultural analyses of all sorts. With sustained attention, we have assembled a body of knowledge, along with concepts and frameworks, for analyzing our data. Because we know more about congregations, we know more about American religion.

Until recently, the field of congregational studies has seemed rather exclusively suited to the study of American religion and to impose it elsewhere seemed to some a kind of intellectual imperialism (Bender et al. 2011). In some parts of the world, religious gatherings are primarily matters of episodic ritual observance, not gathered congregations. In other parts of the world, anti-religious states make it very difficult to organize anything around religious identity or practice. In still others, local parishes are present, but are taken for granted as the expression of a cultural identity and an external authority that funds them and determines their organizational contours. Still, those longstanding indigenous religious patterns have been significantly disrupted by the global movement of populations, including religious groups. No part of the world has been untouched by Protestant evangelists carrying the congregational model with them, as well as Muslim entrepreneurs organizing mosques. Religious entrepreneurs of all sorts seem to find this local form of religious organizing conducive to their goals. It now seems inevitable that the study of congregations will escape its American container.

The UK was the first European outpost of congregational studies, sparked by the work of organizational theorist Margaret Harris (1998) and enriched by a range of ethnographic work (Guest et al. 2004). This reflects the reality that British religious organizational culture is closer to the United States' than are other European cultures, and that the two academic cultures have considerable interchange. This current volume marks the welcome emergence in the rest of Europe of research that takes local religious gatherings as its focus.

[2] Among the important early studies were Robert Orsi's history of *The Madonna of 115th Street* (Orsi, 1985), Edgell's documenting of modes of conflict (Becker, 1999), Ammerman's assessment of patterns of congregational adaptation (Ammerman, 1997), and the studies of immigrant congregations in *Gatherings in Diaspora* (Warner & Wittner, 1998).

Why Congregations at This Moment in Europe?

As never before, assumptions about the role of religion in European societies are being challenged. The established majority churches have endured two generations of steady precipitous decline. As the number of believers and regular attenders has reached record lows, participation is increasingly seen as a voluntary choice, rather than a civic duty or family tradition (Davie 2000; 2015). And while many nonparticipants are still paying their church taxes, the stability of church funding schemes is no longer taken for granted. There is some reason to wonder whether the religious foundations of European societies are shaking sufficiently to open space for the sort of local autonomy that would make some parishes more like congregations.

Space for alternative religious gatherings has long been possible, of course, although in degrees that vary from country to country. Post-Westphalia, each prince might determine the faith of his territory, but over time various Protestant groups gained a measure of legitimacy in Catholic lands. Jews formed synagogues with and without legal protection. And established Protestant churches made room for a limited number of other recognized religious groups within their territories. These non-majority groups, of necessity, have operated with a degree of “congregationalism” alongside the establishment parishes in their communities.

Over the last few decades, as participation in established churches has dwindled, other alternatives have emerged alongside the historic minorities. “Alternative spiritualities” have attracted individuals into client-based relationships, but many of these have collective expressions, as well (Heelas and Woodhead 2004). Groups gather for yoga or meditation; wiccans create covens; drummers gather in circles. People may not be gathering in the usual places and doing the usual things, but they are still gathering. As voluntarily constituted local spiritual groups, their presence adds to the sense that studying “congregations” in Europe may no longer be irrelevant.

Far more prevalent and pressing than any of these forces, however, is the presence of significant numbers of immigrants whose religious traditions do not fit any of the above. Religious traditions are enormously important in sustaining them in their new homes, and unlike the situation in their homelands, voluntary organizing is usually called for (Oxford Analytica 2006). If they are to maintain tradition, take care of each other, and pass along rituals, they will have to take initiative themselves and gather into communities. Just as immigrants in the United States have turned to religious communities for solace and as gateways to larger community membership (Kniss and Numrich 2007), that process is underway across Europe, but not without difficulty. Existing legal frameworks were not designed to include them, and existing cultural categories and practices marginalize them (e.g., Bowen 2010; Gilliat-Ray 2010; Mantovan 2010; Timmerman et al. 2009). As they gather, they are reinventing the religious organizational ecology. At this moment, it is all the more important to develop a sociology of religion in Europe that has tools with which to analyze the full range of local religious gatherings that are part of the social landscape.

This volume is an important step in that direction, and I want to highlight here at the beginning some of the ways American congregational studies can provide conceptual and methodological resources for this work, as well as the benefits European work can provide to students of congregations elsewhere in the world.

Studying Congregational Ecologies

One of the key conceptual approaches developed in North American congregational studies – the notion of an ecology of organizations – is borrowed from organizational sociology, which in turn borrowed it from biology (Eiesland and Warner 1998). Students of biological species know that species depend on the right combination of resources, the density of the competition for those resources, and their ability to adapt to become more efficient or to shift their resource needs. There can also be artificial interventions that shift the relative advantage or disadvantage of one species over another. Applied to congregations, this may seem far too deterministic, overlooking both the human and the sacred dimensions of religious life, but as human organizations, congregations are nevertheless susceptible to just these sorts of social forces. The study of congregations needs to include attention to both the macro factors present in the larger environment and the micro dynamics of local ones.

Among the artificial constraints to be assessed in the study of congregations are the legal regimes governing religious organizing. We have already noted the effect of the relatively open legal environment in the United States. There are taxing and licensing mechanisms that create some routine controls, and there are legal proscriptions on practices that stretch the boundaries of acceptance (ingesting illegal drugs, plural marriage, and the like). Beyond that, the ability to organize a religious congregation is unfettered, and the result is an enormous range of religious diversity that has been present for at least four centuries (Butler 1990; Hatch 1989). At the opposite end of this legal spectrum would be regimes that attempt to enforce a single religious tradition or a singular adherence to atheism (Froese 2004). Conspicuously off the spectrum are the regimes that have no mechanism for regulating "religion" because they do not expect religion to come in modern organizational forms (Asad 1993). Understanding congregations means understanding the way the organizational ecology is defined by these macro cultural and legal definitions.

The cultural environment also provides a range of informal incentives and disincentives that have profound effects on congregational life. Which religious traditions are considered legitimate? What forms of religious practice are accepted in society? How is religious participation rewarded (or not), and how does that vary across the lifespan and in different social sectors? Human resources are one essential ingredient in congregational health, and the availability of those resources is not entirely of the congregation's own doing. They come, in part, because cultures establish the pathways.

Also critical, of course, are financial resources and all the attendant components of location, physical facilities, leadership, programming, and the like (McKinney 1998). Those resources can come from a variety of places – the members themselves, legacies of previous generations (endowments), grants from public and private sources, funds from external religious authorities, and tax-supported public funding. The particular history and legal arrangements in each country affect the relative weight of these sources. Where a robust taxing and funding mechanism is in place, congregations and parishes of the favored state religion(s) have a significant advantage in the organizational ecology. They can carry out a wide range of rituals and services, even with relatively few human resources. If an external group invests resources toward expansion in new territory, that can change the balance, as well. Without either mechanism, congregations must depend more heavily on their own members' resources.

In addition to these societal-level factors, the shape of congregational life is also affected by the micro-context. Faith communities gather in particular places and are always in relationship to those places (Ammerman 1997; Eiesland 2000). Truly neighborhood or town parishes are likely to have routine relationships with schools and businesses and local government, for instance. They may be the site for community gatherings in times of distress or celebration. There may, in other words, be a very permeable boundary between the congregation and the community of which it is a part. For many other congregations, the "community" is much more a matter of demography than geography. Immigrants, ethnic communities, lifestyle enclaves, and minority religious groups may be scattered across a wide geographical area, but congregate in a few identity-defined niches (Ebaugh et al. 2000). Indeed, the mental maps of a given region may be as important as the geographical ones. Cultures define what kinds of functions belong in which places and which populations belong where. Both are important questions in the study of congregations.

Within both neighborhood and region, there will likely be numerous organizations whose functions and religious and social identity complement or compete with a given congregation. A congregation wishing to serve the poor, for instance, is assisted by proximity to other service agencies and congregations with a similar mission. A plethora of congregations serving up formal liturgy and classical music, on the other hand, may be too many for the population of people who find that appealing. Students of organizational ecology point to density as a key dynamic (Hannan and Carroll 1992; Scheitle and Dougherty 2008). Too few organizations of a type, and no one thinks to go to a given place. Too many, and some of them will fail. Think about the dynamics of "theater districts," for example.

Because congregations are multipurpose organizations, assessing the terrain of complementary and competing organizations is difficult. There are the other congregations (both similar and different), as well as the service organizations and public agencies, all a part of the relevant religious ecology. In addition, the nature of the neighborhood itself matters. Places that were once home to comfortable middle-class populations of the dominant ethnic group may not continue to draw members when the neighborhood has become home to immigrants. Transportation matters, too. If a congregation is drawing a widely dispersed population, it is in part because they can easily travel there from where they live. The study of micro-context, then, can be thought of as combining geographic, organizational, and demographic questions about the place of a given congregation.

Just as plants and animals thrive or perish based on their ability to find resources and adapt to what they find, congregations thrive or perish based in part on the available resources of people, money, infrastructure, and legitimacy. When any of these is in short supply, competition may ensue. When the nature of any of them changes, it is the adaptive group that may thrive. The research collected in this volume includes excellent work toward mapping European religious ecologies and will lay a foundation for fruitful comparative study in the future.

One of the most critical goals for such future studies will include attention to the nature of the religious diversity that is increasingly present in European societies. We need to know more than the demographics of adherence. Understanding the changing shape of society also includes attention to the number and distribution of kinds of congregations, as well as to the structural resources and constraints that allow them to do their work. There may also be policy implications in assessing the extent to which a diverse array of *congregations* does or does not enable diverse *populations* to manage their interactions and potential conflicts.

Studying Congregational Cultures

The second conceptual tool available from the American experience – this time borrowing from anthropology – is the notion that congregations create cultures. This tool has been developed largely in the context of individual case studies, although there have been a number of comparative case analyses, and elements of cultural analysis have informed large-scale surveys. The argument for attending to congregational culture is this: Although many religious traditions prescribe patterns of worship and ways of organizing the congregation's programs and decision-making, it would be a mistake to assume that those prescribed patterns are implemented without local variation. Each local group will put its own stamp on the way things are done.

In *Studying Congregations* (Ammerman 1998), I suggested that it may be useful to pay attention to activities, artifacts, and accounts. That is, what do the participants do together? What material things and spaces do they make? And how do they give accounts of who they are, why they do what they do, and the role of divine or spiritual actors in the drama? Whether a huge megachurch or a modest storefront, groups that regularly gather will mark their routines with meaningful habits, surroundings, and stories.

Activities

In the United States, we have found that congregations engage in a fairly predictable range of *types* of activities, including worship, religious education, social activities for the members, and service activities for their communities (Ammerman 2005; Chaves 2004). The mix of emphases varies from one group to the next, and the content of the activities varies enormously, but these categories form something of a congregational organizing template. There is what organizational theorists call "institutional isomorphism" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

The pressures toward organizational sameness will vary, however, in societies that absorb more and less of these activities in sectors outside religion. If religious traditions are taught in the home or in communal rituals – or in the public schools – congregations will not be expected to organize activities for that purpose (Monnot and Stolz 2014). To the extent that they do, it may signal their perception that the tradition they wish to pass on is not well represented in those larger communal spaces. Similarly, if a congregation spends organizational resources on building relationships among the members, it may be that those members are not otherwise connected in the community. And, if social service delivery is a major emphasis, it is important to know where that fits in the larger welfare ecology (Bäckström and Davie 2010). That is, the presence, absence, and importance of various activities is related to the social niche the congregation occupies and the nature of the larger society in which that niche is located. Every congregation is shaped by a sense of its own religious mandate, but that mandate will be engaged in ways that fit the local culture and the group's place in it. A detailed inventory of the things a group does together is a good step toward understanding the culture of a congregation.

No matter what the larger ecology looks like, the one activity that is nearly universal among congregations is gathering for some sort of worship service (Chaves and Eagle 2015). The religious tradition they inhabit will provide them with a range of more and less prescribed elements: scripture reading, praying, singing, ritual movements (bowing, processing, kneeling), preaching and teaching, silence, response. No matter how prescribed the event appears to be, however, it will still bear the mark of the people who are participating in it. If groups perceive themselves to be in charge of their worship event, it will bear their mark even more visibly. Observing worship events is one of the most common methods used in the study of a congregation. Both style and content are windows on a congregation's culture.

Artifacts

The activities of a congregation are both social and material (Vasquez 2010). Congregations define and inhabit particular spaces and do so in ways that speak to what is important to them. Historic buildings and art are obvious cultural artifacts, but even the most impoverished congregation will use the resources it has to arrange and decorate the space it can afford. Congregations also find and use the necessary tools for doing their collective work, whether they are sacred vessels for sacraments or computers for multimedia presentations. The leaders and participants also establish norms for how each should dress for the occasion; clothing forms another dimension of the material culture they inhabit. When we seek to understand a congregation, the tools of material cultural analysis are critical to our task – no matter where the congregation is located.

Accounts

Congregations also create “accounts.” They tell the stories of their tradition and of their own history. Cosmic stories of human origins and moral redemption are common in religious traditions. Sometimes they are explicitly told, but sometimes they are conveyed in more subtle ways. Listening for the worldview of a congregation may mean listening for the arc of the narratives they tell about their own history (Hopewell 1987). Just as important as these “big stories,” however, are the ordinary tales of everyday life, the memories a group shares that convey their identity to newcomers, children, and themselves. Sometimes stories are preserved in officially produced histories; more often they can be collected from the memories of the participants. Sometimes they may reflect a clear and coherent theological system; but just as often they may reflect the collection of values that have come to characterize this particular religious community. Creating occasions for storytelling is another of the most valuable tools in the congregational studies toolkit.[3]

Along with activities and artifacts, accounts are useful ways of thinking about the cultural dimensions of congregational life. Which activities, what kinds of artifacts, and the content of accounts can give us the contours of a case study or the skeleton for more systematic comparison. As we do so, we will also want to keep in mind the external factors in play, including the ethnic and social class makeup of the participants. Even parishes organized within a prescribed geography will reflect the cultural and socioeconomic character of that geography.

Close readings of local congregational life in Europe are still relatively rare, even in this volume. Guest, Tusting, and Woodhead’s 2004 book on congregations in the UK is a notable exception, as is the work done at Aarhus University, and the research of practical theologians in the Nordic countries. In these and other emerging efforts, we begin to see the cultural dynamics of a growing array of European congregations. All these projects were situated in Protestant contexts, however, with Catholic parishes in Catholic countries still conspicuously absent from the catalog of cases. Attention to local religious life in those contexts remains largely a matter of counting clergy in place and sacraments administered. Those statistics certainly reflect the challenges facing such parishes, but give little insight into the ways local groups are coping, adapting, and/or innovating. There is still much room for European parish studies to give us that insight.

The Promise of Studying Congregations in Europe

Bringing Europe more fully into the study of local religious communities is a welcome scholarly development. With an expanded range of social and political contexts across which to compare, our knowledge of the way congregations operate and

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[3] Advice on these and other methods for studying congregations can be found at www.studyingcongregations.org.

their role in society is being fruitfully expanded. Among the most important contributions of this expansion is greater attention to questions of legal context and patterns of funding. Because so much existing research has been in the context of the United States, we have long assumed societal differences rather than testing them (Smilde and May 2015). We have assumed (probably wrongly) that a strong "established" religious tradition would dampen the innovative spirit of minority groups (Stark and Iannaccone 1994). We have also failed to distinguish the many varieties of establishment and disestablishment. There are important differences in how basic cultural and legal legitimacy is achieved and which groups have it. There are differences in bureaucratic requirements. There are differences in how money is collected from the population and how it is allocated to religious groups. And there are a multitude of differences in the functional and cultural entanglements between state and religion. Each of these variations deserves to be examined systematically, with equally systematic analysis of the corresponding differences in congregational presence, diversity, function, culture, and organizational vitality.

My own hunch is that one of the most consequential differences is how congregations receive their funds. To what extent is the budget supported by an outside entity, and how closely does the funder monitor the use of the funds? Does outside support enable congregations to engage in activities they would otherwise not be able to do? Or does it dampen the autonomy and innovation of a congregation? In the United States, this question can only be asked in terms of endowments (a tiny proportion of congregations), grants (another tiny proportion), and denominational subsidies (also relatively small). With a much larger range of amounts and kinds of external support to analyze, speculation about its dampening effects can be tested.

Another of the questions European research allows us to test is the effect of different religio-cultural distributions in a society. How does the population of congregations respond, for instance, to increasing diversity, including a much larger number of functionally unaffiliated people in the population? Do congregations develop explicit accommodations for populations that might be described as "vicariously" religious (Davie 2006)? Do they drop or reduce activities that previously occupied a larger role? And to what extent do the alternative spiritualities that are present in a population actually take the form of gathered communities that approximate congregations?

Finally, the experience of immigrant populations in a more regulated religious environment has been noticeably different from experiences in the United States. Here migrants have been free to form ethnically distinct religious groups, and they have. Those groups have provided both tangible and cultural benefits. They have served as gateways to assimilation as leaders are incorporated into larger civic networks and as second generations bridge old world and new. Differences in the degree to which migrants can organize around a religious identity are important differences to explore (Mooney 2013). Case studies of those migrant communities are critical to understanding how they do and do not contribute to civic incorporation. Not least, understanding the culture and function of Europe's increasingly diverse religious communities is essential for building societies of trust.

For all these reasons and more, a body of literature on European congregations is a welcome contribution to scholarship on both sides of the Atlantic, and it signals the many ways knowledge of religious life is being enhanced by attention to the social gatherings where traditions are birthed, sustained, and adapted.

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Dr. Ammerman's most recent research has focused on the social structures and practices of everyday lived religion. Her most recent book, *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes: Finding Religion in Everyday Life*, (Oxford University Press, 2013) documents the way religion and spirituality operate across the many domains of daily lived experience, the way "the sacred" is encountered both within and beyond the boundaries of official religious institutions and practices. This follows *Everyday Religion: Observing Modern Religious Lives* (Oxford University Press, 2006), an edited collection of essays exploring "lived religion" in Europe and the U.S. Nancy was the 2004–05 President of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, the 2000–01 Chair of the Religion Section of the American Sociological Association, and the 1995–96 President of the Association for the Sociology of Religion.

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Contents

Chapter 1
Introduction

Christophe Monnot and Jörg Stolz

Abstract In congregation studies, scholars must define and operationalize their unit of observation. While most mapping studies routinely give a definition of congregation, there has been no attempt to show just what techniques of operationalization are needed to apply the definition to the field, what problems may arise and how they can be solved. This chapter uses the example of the Swiss congregation census to fill this gap in the literature. We first discuss general questions of definition and operationalization and give our definition of congregation. Second, we show how the definition has been operationalized in the census, demonstrating for every element of the definition how it includes certain phenomena and excludes others. We give special attention to borderline cases and discuss with what techniques they have been treated.

Keywords Congregational studies · Methodology · Religious changes · Theoretical perspectives · Religious institutions · Sociology of organizations · Europe and U.S.A.

Research on congregations – local religious groups – in Europe has been greatly neglected in the sociology of religion in the second half of the twentieth century; a major renewal of interest in congregations has begun only recently. The aim of the present volume is to contribute to this renaissance.

While theoretical work on secularization, individualization, religious market paradigms, and empirical research on individual religiosity have dominated the field, the perspective on the local religious group has been curiously neglected.

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_1

There are several possible reasons for this situation. One is certainly the success of Thomas Luckmann's (1967) harsh critique of the *Kirschnsoziologie* or "church sociology". Church sociology is – according to Luckmann – a deeply positivist enterprise that identifies religion with official religious institutions (the churches). It is restricted to a weak level of theorizing, interested mainly in "parish sociology, the demography of the churches, statistics on the participation of church activities" (Luckmann 1967, 17), and limited to showing the slow but steady downfall of church religion. This kind of sociology, Luckmann tells us, is not able to grasp the central religious changes in society. No wonder that many sociologists of religion stopped doing what we now call congregational studies and started conducting large population surveys or ethnographies in search of a so-called "invisible religion"! A second reason for the lack of interest in congregational studies may be methodological. The comparative – and especially statistical – investigation of religious communities is in many respects more difficult and problematic than a survey of individuals (e.g. the problem of the unit of observation; the selection of respondents). It seems that important methodological tools of congregation research have been devised only more recently, allowing for a new upswing of this kind of research (e.g. mapping methodologies, key informant methodology, and multi-level models).

The neglect of local religious groups in the European sociology of religion is, of course, unfortunate. Religion is a strongly social phenomenon and the local religious group is arguably the most important social form that religion takes in European countries. It is the local religious groups that "supply" much of the religion that people encounter in everyday life. It is – in great measure – the success or the failure of local religious groups that ultimately decides on whether societies are secularizing.

Let us note some of the most important areas of research in which the renaissance of interest in congregational studies in Europe has its roots.

A first area of research lies in the so-called religious mapping studies that began in the 1980s (Knott 1987).[1] These researchers started systematically counting, describing, comparing, and localizing ("mapping") local religious groups in a defined geographical area (Knott 1987; Baumann 1995 [1993], 2004, Becci et al. 2016). While they first concentrated on new or immigrant religions, they increasingly also included traditional local religious groups. This initiative has been strong especially in religious studies and often has aimed to describe the new religious diversity and its effects. A significant part of the research is specifically interested in Islam in Europe (Allievi 2013; Banfi 2013; Cesari 2013; Cesari and Mcloughlin 2005; Groot et al. 2015; Frégosi 2001, 2006, 2013; De Galembert 2003; Göle 2013; Monnot 2015, 2016). More widely, researchers try to understand how new religious groups are "making place" in Western urban areas (Vásquez and Knott 2014). However, especially in the sociology of religion, an increasing number of scholars have also started mapping religious congregations with an explicit link to the socio-

[1] These studies are in line with the works by Park et al. (1925), known as the Chicago School, which focus on understanding the transformations of neighborhoods under the pressure of waves of immigration. It was Louis Wirth (1928) with *The Ghetto* who first pointed out the central role of identity that a religious community plays in a diaspora of a diversified population.

logical theories of religious change (Ahlin et al. 2012; Roest et al. 2014; Fibiger 2009; Giordan and Pace 2014; Hero et al. 2008; Käriäinen et al. 2005; Martikainen 2004; Martinez-Ariño et al. 2011; Weller 2008).

A second area of research can be found in the seminal work of Margaret Harris, starting in the 1990s. In a series of studies and publications, she asked if local religious groups behaved like other voluntary organizations in the U.K. (Harris 1995, 1996, 1998a, c, 2000; Cairns et al. 2007). One of her insights was that religious congregations of very different religions behave in many respects much like other voluntary associations – however, they often must tackle a greater complexity on the level of administrative and spiritual leadership and their link to their federation or denomination. She pointed out five main problems specific to congregations: the difficulty of defining and carrying out objectives; the institutionally ambiguous role of the spiritual leaders (loyalty to the denomination versus loyalty to the local assembly); the vagueness that predominates regarding the relative positions of volunteers and paid employees; and finally, the dilemma stemming from the community's social commitment to both members and non-members (Harris 1998b).

A third area of research that has stimulated interest in congregation studies is based on the hypotheses of the sociology of organizations.[2] From the 1980s, researchers have contributed to the renewal of organizational sociology by focusing on the constraints of the milieu in which the organization is acting (Johnson and Chalfant 1993). This sociology reforms the contingency theories that take for granted that the structures adapt to their environment (Aldrich 1979; Aldrich and Pfeffer 1976). This is the first line of this research area; a second is to consider the community as an institution providing services to users and depending on denominational resources and structures that give it a certain legitimacy (Scheitle and Dougherty 2008a).

In the first line, where the interaction of the communities with their context is investigated, it is the constraints of the milieu, the rules, and the type of environment that will influence the organization. Qualitatively, this is what Nancy Ammerman examined in congregations with her famous book *Bible Believers* (Ammerman 1987). Together with other scholars, she has since extended her work to a general approach to congregation studies (Ammerman 1997, 1998, 2005; Ammerman et al. 1998). The local communities depend on their structures and are individually distinguishable by their homogeneity (Ammerman 1994, 1997). For her, "congregations are part of a community's institutional infrastructure, a part of structures and connections that make social life possible. […] They are living networks of meaning and activity, constructed by the individual and collective agents who inhabit and sustain them" (1997, 346). Thus, certain groups resist when their environment deteriorates, while others have insufficient resources to resist. The congregations follow several survival strategies, such as moving to another neighborhood, or adjusting their program and internal organization to respond to the new environmental conditions. However, she demonstrated that, much more than a group's geographical

[2] For an in-depth theoretical discussion of the sociology of organizations and the study of congregations, see the article by Scheitle and Dougherty (2008b).

location, it is the denomination that is a congregation's most influential environment (Ammerman 2005).

In another vein, this concept of an institutional adaptation of congregations to their environment is present in a whole series of studies[3] on diaspora communities. They highlight the adaptation of communities issued from immigration to the existing institutional environment (in both Europe and the U.S.A.) They concur in showing that, to organize themselves, the migrant communities reproduce the existing model in the host country. For Stephen Warner, "we are seeing convergence across religious traditions toward *de facto* congregationalism, more or less on the model of the Reformed Protestant tradition of the congregation as a voluntary gathered community" (1994, 54). Carl Bankston III and Min Zhou, who have compared Vietnamese and Laotian communities in the U.S.A., have noted that "ironically, the congregational form resulting from collective efforts to establish a religious center for the sake of maintaining tradition often represents a substantial transformation of religious structures" (Bankston et al. 2000, 455). This adaptation to the Western context is, for the Hindu diaspora in the West, what Baumann refers to as 'templeisation' (Baumann 2009). He highlights a process already noted by Knott (1987) for the city of Leeds or Nye (1995) for the city of Edinburgh. "Temple practice, therefore, has become of crucial importance in the retention of tradition and its transmission from one generation to the next. Attendance at the temple provides an opportunity for the strengthening of social relationships and cultural ties between members of like kin, caste and language groups." (Knott 1994 [1986], 115). The Hindu temple thus becomes a central element of a congregational rite in the West, whereas traditionally the rites are practiced in the private sphere.

In the second line, influenced by the sociology of organizations, the congregation is considered as an organizational unit. The congregation is minimally considered as "an organized group of people that regularly gather to worship at a particular place" (Wind and Lewis 1994, 1). Such studies focus on congregations' attributes such as their size, age, staff, worship, and political and social activities (Chaves 2006; De Roest 2017; Kaldor et al. 1999; Woolever and Bruce 2002; Bruce et al. 2006). The leading research in this domain has been conducted by Mark Chaves and his collaborators (1999, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2014). They have initiated a series of representative National Congregations Studies that can chart trends in American congregations impossible to detect without these data.[4] They have thus been able to show the impact, among others, of American policies on the organization of local groups (Chaves and Tsitsos 2000) and the social activities of congregations.[5] (Chaves 1999; Chaves and Wineburg 2009; Chaves et al. 2004), and the effects of the crisis on congregation funding (Chaves and Anderson 2014). The interest in

[3] For an in-depth theoretical discussion of the types of congregation studies, see the chapter by Woodhead et al. (2004).

[4] For now, it is only in Switzerland, with the NCS research (2007–2010) under the direction of Chaves and Stolz, that an identical enquiry has been conducted (Stolz et al. 2011; Monnot 2013).

[5] For the UK, see Harris et al. 2003, 2005.

congregations in the United States has contributed to an intensive shift in the perspective of the religious field, by showing its continuities and changes.

In Europe, where diversification in the population, in beliefs, and in practices has been important since the end of the last century, it is also necessary to shift to a perspective based on the local religious group. This volume gives an initial overview of the studies in this area. A little more than 10 years after the work of Guest et al. (2004), which reports half-a-dozen case studies and discusses a resolutely ethnographic approach to the congregation, this volume traces the paths explored in the field with enquiries that have expanded the local context to investigate a whole city, a region, a national Church federation, or again a country. While the first works of Guest et al. (2004) and Harris (1998a) centered on the British context, this volume centers on continental Europe.

The book is divided in four parts, each part addressing a different goal. The first goal is to provide the necessary theoretical tools to research congregations. The second is to highlight, through the study of the local religious groups in a specific territory, the appearance of religious diversity in Europe. The third goal is to examine how congregations are involved with "pluralism" understood specifically in this part as the relationship emerging between historical congregations and recently-arrived communities seeking to establish themselves. Finally, the fourth is to understand the impact of decreasing membership and practice in the historical parishes on the vitality and organization of the local congregations.

Three main tendencies emerge from the different enquiries presented in this volume. On the level of the community, we are now witnessing an important diversification of practices and affiliations in Europe.

First: Although it is the world religions that attract public attention, it turns out that the greatest diversification concerns Christianity, with the establishment of Orthodox and Protestant congregations (Evangelical and Pentecostal). The second observed tendency is diversification within the historical confessions, with some congregations renewing their offers and with some weakening. However, and this is the third observed tendency, the historical confessions play a new role in the diversified religious landscape: that of a mediator between the representatives of the new religious communities and the public authorities.

In what follows, we briefly present the contributions to the volume.

In the first paper of part 1, Christophe Monnot and Jörg Stolz present the operationalization that they used for their census of congregations in Switzerland, based on Chaves' definition (Chaves 2004, 1–2). They present seven concrete criteria distinguishing a religious congregation. For each criterion, the authors document the cases encountered and the selections made. With this operationalization, they claim, about 95% of the groups encountered are easily classified as congregations or not. For the remaining 5%, they describe the different parameters that they have considered for either including or excluding the group.

To this chapter responds that of Lars Ahlin, who points out the dynamics observed between the two waves of research led at Aarhus on the spiritual milieu. Starting from Beck's concept of the second modernity, the author shows that a change has occurred in Europe, creating a greater fluidity of the religious landscape. The focus on congregations permits accounting for the diversification and the pluralization of the religious field. However, the author comments, such a project finds its limits in the fluidity of affiliations of the spiritual groups and therapies.

In the second part, the authors present, through the study of active groups in Italy and Germany, the appearance of religious diversity and the emergence of disparity in community vitality within a single country. Giusepe Giordan and Marco Guglielmi point out that Italy is the theater of a spectacular rise in the establishment of Orthodox communities. The authors begin by showing that this is not a historical first, since an important Orthodox population from the Balkans had established itself at the time of the Ottoman invasion. In contrast, this minority had been strongly assimilated into Catholicism during the nineteenth century. Currently, the authors perceive two important factors in the Orthodox thrust: the diversity of the populations and the diversity of the Orthodox branches involved. Faced with this diversity, the faithful seek to construct a "generic" Orthodoxy, beyond all the individual branches. Starting from the Orthodox Church in Romania, the authors show that this quest for a generic Orthodoxy represents a real religious innovation – in a diaspora situation – that will then influence the Churches within the country of origin.

Innovation and adaptation are at the heart of the chapter proposed by Hilke Rebenstorf. Using the results of the German Church Barometer, this author observes that parish development in the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD), which counts 15,000 parishes and 23.6 million members, is very diverse. Based on the responses of the members of the Parochial Church Councils, the author observes that, although the situation is difficult with a loss in memberships and resources, the council members remain moderately positive about the future of their parish. The parishes employing managerial methods seem to be making the best of it and surviving. Nevertheless, we must relativize the fact that the best organized are the best situated by their geographical position, which also plays a very important role. The parishes that are thriving are those located in cities and those engaged in developing new activities. In addition, a fracture is observable between the former East Germany and West Germany, in which the parishes situated in the east are less developed and less orientated to marketing/organizations than those of the west. Thus, for the parish councilors in the east, the future is depicted much more negatively than in the west. To synthesize her observations, the author has constructed seven different types of parishes that she places along a linear continuum going from good development and good organization to weak development and weak organization.

The third part of the book examines the relationships that the historical congregations maintain with the recent communities. Jörg Stolz and Christophe Monnot refer to these groups as the established and the newcomers, based on the Swiss National Congregations Study (2007–2010). Since the Swiss religious field may be considered an almost textbook example of both the legal and *de facto* establishment of Reformed and Roman Catholic congregations, while (almost) all the other congregations are not established, the authors test a hypothesis suggested by Weberian-Bourdieusian field theory, namely that established religious groups will try to hold onto their privileges by excluding the non-established groups. They observe that established congregations in Switzerland are indeed greatly privileged and have far more plentiful resources than non-established ones – even though they have relatively low and shrinking attendance and an ageing attender structure. Other than expected, established groups do *not* seek to hold onto their threatened status by using exclusion strategies, but by inclusion. They try to retain their privileges by engaging in ecumenical and interreligious contacts and rituals, and by showing themselves tolerant regarding individual social and religious diversity. The article shows that Weberian-Bourdieusian field theory must be extended in a specific but important way: Established groups may use privilege-maintaining inclusion strategies.

An inter-religious relation of the major Churches toward the newcomers is also observed in Hamburg. Anna Koers, having inventoried more than 600 congregations in Hamburg and surveyed 350 groups, observes that while religious plurality in not new in the second-biggest city in Germany, it is growing. Identically to the Swiss case, some Churches have many resources, while others have almost nothing. However, the historical Churches, there too, do not avoid contact with the newcomers and, on the contrary, play a catalyzing role in the various inter-religious contacts that the congregations may have. Surprisingly, leaving aside the two Protestant and Catholic Churches, it is the other Christian and the Buddhist communities that maintain the fewest relationships with others.

Another question that Vicenzo Pace asks in his chapter on Italy is how a religion with a historically monopolistic position, such as Catholicism, is challenged by diversity and how it can respond to it. After describing the emergence of religious pluralization in Italy, the author focuses on understanding the relationships that Catholicism maintains with it. He remarks that the Catholic promotes dialogue in this reconfiguration with, on the one hand, a discourse of acceptance of diversity. On the other hand, the Church proposes re-contextualizing both the religious and the action of the Catholic Church as an institution involved in protecting vulnerable individuals and migrants. It thus appears as a good manager or an elder sister of the other religious institutions that it is careful to protect. It shows itself preoccupied with each – regardless of its religious affiliations – in complementarity with the State social services. The position of monopoly is thus transformed into an allied force of the public powers to confront the rapid changes in population and the reception of migrants.

The fourth and last part of the present work features the presentation of diachronic research. These developments in the establishment of the religious communities are first presented by Marie Vejrup Nielsen, who takes advantage of the second wave of the Religion in Aarhus Project. Although the situation in Denmark is characterized by having a still-predominant State Church, the second wave of the research has highlighted the diversification of Christianity and an increase in the numbers of Muslim groups and faithful. She also points out that the new local situations are much more narrowly linked to the overall situation of a continent.

In the Barcelona region, Julia Martinez Ariño observes that, in the interval between the 2001 and 2014 waves of the Catalan Religious Map, it is especially the Pentecostal and the Muslim communities that increased their presence. However, as the author points out, this diversification has been possible due to a law that promotes religious freedom through cooperation with religious minorities, and promotes debate concerning religious freedom and freedom of conscience. This encouragement could be influenced by another new law: one concerning stricter building standards for housing public meetings. The most precarious congregations thus risk losing their places of worship or have difficulty in finding an affordable location.

In his chapter closing this last part, Jens Schlamelcher brings out how the mainline churches of Germany are facing a form of decline. With losses in membership and associated funding, these churches are reorganizing. But, as the author shows, the success of these programs of reconfiguration and re-centering are "partial at best". Starting from a community, the parish thus transforms into a structured organization, creating a new distance with its members. The most committed faithful thus feel "left alone by their church." Attempting to confront the decline, these Churches undertake organizational changes that attain their initial goals only with difficulty because, as the author points out, these reorganizations "repel distanced individuals and discourage their highly-committed members". Thus, the actions taken to reduce the decline only increase it. The author thus depicts the internal dynamics within the mainline churches of a vicious circle of secularization in Germany. The decline in membership and resources drives the congregations of these Churches to restructure themselves, attempts that only accelerate the distancing of the remaining faithful.

This volume would not be complete without a concluding chapter synthesizing the European trends in comparison with the U.S. situation. Mark Chaves, one of the specialists of the study of congregations in the U.S.A., offers his critical reading that opens up new vistas for the study of congregations in Europe. This study must advance toward greater collaboration and standardization to produce an increasingly detailed image of a specific period on this continent, with major reorganizations of the historical congregations and extensive establishment of new communities. Finally, in its conclusion, this volume marks a new beginning in the potentialities of the study of the religious field in Europe, through a sociological focus on local religious congregations.

In finishing, the editors of the present volume would especially like to thank the Faculty of Theology and Sciences of Religions of the University of Lausanne, which has granted funding for the academic English editing of the chapters of this publication, as well as Christine Rhone who has given her time and energy to this task. The different contributions comprising this volume were selected from the papers given at the Thematic Session "Congregations in Europe", organized by the editors of the 33rd Conference of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion (ISSR) "Sensing Religion", in Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium) in July 2015, with the exception of the contributions by Nancy Ammerman and by Mark Chaves, whom we thank for the privilege of including their work and their American viewpoint for this European enterprise. We further thank each person who has presented his or her research during this session, as well as the organizers of the ISSR conference. Final thanks go to Cristina dos Santos of Springer Publishing, who has believed in the project from its earliest stages.

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Part I
Congregational Studies, Methodology and Epistemology

Chapter 2
How Do You Recognize a "Congregation"? Definition and Operationalization Strategies of the Swiss Congregation Census

Christophe Monnot and Jörg Stolz

Abstract In congregation studies, scholars must define and operationalize their unit of observation. While most mapping studies routinely give a definition of congregation, there has been no attempt to show just what techniques of operationalization are needed to apply the definition to the field, what problems may arise and how they can be solved. This chapter uses the example of the Swiss congregation census to fill this gap in the literature. We first discuss general questions of definition and operationalization and give our definition of congregation. Second, we show how the definition has been operationalized in the census, demonstrating for every element of the definition how it includes certain phenomena and excludes others. We give special attention to borderline cases and discuss with what techniques they have been treated.

Keywords Congregation definition · Swiss census · Determining factors · Methodology · Theoretical framework · Operationalization · Specifiic criteria

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_2

2.1 Introduction

In recent decades, there has been a significant rise of scholarly attention for the meso-level phenomenon of the religious congregation (Chaves 2004; Ammerman 1997; Knott 2005; Pepper et al. 2015; Giordan 2013; Harris 1995; Rebenstorf et al. 2015; Monnot and Stolz 2014). In congregation studies, it is necessary to define and operationalize the unit of observation by specifying what counts as a congregation and what should be excluded from observation. Of course, researchers may work without a definition and think that they "recognize a congregation when they see it". But this only means that they use an implicit, unsystematic definition that will probably create an incoherent selection of phenomena to be studied. As we will see, the task of how to delimit a coherent set of phenomena as "congregations" is far from trivial.

While mapping studies often give a definition of congregation, there has been to our knowledge no attempt to show just what techniques[1] are needed to apply the definition to a given field, what problems may arise, and how such problems can be solved.

This chapter uses the example of the Swiss congregation census to fill this gap in the literature. Taken from September 2007 to the end of September 2008 (Stolz et al. 2011), this is the first example of a census of religious congregations for a whole country and including congregations across the entire range of religious traditions.

The central question of our paper is: How can a definition of "congregation" be operationalized to be applicable to the field and how can borderline cases be treated? How are results influenced by these techniques?

The plan of the chapter is as follows. In Part 2.2, we discuss general questions of definition and operationalization and give our definition of congregation. Part 2.3 shows how the definition is operationalized in the census. We give special attention to borderline cases and discuss with what techniques they are treated. Part 2.4 presents selected census results and concludes with recommendations for future studies.

The contribution of our chapter is methodological. We want to give an exemplar to show how a congregation census can be put into practice.

2.2 Definition and Operationalization Strategies

At the risk of stating the obvious, definitions are not empirical statements and can therefore be neither true nor false (Opp 1976; Bernard 2000, 36f.). They tell us how a given term should be used by creating an identity between the definiens (term to be defined) and the definiendum (terms defining). If the definition is operationalized, it gives us rules of how to empirically include a certain number of phenomena into the domain of observation, thereby excluding other phenomena. Although not verifiable, definitions can be useful for the research at hand. They are useful if they coherently and systematically include what researchers want to study.

[1] Except Cnaan and Bodie (2001) who have detailed the different techniques to reach a congregation in order to include it in a census.

Such a view implies three points that should appear in textbooks on social science methodology. First: The definition process is not just "theoretical" and cannot be completely separated from empirical observation. Rather, solid knowledge of the objects under study forms the basis for conveniently drawing the boundaries. Second: The quality and usefulness of a definition may vary with the historical, geographical, and sociological context. Whether a given definition "fits" the empirical field is an empirical question (Wilson 1970, 23). Third: operational definitions always encounter borderline cases that demand special attention.

2.2.1 Defining "Congregation"

The term "congregation" has been defined in different ways. Harris (1998, 307), for example, defines congregations as "local institutions in which people regularly gather for what they feel to be religious purposes", and she sees them as special kinds of voluntary associations. Ammerman et al. (1998, 7) see congregations as "local, voluntary, lay-led, religious assemblies". These are useful definitions, but they lack the specificity that is needed when creating a census. To our knowledge, the first researchers who have used an operational definition of "congregation" to create a census of religious congregations are Cnaan and Bodie (2001, 563–564). They defined congregations as "a cohesive group of people with a shared identity; a group that meets regularly on an ongoing basis; a group that comes together primarily for worship and has accepted teachings, rituals, and practices; a group that meets and worships at a designated place; a group that gathers for worship outside the regular purposes and location of a living or work space; a group with an identified religious leader; and a group with an official name and some formal structure that conveys its purpose and identity" and set to work. After 3 years of counting, they concluded that there were 2095 religious groups in Philadelphia. This definition is too tight for the European context.

The Swiss congregation census used the definition given by Chaves (2004, 1f.). He defines "*congregation*" as "a social institution in which individuals who are not all religious specialists gather in physical proximity to one another, frequently and at regularly scheduled intervals, for activities and events with explicitly religious content and purpose, and in which there is continuity over time in the individuals who gather, the location of the gathering, and the nature of the activities and events at each gathering" (Chaves 2004, 1–2). We added one point that emerged during our attempts to operationalize the definition: Subgroups of congregations (e.g. prayer groups, congregation music groups) and federations of congregations are not counted as congregations.

Let us note two important attributes of this definition. First, the central characteristic of the congregation is here seen in the *ritual and the participants that gather physically for the ritual*. It is clear that this definition fits Christian, Jewish, and Muslim groups particularly well and that it might be less well adaptable to other religions. However, as different scholars have argued, many other religions have increasingly taken up the congregational form in Western countries (Bankston III and Zhou 2000; Ammerman et al. 1998, 7f.). Second, attributes that are *not* stated in this definition are treated as *empirical variables* that may or may not be present (or vary in degrees) in a given congregation. For example, our definition does not say anything about the juridical form of congregations. A congregation may therefore be established as a parish, take the form of an association under private law, or be an informal group of believers. One of the most important attributes that is not fixed in the definition is its size. For us, a congregation may be extremely big as it may be extremely small (as long as there are several, that is, at least three members).

2.2.2 Operationalization Strategies

Operationalization is the process of specifying how a concept should empirically be measured (Schutt 2004, 86). Chaves' definition is already very close to the needs of an empirical study; nevertheless, a few additional operationalization steps proved to be necessary. Thus, we had to define the terms "institution", "religious specialist", and "religion", specify what is meant by "frequently", and detail (as noted above) one additional criterion. With Chaves' definition and our operationalization, we could unhesitatingly decide on about 95% of the cases encountered. In the remaining 5%, a more thorough examination normally permitted applying the rules without developing additional precision. In a remaining group, we had to add a few specific rules. In Table 2.1 we show how our definition excludes phenomena that are not congregations.

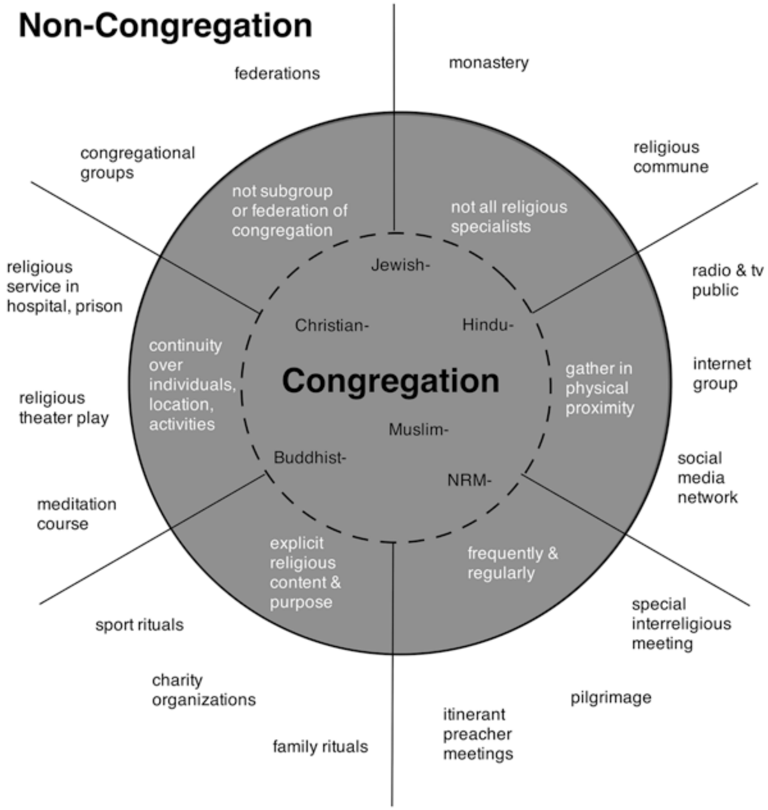
2.3 Putting the Strategies into Practice

2.3.1 A Social Institution…

According to Chaves' definition, congregations are a special case of an institution. An institution may be defined for our purposes in a very general way as a social phenomenon that is regulated by rules and norms. Such a wide definition of institutions includes habits, roles, organizations, groups, interactions, etc.[2]

[2] It might have been theoretically more elegant to define congregations as special kinds of *groups* instead of special kinds of *institutions*. Good practice in definition is to use the closest more general term and then name the specificities. We stay, however, with Chaves' definition; in practice the term "institution" works just as well, since the specifying attributes of Chaves' definition eliminate all non-group phenomena anyway.

Table 2.1 How the Chaves definition of congregation excludes different phenomena



2.3.2 … *in Which Individuals Who Are Not All Religious Specialists …*

Congregations are local groups that *do not consist exclusively of religious specialists*. A “religious specialist” is defined as a person, who is (1) a full-time or part-time leader of a religious group and/or (2) a full-time member of a religious commune, and/or (3) a person who is salaried by a religious organization. Hence, this criterion can exclude monasteries, orders, and communes that only gather religious specialists – such as the Saint-Maurice Abbey founded in 515, the oldest continuously inhabited Christian monastery in Europe (Mariaux 2016), or the Benedictine Einsiedeln Abbey founded in 1130 with two religious communities (one for the monks and one for the nuns under the authority of a single abbot), or the Cistercian abbey of Haute Rive, the oldest Cistercian abbey in Switzerland founded in 1138. Note that congregations *can* consist exclusively of *religious virtuosos*, that is, individuals who subject their whole lifestyle to religious precepts and show a very high level of religious practice, beliefs, and religious-ethical conduct (Weber [1920] 1978, [1922] 1993, 60–79).

Although the criterion seems to be unambiguous, some interesting borderline cases exist. Thus, there are monasteries with their groups of religious specialists (monks) that at the same time are used for the meetings of lay people. Take the monastery of the *Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch* situated at the border of the Lake Zug. This Monastery of St. Avgin Arth is the home of six monks and the bishop for Austria and Switzerland Mor Dionysius Isa; at the same time, it is the only place where the Syriac Orthodox in Switzerland, coming from Turkey, Syria, and the Lebanon, can celebrate their Armenian ritual in Switzerland. We have therefore included it in our count of congregations. Another case is the *Buddhist monastery founded in 2006 by the Fo Guang Shan of Taiwan*. This monastery is inhabited by two nuns who work as priests for a Chinese-speaking Buddhist community of about 200 members. This monastery is resolutely geared towards providing religious services for Buddhist laypeople and functions as a meeting place for a local religious group. It, too, can be counted as a congregation. A very different borderline case is the *Buddhist monastery in Rikon*, in the canton of Zurich, where an entrepreneur hired a number of people from Tibet. In 1967, he constructed a Tibetan Buddhist monastery, the first of its kind in Europe. This monastery is frequented by different Buddhist meditation groups, but it is not a place where one and the same group would gather regularly for worship. This is why it has not been counted as a congregation in our census.

2.3.3 … Gather in Physical Proximity to One Another…

In a congregation, according to our definition, individuals have to gather in *physical proximity* to one another. This includes again all the local religious groups of different religions whose lay members meet for ritual purposes in churches, mosques, synagogues, gurdwaras, temples, and so on. And it excludes phenomena such as radio and TV audiences, new social media networks (Facebook, Twitter,…), internet chat groups, blogs, vlogs, etc.

Again, however, borderline cases come up. An interesting case is *Neo-pagans* and especially *Wicca*. While some Wiccan groups have regular and frequent physical meetings as stipulated by our definition – most people identifying as Wiccans predominantly have contact with other Wiccans through the internet and may physically gather only at irregular intervals (e.g. for a Wiccan fair). For our census, we therefore have counted only the few and frequently gathering groups as congregations. Another interesting case is a structure called *"ICF-Léman"* that, on its website, claims to be a church of more than 1000 members. It is true that the sermons, posted on the website are seen more than a 1000 times every week.[3] However, since the website has only an internet audience, it cannot be counted as a congregation according to our definition. A closer look shows that the website is linked to two local religious groups that consist of 50–120 individuals each. The pastor gives his

[3] E.g. See on YouTube https://youtu.be/Pb3TS-kPzx8 (937 views) (Accessed 4 Sept 2016).

sermon to the one group; the other group watches the celebration on a big screen – while the internet community can follow on the web. In this case, we have only counted the two physically gathering groups as congregations.[4]

2.3.4 … *Frequently and at Regularly Scheduled Intervals…*

In a congregation, according to our definition, the physical assemblies for ritual purposes have to take place *frequently and at regularly scheduled intervals*. This criterion includes, for example, Christian, Jewish, or Muslim groups whose main religious service takes place weekly, be it on a Sunday, a Saturday, or a Friday. It excludes groups whose religious gatherings are (1) regularly, but infrequently scheduled (such as a yearly pilgrimage to Lourdes); (2) frequently, but irregularly scheduled (such as the religious celebrations by a famous itinerant preacher in a certain region); (3) neither regularly nor frequently scheduled (such as a visit by the pope, or a special interreligious meeting because of a tragedy).

When trying to apply this criterion, it quickly became apparent that religious groups can have very different frequencies of meeting. Pious Catholics and Muslims may meet daily in their places of worship; Jehovah's Witnesses meet twice a week with an hour of Sunday School before the celebration; the Bahaïs gather every 19 days; some Catholic groups meet only every 3 weeks because of a lack of priests. It is therefore necessary to specify what is meant by "frequently". We have opted to define frequently as "monthly or more often". In our exploratory interviews we had found that new congregations often start seeing themselves as a group when they are able to have at least a monthly cadence of meetings. Conversely, groups whose meetings fall below a monthly rhythm will often merge with other groups or cease to exist. If a group is not in decline and still has a less than monthly pace of meeting, this will often be because of members who are very widely dispersed or too few to be able to constitute a true local religious group.

While the criterion of at least monthly regularly scheduled meetings worked well in most cases, again some borderline cases appeared. An interesting case is the *Armenian Apostolic Church* that officially consists of three parishes in Switzerland: one in Geneva, a second one in Neuchâtel-Jura and a third one in Zurich. However, a regular mass only takes place in the church Saint-Hagop in Geneva. In addition, there are 12 masses[5] that take place irregularly and in different places in Switzerland. Applying our definition, we have therefore counted only one congregation in Geneva. The most remarkable case we have found concerning this criterion is the *Orthodox Serbian parish* in Lucerne that meets only once a year in Lucerne to celebrate Easter (Hämmerli 2014, 2011). While the group meets for ritual purposes on a regular basis, its pace is not frequent enough to be counted as a congregation.

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[4] After the census, the pastor became ill, the website stopped working, and now the French-speaking ICF Channel on YouTube reaches only about hundred views.

[5] http://www.armenian.ch/church/Pages/F/main.html (Accessed 5 Feb 2008).

2.3.5 … for Activities and Events with Explicitly Religious Content and Purpose…

According to our definition, a group is only to be counted as a congregation if its activities and events have *explicitly religious content and purpose*. Evidently, this part of the definition forces us to define the term "religious". In view of the literature, this might seem to be a daunting task.

Interestingly, however, operationalizing and applying the criterion of "religion" proved to be easier than other criteria of our definition. True, eminent scholars in the sociology and study of religion tell us at great lengths about the difficulty of defining "religion" – but when we had to apply the concept in our census, only minor problems arose. We used the definition by Stolz (2010, 258) according to which

- "*Religion* denotes the whole of cultural symbol-systems that respond to problems of meaning and contingency by alluding to a transcendent reality, which influences everyday life but cannot be directly controlled. Religious symbol-systems incorporate mythical, ethical, and ritual elements as well 'salvation goods'."[6]

In this definition, the different terms are again defined. Thus,

- A *transcendent reality* is a superempirical (or "higher" or "ultimately real") plane which cannot be directly controlled by humans but which is thought to be influencing their lives in some way or other. The transcendent reality may be seen as anthropomorphic (including spirits, gods) or not (superempirical laws or states of beings)".
- *Symbols* are objects, actions or elements of communication that refer to something other than themselves. They consist of a "signifier" and a "signified".
- *Problems of meaning and contingencies* are situations in which individuals or groups find themselves, and in which things are not how they should be or how they are normally (success, disappointment, catastrophe, positive or negative surprises, illness, death of a near one), thus leading to (a) the question of "why" things have happened in this way and (b) the motivation to influence such situations with out-of-the-ordinary means .
- *Salvation goods* are both the ends that individuals seek with their religious practices and the means to reach them. These ends and means may themselves be transcendent or immanent (e.g. eternal life, illumination as transcendent ends; wealth, social status as immanent ends).

What phenomena do we want to exclude with our religion criterion? It is groups whose activities and events do not show a clear link to a transcendent reality both in content and in purpose, that is, their primary focus is not to link the participants to a transcendent plane (a god, a higher force, etc..). Examples are fraternities, scouts,

[6] See for similar definitions Geertz (1993), Stolz Fritz (1988, 2004), Pollack (1995). See also Jeavons (1998, 81).

soccer crowds, academic communities, or political parties. Note that the fact of presenting oneself explicitly or implicitly as a religious group is *not* a criterion in our definition. The definition includes a group as a congregation even though the group itself denies being "religious" (this is often the case for groups in the holistic milieu) and, conversely, denies a group the status of a congregation even though the group itself claims to be a religious congregation. Neither is the fact of *societal acceptance (or non-acceptance) as a religious group* important for our definition. In other words, it is irrelevant for our endeavor whether the state, the media, or general opinion thinks that a certain group is "religious".

Let us look again at some specific borderline cases.

The Alevis are a minority and a specific branch of Islam from Turkey. "Because of their negligence of the pillars of Islam and probably earlier practices (worship of trees, stones, etc.), it is difficult to assign a precise origin" (Massicard 2002, 142). The Alevis are not considered as Shiites by the Shiites. As for the Sunnis, they oscillate between denying them a religious status and assimilating them to Islam by denying them any specificities (White and Jongerden 2003). The Alevis do not pray in the mosque but in the *cemevi*, a Turkish word for "house of gathering". The very term *cemevi* emphasizes the ambivalence: what is the purpose of the gathering? In Switzerland, the Alevi have invested their time and effort predominantly in the defense of their minority situation in Turkey and the transmission of a tradition and folklore (Manço 2004; Massicard 2005). When trying to apply our definition, we must admit that this is a borderline case, the central content and purpose of the group activities being semi-religious. However, since the 1990s, there has been a religious turn in the *cemevi,* first in Turkey, then in Western Europe. We finally did decide to include these groups, since the purpose of the Alevite associations *also* refer to a religious understanding and not only a political one (Baumann 2015). The fact that the group is a hybrid phenomenon is reflected in the fact that the self-description of the group as religious or non-religious is ambivalent.

Another hybrid phenomenon is the group of *liberal Quakers in Geneva* (Knobel et al. 2014; Collins 2004). The prime focus of this group is its engagement in the lobby work for peace initiatives at the United Nations, through the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) (Trigeaud 2016). However, it also organizes a monthly ritual in the Quaker House for its members (the "friends"). This (mostly silent) ritual is clearly religious in nature (Collins 1996). On the list, we have therefore included this group as a congregation.

An interesting case is *Yoga*. Here, we clearly find a ritual – but is it religious? Following Altglas (2005, 2008), and Baumann (2007), we have made a distinction as follows.[7] Groups of Kriya Yoga that link Yoga clearly with a spiritual teaching (such as the Self-Realization Fellowship Center, Sahaja Yoga, Yesudian-Haich Yoga or Babaji's Kriya Yoga) were counted as religious congregations. Groups that practiced postural yoga without spiritual teachings, closer to sport and wellness groups, were not counted as congregations.

[7] Also see Altglas (2014).

An interesting case of groups that systematically refuse the label "religious" are the *Freemasons*. In the canton of Lucerne, three Masonic lodges[8] went so far as to take legal action against a scholar who had included them in a list of local religious groups (Sindemann 2005).[9] To avoid such problems, we pragmatically excluded Freemasons from our list. Substantively, the question is not easy to solve and would probably have to be decided on a case-by-case basis. Freemasons clearly have rituals; there is an ideology including ideas about a transcendent plane (Schmid and Schmid 2003). However, the importance attributed to this transcendence varies greatly depending on the group in question.[10] For instance, in the group affiliated with the Alpina Grand Lodge, the members are mainly agnostics (and then they can sustain a kind of "spirituality"), and in the lodges under the obedience of the Grand Orient of France, the members support radical atheism.

In what is often called the "holistic milieu" or "alternative spirituality milieu" (Houtman and Aupers 2007; Heelas and Woodhead 2005; Siegers 2012) our criteria for religion lead us to count some groups as congregations while excluding others. Thus, for example, *Transcendent Meditation* or *Zen Buddhist* groups can clearly be viewed as congregations (even though they might want to reject the label). There is a ritual, we find the "groupness" asked for in the definition, and there is a clear allusion to a transcendent plane (Obadia 2007; Numrich 2003; Prebish 1993). *Mindfulness groups* or groups interested in *Family Constellations* are not congregations since the transcendent element is not strong enough.

One of the best-known cases is, of course, *Scientology*. This group, whose religious or non-religious character has been debated by scholars and the courts (Wilson 1990; Wallis 1995; the Swiss Department of Justice and the Police 1998; Reitman 2011), claims to be religious, a claim challenged by many critics (Dericquebourg 1998).[11] As has been noted above, our definition does not consider whether the group itself claims to be religious. In Switzerland, we find five groups in the largest Swiss cities and three missions that try to implant new groups in other cities. In our view, there is no doubt that Scientology may be called "religious" according to our definition of religion. Clearly, the group links its activities in a very important way to some "transcendent plane" (including thetans, reincarnation beliefs, mythical beliefs about the origin of the world, etc.). It is a more difficult question to decide if the group engages in a common ritual that benefits the members. The ritual pointed to by the group itself (a religious service on Sunday) seems to be mainly an effort to *appear* as a religion. However, from our perspective, the normal functioning of a Scientology group, that is, the weekly course meetings and the auditing sessions, are assemblies of and for the members with religious content and purpose. Thus, we have included the Scientology groups as congregations.

[8] Druidic Order and Odd Fellows (one male and one female lodge). The Fiat Lux Lodge (from the Alpina Great Lodge) did not pursue the scholars but, together with the other lodges, supported classification as a philosophical organization outside the religious domain.

[9] See www.religionenlu.ch (Accessed 1 Feb 2016).

[10] In Lucerne, the legal debate was mainly to specify if a philosophical organization could be categorized among religious organizations.

[11] In France, the Church of Scientology is a court case nearly every 15 years (1983, 1998, 2014).

2.3.6 … in Which There Is Continuity Over Time, Individuals, Location, and Activities

Religious congregations, per the definition, must show a certain *continuity over time, the individuals gathering, the location, and the activities and events proposed*. The criterion is important for excluding phenomena that may well unite individuals for religious purposes on a regular basis – but without the continuities mentioned. Thus, for example, a recurrent pilgrimage, a recurrent religious service in a hospital, and a religious theatre play that tours the country, all lack the continuity of individuals involved – the theatre play additionally lacks the continuity of place. In all three cases, we would not count the phenomenon as a congregation.

Again, borderline cases highlight the boundaries that our definition imposes on the empirical material: Take the case of *“Forum Licht”*,[12] a center for new spirituality in Zurich. It comprises a book store, a store for wellbeing products, a publishing house “Licht Welle Verlag” (Waves of Light) and a meeting hall in which about ten seminars per month are organized (evenings or week-ends). While there is a continuity over time in the location and types of activities, the fact that there are always different courses with different participants leads us to the decision not to count the center as a congregation (however, if a regular group would meet in the center, it would be counted as a congregation). Neither can the courses be counted as a congregation, since they do not create continuity in the participants over time. Another example is the *“Zurich Christian Connecting Point”*. This is a Christian “meetup”. “Meetups” are physical meetings of people who have virtually made contact on the internet and share a common interest. They can have any theme, such as an interest in home-brewed beer, philosophy – or religion. Thus, Karina “from Switzerland and Argentina” has created her Christian meetup. Sometimes, this is a Christian breakfast, sometimes an after-work prayer. This meetup does not fit the definition of a congregation, since there is no guarantee of the continuity over time of the participants, their activities or the regularity of the activities. On the contrary, the idea of the meetup is a very flexible and changing mixture of participants and activities. Yet another borderline case is the group *“Connect”*. This group has had to change location nearly every week for 2 years.[13] At first sight it might seem as if the group does not fit the continuity of the location over time. However, the group is not “itinerant” as such; its frequent change of location was caused by various external factors and both leaders and members were clear about the fact that the group wanted in principle to be a stable group. There is no doubt, then, that this group can be counted as a congregation. In a similar manner, we found many smaller and emerging groups that gathered in the home of one of the members. Again, such groups, that at least in principle were looking for stability even if they had not yet necessarily achieved it, were counted as congregations.

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[12] See www.imlicht.ch (Accessed 1 Feb 2016).

[13] At present, the group has found some stability in a rented hall in downtown Geneva.

2.3.7 …and That Is Not a Sub-Group or a Federation of Congregations

An important attribute of our definition of congregation is that the congregation *may not be a subgroup or a federation of another group having the characteristics of a congregation*. This is the one criterion that we had to add to the original definition by Chaves. Examples of subgroups of congregations are prayer groups, women's groups, men's groups, outreach groups, groups that read holy scriptures, etc. Examples of federations of congregations are denominational organizations as well as organizational unities that comprise several congregations to draw on certain resources.

Again, borderline cases are instructive. Let us first look at examples of possible subgroups. The Pentecostal groups *@home* in the canton of Vaud, for example, are prayer and Bible reading groups, often with fewer than 15 members. They have been created on the initiative of a young pastor who led young families out of existing congregations, explaining that meeting in small groups was the "new model of the church for the postmodern society".[14] Since *@home* groups have deliberately cut any link to a bounding congregation, they must be counted as congregations. A similar example consists of the groups of *"Universelles Leben"* (in Zurich and Lausanne) that was a renewal movement in the historical churches (mainly in Germany) and split off in 1985 from these churches, thus creating a few small congregations (Hitziger 2008; Humbert 2004).

An interesting (and sometimes quite difficult) case are *linguistic groups* (Bünker 2015). In many congregations, we find different language groups that have their own ritual in their respective language in the same building. Are they to be counted as subgroups or as separate congregations? We decided to use the following criteria: If there existed joint rituals of the linguistic groups that were considered as the basic ritual of the overall congregation, then the linguistic group was to be considered a subgroup (no congregation). If no such overarching rituals existed, the linguistic groups were viewed as congregations of their own. According to this criterion, the three linguistic groups of the *Latter-Day Saints in Geneva* are to be seen as congregations (Basset et al. 2011; Trigeaud 2013). The counterexample are the linguistic groups of the *Geneva Mosque*. This mosque attracts up to 2000 believers coming from locations as different as the Maghreb, the Middle East, and meeting every week for a common Friday prayer. At other times, different linguistic groups meet separately for prayer and study, using their specific language (Banfi 2013). These groups have not been counted as congregations.

Turning to groups on the "upper level", we are again facing some difficult borderline cases. Thus, in some churches, congregations (mostly parishes) are to a cer-

[14] See the website atomic.ch and the study by Maëlle Wahli-Bühler "Eglise de maison quelle vision?" that can be downloaded (Accessed 4 Sept 2016). See also http://pages.rts.ch/la-1ere/programmes/hautes-frequences/3875464-l-avenir-des-eglises-2-4-les-eglises-tupperware.html (Accessed 4 Sept 2016).

tain extent, but not completely, merged. To respond to the vocational crisis,[15] the Roman Catholic Church has a new organization called "Pastoral Unit", bringing together several parishes. The idea is to allocate three priests or ministers to an area covering on average between three to four parishes. Instead of having four Sunday services, the Pastoral Unit provides one (and sometimes two) masses on Sunday (the masses in the main parish or alternating parishes). We counted 180 Pastoral Units in Switzerland (grouping 653 parishes). One may therefore ask whether the Pastoral Unit is the congregation or the parishes should continue to be considered as congregations. Since there continues to be a regular religious ritual in the parish and since the parish as an organizational unit is upheld, we decided to count the parish as a congregation (and not the Pastoral Unit).

2.4 Results

The definition has led us to capture 5734 congregations in Switzerland (Table 2.1). The oldest was founded in 900, the youngest in 2008; the largest has 2500 regular attendants, the smallest only 3; the richest congregation has an annual income of 8,000,000, the poorest 0 CHF. 49.6% of the congregations are either Reformed or Roman Catholic, uniting 81% of the individuals associated with a congregation to any degree. 24.8% of the congregations are evangelical – although only 6.1% of the persons associated with a congregation. This latter fact is, of course, explained by the fact that these evangelical groups are much smaller.

We could go on with results for a long time, but that is not the purpose of this paper. What we do want to emphasize, however, is that these results depend in at least three ways on our methodological procedures. First, on the *way we have defined and operationalized "congregation"*. Had we defined and operationalized "congregation" differently, the numbers in Table 2.2 would have been different. For example, if we had introduced a minimal size (say: 20 regular members), the clear majority of neo-Buddhist, neo-Hindu, and "Other" movements would have been excluded from our census. Had we used a functional definition of religion in the style of Luckmann (1967), the number of "Other" religious movements would possibly exceed many other religious traditions. Second, on the *coherence with which this definition/operationalization has been put into practice*. Had we put less time and energy in the operationalization of "congregation", the application to the field, and the treatment of borderline cases, the numbers in Table 2.2 would certainly have looked different and the results would have been less trustworthy.[16]

[15] On the vocational crisis in Switzerland, see: Bünker and Husistein (2011).

[16] Of course, the results also depend on the *time and energy put into researching the congregations*. This is a point we have not touched on in this paper. See on this specific issue: Cnaan and Boddie (2001).

Table 2.2 Numbers of congregations and their associated members, by religious tradition

	Congregations[a]		Individuals		
	N	%	N	% persons associated[b]	% Swiss population[c]
Reformed	1094	19.1	1,731,832	42.3	22.5
Roman Catholic	1750	30.5	1,579,849	38.6	20.5
Old Catholic	35	0.6	11,182	0.3	0.2
Evangelical	1423	24.8	251,478	6.1	3.3
Orthodox Christians	58	1.0	67,424	1.6	0.9
Other Christians	399	7.0	102,995	2.5	1.3
Jewish	33	0.6	23,412	0.6	0.3
Muslim	315	5.5	221,832	5.4	2.9
Buddhist	142	2.5	21,454	0.5	0.3
Hindu	189	3.3	59,309	1.4	0.8
Other	296	5.2	23,706	0.6	0.3
Total	5734	100.0	4,094,473	100	53.3

[a]Swiss Congregations Census, September 2008, see: Stolz et al. (2011) and Monnot (2013, 45–63)
[b]Total number of persons associated with a congregation to any degree: number of persons that are associated in any way with the religious life of a congregation – including adults and children, regular and irregular participants, and official or registered members and participating non-members (See the discussion about the differences between official affiliation numbers and the persons associated with a congregation number in Monnot (2012)
[c]Swiss populations 2009 (Swiss Federal Statistical Office): 7,701,856)

2.5 Conclusion

This paper has treated the problem of "how to recognize a congregation" for purposes of censuses and mapping studies. A congregation, we have argued, can only be recognized as such based on an explicit, operationalized definition. It is not enough to simply trust that one will "recognize a congregation when one sees one".[17] We have given an exemplar of how a definition and operationalization of "congregation" has been put into practice in the Swiss congregation census, focusing on borderline cases and strategies translated into results. We hope to have shown that the definition and operationalization of concepts is not abstract and theoretical, but rather an eminently practical activity, and that our paper helps other scholars in designing and conducting their own census or mapping studies. We also welcome other papers presenting different definitions and operationalization strategies for purposes of comparison.

[17]This reminds us of a joke: How do you recognize a boomerang? If you throw it and it doesn't come back, then it wasn't one.

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Chapter 3
Second Modernity's Effects on the Religious Field: Implications for a Mapping Project

Lars Ahlin

Abstract A precondition for studying change/continuity in any religious mapping project is the validity of the investigations. Are we actually studying what we are supposed to be studying? Do we really map religions and adherents to religions?

To secure the validity of ones studies one has to be aware of both the societal conditions at hand at the time for the mapping as well as the changes these conditions have gone through (and presumable go through). These requirements are essential since the social conditions and the change of these have a direct impact on the religious field.

Ulrich Beck and his thoughts about the transition from first modernity to second modernity will in this article be used as the point of departure. Beck highlights five developments challenging the cornerstones of first modernity: Globalization, intensification of individualization, transformation of gender roles, the flexible employment and the global ecological crises.

Primarily in my discussion of Beck's five points I will use the results from the two waves of mapping taken place in Aarhus 2002 and 2012 (Aarhus is the second largest city in Denmark with about 325,000 inhabitants).

Keywords Mapping project · Religion · Spirituality · Ulrich Beck · Social conditions · First and second modernity

3.1 Introduction

In a religious mapping project, today it is necessary to consider the dramatic changes a society like the Danish has gone through during the last decades, including changes it is going through at this very moment. To use the vocabulary of the German sociologists Ulrich Beck and Christoph Lau (2005): We must be aware that

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_3

we no longer live in a society dominated by the characteristics of the first modernity, but in a society dominated by characteristics of the second modernity. According to them, the first modernity peaked in the 1960s at least 50 years ago (527), and thereafter the salient characteristics of the second modernity have become increasingly distinctive. Beck talks about this transition as a "mega-change", affecting all societal spheres. Such changes will therefore also have consequences for the religious field and implications for a religious mapping project.

Besides being aware of societal changes, the purpose of the project must be clear. It can have at least two different purposes: to map the extent of religious pluralism or to map the extent of religious diversity. In the Aarhus project the distinction between the two is explained in the following way: "religious diversity (is) defined as the existence of different religions within a society, and religious pluralism as a situation where patterns of engagement, interaction and relationship between religious groups emerge" (Ahlin et al. 2012, 405). In the following, the situation in Aarhus will be discussed from the perspective of religious diversity. This implies a discussion about how to define/delimit and how to estimate the number of people "belonging" to different world religions or branches thereof as well as to new religious/spiritual milieus.

3.2 The 1960s: A New Era Begins

Beck, among several other scholars including sociologists, has pointed out that the decade of the 1960s represents something new in the history of Europe. This is also the true of scholars dealing with religion and religiosity. They can be said to have discovered the "mega-change" of the religious field, or at least aspects of it.

The church historian Hugh McLoad has characterized the 1960s (in his words, the long sixties from 1958 to 1974) as a period just as revolutionary for the religious field as the Reformation during the sixteenth century. One very important aspect of this is that "in the more relaxed Sixties and Seventies, authority figures of all kinds had lost a lot of their power, and the new cliché was 'Do your own thing'" (McLoad 2005, 229).

In *The Death of Christian Britain* (2001), Collum Brown, who is currently a historian of Late Modern History, describes the religious field as radically changed during the 1960s. He says that, during the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, the British people absorbed Christianity in their lives, and from the 1960s they stopped doing so. Brown localizes the explanation for this discursive change in the new position of women in both the private and the public spheres, as well as in an increased individualism.

The sociologist of religion Grace Davie gives her picture of the same development when she says that, concerning religion, we have experienced "a shift from a culture of obligation or duty to a culture of consumption and choice" (Davie 2014, 7).

In the newly published book *(Un) Believing in Modern Society,* Stoltz et al. (2016), say something similar. They formulate it as follows: "in the 1960s …

occurred a regime change of the religious-secular competition" and this can be viewed as a "cultural revolution" where one result was the individual with "the ultimate authority on decisions of all kinds", the religious included (4).

All these scholars emphasize the momentum of the 1960s and its revolutionizing effect on the religious field. It is primarily individualism that is said to characterize the changes taking place during this decade. Awareness of this is essential for a mapping project. How the growth in individualism has affected the religious field during the past fifty years is also an excellent starting point for discussing the possibilities and limitations of a religious mapping project today. The intensified individualism is also an important part of Beck's explanation for the transition from the first to the second modernity. Since the theory of Ulrich Beck includes more aspects that are also relevant for the situation in the religious field, I have decided to use his whole theory as the basis for the discussion.

3.3 The View of Ulrich Beck

The second modernity has, according to Beck et al. (2003), evolved primarily as a result of five societal developments, all challenging the cornerstones of the first modernity (the following paragraph is not a detailed account of the five developments but rather a short introduction):

1. *Globalization* undermining the economic foundations of the first modern society and the idea of society as a nation-state. Globalization also has political and cultural dimensions that affect the very meaning of national borders and all the certainties upon which the nation-state is based.
2. The welfare state from 1960s onward has provided the basis for an *intensification of individualization*. The result has been an erosion of several ascriptive patterns of collective life. The universalization of freedom and equality is a further development of key modern social practices.
3. *Transformation of the gender roles*. Women have equal legal rights as men and they join the men in the educational institutions as well in the labor market.
4. *Flexible employment* expresses a breakdown of a full employment society, and perhaps of the importance of gainful employment.
5. Political dynamics set in motion by the perception and awareness of *the global ecological crises* (6–7).

Beck et al. state that, due to these developments, we are now experiencing meta-changes in the West, meaning that the experiential and theoretical coordinates are changing at the same time as the basic institutions. This structural break is explained as resulting from modernization. Beck says that once modernization has been radicalized, it affects all spheres of society (13).

Further, according to Beck and Lau (2005), the "either/or" mindset dominated the first modernity, while "both/and" is dominating the second (527), and this can be considered one characteristic for the transition from the first modernity to the second. In relation to this, they say “that a new structural logic may be emerging beyond the dualities of first modernity” (540). The process is on its way forward and, they write, the first modernity “culminated in the nation-state order of industrial society in the 1960s”. They speak of a “strict boundary between categories of human beings, things and activities and made distinctions between modes of activity and ways of life”. These distinctions and boundaries are today coming up against their own limitations (527) due to the five developments earlier described.

All the previously mentioned societal developments, challenging the first modernity, have had and continue to have an impact on the religious field. Among those five, especially globalization and intensified individualism have had the most obvious impact. In addition, the other three developments mentioned also have had an impact. Today, in principle, women in democratic (i.e. mainly Western) societies have both equal rights and equal obligations as men (transformation of gender roles). It is today fully up to women themselves to decide what religious or areligious path they want to pursue to fulfil their needs or wishes. In this pursuit, it is possible that liberated women opt out of the patriarchal Christian god. One consequence of this might be the fact that several new phenomena, allegedly in the religious field, are dominated by women. This applies to the New New Religious Movements,[1] the New Age and the New Spirituality.

The latter two developments, the increasingly uncertain labor market (flexible employment) and the ecological crises, have had another kind of impact. Both can be considered to function as background to the rise of new religious needs and new religious currents. As examples in relation to the ecological crises, one can point to the neo-pagan movements and the eco-religious movements. The reactions to flexible employment and the uncertain labor market are less concrete and obvious in religious terms. Nevertheless, they might be exemplified by the growth of New Age/new spirituality as a means of dealing with stressful conditions in the labor market and of striving to be more competitive in the workplace (see further discussion below).

As Beck and Willms (2004) see it, the mentioned mega-changes have also led to problems for the social sciences. Beck talks about the danger for today’s social scientists to use “zombie-categories”. Zombie-categories are living-dead categories that focus researchers’ attention on realities that are in the process of vanishing. They embody the horizons of the first modernity, which are nineteenth-century horizons of experience. “Because these inappropriate horizons, distilled into *a priori* and analytical categories, still mold our perceptions, they are blinding us to the real experience and ambiguities of the second modernity” (19).

Naturally, this is also a risk for researchers concerned with mapping today’s religious diversity to consider. A precondition for studying religious change/continuity in any religious mapping project, as for all social scientific studies, is the validity of the investigations. The essential question is therefore whether we are in fact studying what we think we are. Are we in fact studying different, separate religions and the number of affiliations to religious groups or can “religions” and “affiliation to religions” be considered “zombie-categories”?

[1] New religious movements established in the 1990s and later.

This issue, as well as other problems in mapping religious diversity, will be addressed in the following discussion that is based primarily on experiences from two waves of mapping the religious field in Aarhus, the first in 2002 and the second in 2012. (The main results of these studies are presented in Marie Veirup's chapter in the present volume).

3.4 The Fluidity of the Religious Field

The religious landscape of today definitely has a more fluid character compared with that of 50 years ago. In general terms, the fluidity can be said to be the aggregated effect of all the previously mentioned societal developments. This fact constitutes a challenge for a mapping project to take into consideration.

One aspect of the fluidity becomes obvious when looking at the change in the number of religious groups in Aarhus between 2002 and 2012. In 2002 there were 69 groups compared with 76 in 2012. This in fact indicates a rather stable situation. However, when one goes under the surface, another picture emerges. The seven new groups are the net result of the changes that have occurred variously in terms of disappearance, establishment, merging or splintering. Consequently, altogether 23 new groups have been established and 16 have vanished during the same period.

We find another aspect of the fluidity on the individual level and can attribute it to the intensified individualism. I here refer to the well-known movements of individuals between different groups in the spiritual milieu. Included in this milieu are the Buddhist and Hindu groups, with primarily Danish-born members/affiliated, along with the rest of the New Religious Movements.

This kind of fluidity, however, is not limited to the spiritual milieu but can also be observed among charismatic Christian groups as well as in the Muslim milieu. A study by a student at Aarhus University makes clear that, in the charismatic milieu, individuals are also moving around among different groups, either without any membership or with membership in one group, but primarily attending the meetings of other groupings (Buur Nørlev 2014). A mapping project must decide to which group the individual should be assigned. One way to avoid this problematic is not to consider the individual groups and instead to focus on "the charismatic milieu", that is, all the charismatic groups together.

The results from Aarhus do not indicate a similar situation in the Muslim milieu but studies from Denmark do so. In a study of Danish converts to Islam, it was shown that the converts were moving around in the milieu without a consistent association with any specific mosque. The study also showed the importance of the internet for these individuals. In their efforts to contact like-minded persons with similar experiences, they did not use the mosques but searched for such contacts among different discussion groups on the internet (Jensen and Østergaard 2007). In another study, which focused on young second-generation Muslims considering themselves Muslims, one important finding was that they lacked an explicit relationship to any specific mosque (Jeldtoft 2012).

Regarding the predominant religious entity in Denmark, the Church of Denmark, this problematic (affiliation/disaffiliation) is in relative figures practically non-existent. In 2009 about 0.3% of the Church members left, the highest percentage since 1984, and simultaneously 0.15% became new members. In absolute numbers, in 2009 about 14,000 individuals left and 7000 new members came in Danmarks Statistik (2010). This means that there are probably more leavers and newcomers in the Church of Denmark than in the spiritual, charismatic and Muslim milieu taken altogether. (Here one also bear in mind that the individuals circulating in the spiritual milieu to a large extent are still members of the Church of Denmark, which is true of almost 90% of Danes with a Danish origin).

In any case, this problematic is probably most acute in relation to the spiritual milieu and we also have most information about this milieu. There is an additional reason to focus on what is happening here. What happens in the spiritual milieu could be considered as a forerunner for what will eventually happen in other religious milieus. The spiritual milieu can be viewed as a product of the second modernity and thus be expected to contain more of its characteristic traits. Therefore, the focus for the following discussion will be on this milieu.

The year of establishment of groups in the spiritual milieu (see below) is a clear indication of the fact that this milieu is a phenomenon of the second modernity. All the groups existing in Aarhus between 2002 and 2012, with exception of four, were established after the 1960s. Beck sees the 1960s as the decade during which the first modernity peaked (Table 3.1).

During the years from 2002 to 2012, nine groups disappeared and nine were established. This is a significant sign of the fluidity on the organizational level of this milieu. The common denominator for almost all these groups is "meditation". In absolute numbers the movements between different groups in the spiritual milieu is miniscule, because this milieu as such is small. Altogether, the groups have about 2000 members/affiliated,[2] a number that seems to have been steady during the ten years between 2002 and 2012.

The spiritually engaged with no membership in any group are not included here since data are lacking. There is, however, a small study focusing on the Mind, Body and Spirit Fair 2011. During the 3 days when it was open, it had 5500 visitors. Of the persons surveyed, one out of ten was a member of or affiliated with a religious/spiritual group. Furthermore, no less than one third went occasionally to meetings of such groups, mostly to those in the milieu but also to different Christian groups. This is one more indication for the fluid character of the spiritual milieu. An even weaker connection to the milieu is represented by the reading of journals or books with a spiritual content. It is limited to one out of three saying that they never have done this.

[2]This number is probably too high, since we only have figures for the total number of people attending meditation for both Transcendental Meditation and the Scandinavian Yoga and Meditation School.

Table 3.1 Names of groups in the spiritual milieu in Aarhus and year of their establishment

Mod lyset/lyset (a spiritistic group)	1913/1995
Christian Science	1936
The Anthroposophical Association[a]	1955
The Christian Community[a]	1968
Transcendental Meditation[b]	1971
Bahá'í Aarhus	1972
Scandinavian Yoga and Meditation School[b]	1975
Scientology Church Jylland	1979
Sathya Sai Baba Aarhus[b]	*1980*
Center for Living Wisdom[a]	*1982*
ISKCON (Hare Krishna)[b]	1985
Martinus Cosmology	1985
Sri Ram Chandra Mission[b]	1985
Liberal Catholic Church[a]	1986
Karma Kadjy Skolen[c]	1987
Summit Lighthouse[a]	1987
Soka Gakkai[c]	1990
The Kundalini Network[b]	*1992*
The Golden Circle[c]	1994
Brahma Kumaris[b]	1999
Bruno Gröning's Friends	1999
Isikaja Witches	*1999*
Falun Gong	2000
Aarhus Blótlaug	2000
Crimson Circle[a]	*2002*
Satanical Forum, Aarhus	*2002*
Sirius Center[a]	2002
Dharma Center Norbu Ling[c]	*2002*
Ashtanga Yoga Shala[c]	*2003*
The Golden Portal[a]	*2003*
Amma-Denmark[b]	2006
The Deeksha group in Aarhus[b]	2006
Århus Zendo[c]	2007
Rangjung Yeshe Aarhus[c]	2009
Øsal Ling[c]	2010
Osho Dynamic Meditation[b]	2011
Jara-witches i Aarhus	2011

In italics=groups closed between 2002 and 2012
[a]Theosophical-inspired groups
[b]Hindu-inspired groups
[c]Buddhist-inspired groups

3.5 Affiliation to Religious Organizations

In the first modernity, membership was the natural and accurate parameter when a religious entity's size was to be measured. In most cases, there was no grey zone: either you were a member or you were not.

Today, in the second modernity, this is no longer the case. Globalization, for example, has led to immigration from countries where such strict borders between members and non-members are not the general way people relate to religion. Further, more people in the West, through the media and traveling, have become aware of the fact that the Western way is not the only possible one. Another aspect of globalization troubling the scene is the phenomenon of transnationalism. For people living in diaspora, the national borders of Denmark have, in respect to religion, no absolute meaning. Ethnic Buddhists living in Denmark have probably more in common and more contact with fellow believers in their native country than with native converts to Buddhism in Denmark (Borup 2005). The same applies to ethnic Hindus living in Denmark. They have more in common with fellow believers in their native country than e.g. with Transcendental Meditation believers in Denmark. One question for a mapping project to address is the following. Are those Buddhists/Hindus to be considered as part of a religious community in their native countries, in the country of diaspora or in a net-based trans-national community?

Unsurprisingly, the intensified individualism must be considered to have had the greatest impact regarding affiliation with religious organizations. "Membership", and even a closer relationship but without formal membership, might be considered something negative by the individual. This is because the religious person might interpret membership as subordination to authorities outside the individual, and therefore unacceptable. The Church of Denmark, however, emerges as the prime exception. The Danes, presumably a very individualistic and secularized people, do not seem to have a problem with membership in a religious organization since almost 90% of the population of Danish origin are members of the Church. This paradox can probably be explained by the fact that many of the members are cultural Christians, regarding the Church not so much as a religious entity but more as a natural part of Danish culture, providing different services.

3.6 Membership: Requirements

In Aarhus, we have experienced that several groups in the spiritual milieu, but also some Christian groups, do not use "membership" as the designated term to indicate adherence or affiliation to the group. Instead no term is used (e.g. Sirius Center, a theosophical group) or terms such as friends (e.g. The Friends of Bruno Gröning), participants (e.g. The Golden Circle, a theosophical group), devotees (e.g. Amma-Denmark), users (Sri Ram Chandra Mission) or others. All the mentioned terms imply a fluid affiliation, certainly more fluid than "membership" in the traditional context. They also imply the possibility of being affiliated not only to the religious organization in question but also concurrently to one or more others. Such an open attitude is also characteristic of several groups in Aarhus in fact using the membership category (e.g. The Sai Baba movement); there is no hindrance for simultaneous affiliation or membership in other religious groups. In general, it is hard to find any kind of exclusivity. It seems to be completely up to the individual affiliated with one group, to be simultaneously engaged in another group, or even more than one.

The same question arises as previously: To what group is the individual affiliated, or is it reasonable to view him/her as affiliated to none and instead as a questing individual who is affiliated to "the spiritual milieu"?

The lack of exclusivity, the fluidity of the religious landscape, has an obvious relation to the intensified individualism in the second modernity. This becomes apparent when looking at the demands/requirements placed on individuals wanting to be members/affiliated, or placed on the existing members/affiliated. Among the groups in Aarhus, a general characteristic is that the demands are either low or non-existent. A recurrent answer, explicit or implicit, when representatives were asked about this was: "It is up to the individual" (explicit e.g. Falun Gong and the Sirius Center). This can be interpreted as an effort from the groups' side to adapt to the very individualistic stance, characterizing individuals in second modernity, in an effort not to discourage potential affiliates. Representatives of a couple of groups also mentioned such adaptions explicitly. One example is the Buddhist group Soka Gakkai. Even though all members were supposed to study some specific material by request from the central organization, the Danish department did not require this since "it didn't harmonize with the Danish mentality". In addition, the recitation of the Lotus Sutra had been shortened in response to "the busy modern person".

A low level of demands is perceptible in several other religious organizations/groups outside the spiritual milieu and is certainly true of the predominant religious entity in Denmark, the Church of Denmark. The requirements to initiate and continue membership are that you are baptized and, as an adult, pay your church tax. No other requirements are generally made. Nor, consequently, will it be questioned if the member is simultaneously a member/affiliated of one or several religious groups outside the Church.

Some natural questions arising from this are: What constitutes a religious group? Is it enough to pay a fee or to occasionally attend a meeting? By what indicators is an individual to be assigned to a specific group? In a project to map religious diversity, such questions might be unnecessary. Instead of focusing on different groups, such a project might instead be satisfied with a focus on different milieus.

3.7 Mismatch

One further problem about assigning an individual to one religious group or another is that today it is fully possible to be affiliated to a religious group despite a mismatch between the individual's religious beliefs or disbeliefs and the group's fundamental belief system. This fact has a direct connection with the non-existing demands on the members/affiliated and is broadly applicable to groups/organizations in the spiritual milieu (but also to the Church of Denmark).

How is such a mismatch to be explained and what are its consequences for a mapping project? There are presumably several very different examples of this. Here, however, I will focus on the spiritual milieu and the explosive growth of alternative therapy, yoga, meditation and mindfulness that we have experienced in Denmark and in the Western countries during the last 30 years. How is it that believing Christians, as well as atheists, are turning to and using these methods and techniques, which largely have their background in Hinduism or Buddhism?

Is it to be interpreted as a "spiritual revolution" (Heelas and Woodhead 2005) or a "spiritual turn" (Houtman and Aupers 2007)? That is, as terms for an increasing number of individuals of the second modernity who long to find deeper religious/spiritual meaning in their lives than that offered in the traditional churches? Surely, for some individuals, this is the correct way of interpreting their engagement in the mentioned methods.

Alternatively, perhaps it is a question of something fully secular, a result of the "subjective turn" (Taylor 1991) in general; a wish to handle one's own life all by oneself and take full responsibility for it, including health. All the mentioned methods/techniques are about the wish to recover when sick, physically and/or mentally. Simultaneously, it is also an effort to remain healthy or get healthier, again physically and/or mentally. To turn to the established health system is considered a way to hand over responsibility to an authority outside the individual and therefore not acceptable. Also, this can be viewed as a valid explanation for the growth of alternative therapy, meditation, yoga and mindfulness (Ahlin 2015).

Yet another way to explain why these methods have become so attractive might be found in quite another sphere of society. That is in the economic sphere. Almost simultaneously as the mentioned techniques began to conquer the West (Campbell 2007), the neo-liberal economy began its triumphal procession over the world. During the past 30 years, the neo-liberal line of thought has dominated both the economic and the political agenda in the West. As an effect of this, the living conditions for millions of individuals all over the world, Denmark included, have changed dramatically.

One of the effects of economic globalization, in interaction with reinforced competition, is that jobs are very easily outsourced to other countries. This leads to uncertainty and anxiety among many people experiencing, or imagining, such a threat. The uncertainty and anxiety may also increase due to greater demands placed on individuals in the workplace. Such demands include readiness for change at any time, greater flexibility, constant upgrading of one's qualifications and so on. These will be experienced as a heavy burden for everyone in the labor market. In addition, such demands might be more difficult to handle for women than for men. Women are supposedly in the labor market on the same preconditions as men, but simultaneously they still experience the demand to take the main responsibility for the family. All this can be one of the reasons why stress and/or depression affects women more than men. This stress originates from the competitive conditions in the labor market and from the demands on people combining a demanding work environment with a family life. Let us also note here that several traditional careers for women, e.g. nurses, teachers and social workers, are more affected by the regime of "the new public management" than others.

In a study in Denmark, 30% of the men surveyed say they were stressed during the last month. For women, the corresponding figure is 42% (Politiken 30 April 2014). Even more serious is that 10% of Danes are diagnosed with depression every year. Twice as many women as men get this diagnosis (Netpatient).

Stress and the wish to get rid of it, together with the need to increase one's capacities to handle demands and expectations both at work and at home, create a situation that is difficult to manage. This might result in engagement in religious or quasi-religious contexts/groups, with their origin either in Buddhism or in Hinduism, such as meditation, yoga and mindfulness or other types of alternative therapy. Engagement in such contexts/groups very probably does not issue from a background of the religious leanings of the group, but in the instrumental promises that it makes. The techniques on offer promise to provide the individual with tools that can reduce stress in two different ways. On the one hand, the tools promise to make individuals "feel good" in the sense of relaxation, enabling them to better handle the demands made on them in the second modernity. On the other hand, the tools promise to empower the individual in different ways, with the aim of increasing competitivity in the labor market and thereby reducing stress.

As mentioned earlier, some figures indicate a conjunction between the establishment of neo-liberal ideology and the growth of some of the methods/techniques mentioned. More than half of today's adult Danish population has used alternative therapy. The growth began in the 1980s, the same decade as the new economic agenda began its victorious way to dominance. In 1987, 10% of Danes had used alternative therapy the previous year and in 2013 the corresponding percentage was 27%. In all age groups the women predominate. Around 40% of working-age women have used it in the previous year (Ekholm et al. 2015). A very popular method today, yoga, was used by one (1) percent of the population in 1993 and in 2010 the figure had grown to six percent. This method strongly attracts women, since no less than 90% of the yoga practitioners are women (Bjerrum and Pilgaard 2014).

Presumably, one gets attracted to and focuses on the secular goals presented, retaining one's original beliefs or non-beliefs and ignoring the religious background for the methods/techniques. This focus is facilitated by the fact that "religion" is not mentioned in the marketing of the different tools, but possibly just "spirituality" (Borup et al. 2015). Spirituality is a very diffuse concept with positive connotations, since it implies an individualistic stance in which the individual's own authority is highlighted. This might be part of the background for the success of practices emanating from religions in the East, where this is not regarded as an obstacle to engagement.

The great majority of the participants in these Buddhist/Hindu inspired practices are most probably members of the Church of Denmark, whether they are believers, non-believers or cultural Christians. Here a mapping project encounters problems regarding the quantitative aspects; to what religion are the practitioners of, for example, yoga to be referred? Christianity, due to their membership in the Church of Denmark (despite lacking Christian beliefs) or Buddhism/Hinduism, due to their practice (despite lacking Buddhist or Hindu beliefs)? Or is it more accurate to designate them as non-religious, due to the secular intentions of the practices and the lack of belief in essential parts of Christianity among cultural Christians? Probably, the correct stance is to use all three categories, but then no definite answers regarding quantity can be given.

3.8 Unaffiliated Believers

Due to the large numbers of people practicing methods with their origin in Eastern religions, there may be some risk of overestimating the number of people designated as Buddhists or Hindus. A mapping project focusing on religious diversity, however, also runs the risk of underestimating the numbers. One problem is how to account for religious individuals *not* belonging to a group or organization. One reason for this might be, as previously mentioned, that membership or closer affiliation is not an option because of these individuals' individualistic stance.

Another reason might be that, for them, there is no appropriate group or temple to approach. The latter is applicable to many various individuals, but it might be most relevant to immigrants with a Buddhist or Hindu background. For example, in Aarhus there is one Vietnamese Buddhist temple and no Hindu temple. Though there are several Buddhist and Hindu groups with converts as members, these are not real options for the immigrants. In any case, we know of people living in Aarhus with origins in Buddhist countries other than Vietnam, as well as people with origins in several different Hindu countries. How to handle these? Despite knowing the number of immigrants from the different countries, when one considers how the population of the native country is divided among religious groupings, one cannot use these numbers to conclude anything relevant. We do not know anything about the immigrants' religiosity; the only thing we know is their country of origin. They might be religious, but equally they might be areligious, atheists, or cultural Hindus/Buddhists.

In his nuanced and well-founded chapter, Jørn Borup (2016) discusses the number of ethnic Buddhists in Denmark. He emphasizes the multi-leveled problems in counting not only Buddhists but all the immigrant religious. One of his conclusions is that more empirical research is needed to make more reliable estimates. Support for conclusions is facilitated when one is dealing with more certain numbers.

3.9 Cultural Religiosity

"Cultural religiosity" has earlier been mentioned several times without being discussed or defined. This label can be applied to people who are members of, or closely affiliated with, any of the world religions, but without beliefs and/or practices in accordance with the fundamental dogma of the religion. This concept was, for example, mentioned in context of the immigrants from Buddhist and Hindu countries. There it was said that, in fact, we do not have any idea if these immigrants are Buddhists/Hindus, cultural religious or non-believers. The same can be said about the immigrants from Islamic countries.

Most important, however, in relation to a project mapping religious diversity in Denmark is the group of cultural Christians as members of the Church of Denmark. According to Voas (2009), 60% of the population in Denmark belongs to the fuzzy religious, his term for cultural religious. The rest of the population is equally divided between the religious and the unreligious. Most of the fuzzy religious can be expected to be members of the Church, since 90% of the Danes with a Danish origin are members (9).

This is not a new phenomenon, however, and could have been an issue for our colleagues 50 or 60 years ago, although it is probably more accentuated today. The question is how to evaluate these "cultural religious" and whether to include them among the religious. This question must be set aside here, since such a discussion would be too extensive. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that our answers to this question have great impact on our conclusions concerning religiosity in the investigated area and concerning the number of people affiliated with the different branches of the world religions or with new religious/spiritual movements.

3.10 Discussion

The point of departure for this chapter was Ulrich Beck and his view that the first modernity, peaking in the 1960s, had been challenged by five societal developments: globalization, the intensification of individualism, the transformation of gender roles, flexible employment and the ecological crises. Further was a governing assumption that the religious field was affected by these developments in parallel to the rest of society, thereby making problems for a mapping project about religious diversity. One important factor behind the problems might be the use of what Beck calls zombie-categories. All of this was discussed with relevant background in the two mapping projects conducted in Aarhus 2002 and 2012.

All the mentioned developments, besides the global ecological crises, have had an observable effect on the religious field in ways that also affect a mapping project such as ours. In the foreground, globalization has had an uncontested impact on the religious field in several respects. Due to this, many immigrants, refugees and migrant workers have come to Denmark with their different religious traditions (if any). In the attempt to quantify the immigrant religions, a mapping project encounters problems of difficult resolution. Another aspect of globalization is that the growth of travel and the new media has broadened our knowledge about the way people live all over the world, including their religious lives, and this has affected the religious field in other ways.

The transformed gender roles have affected the religious field, though not necessarily with direct implications for a mapping project. Most importantly, women can freely decide what religious or non-religious path they want to pursue. However, the transformed gender roles together with flexible employment probably have had implications for a mapping project. This is because the two mentioned developments, as I have argued earlier, constitute the background for the vast growth of alternative therapy, yoga, meditation and mindfulness groups. This is a problematic field for a project aiming at religious mapping. To what religion can the practitioners of these methods be reasonably assigned? The answer might vary widely: Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity (due to their membership in the Church of Denmark) or none whatsoever. The last option might be the most appropriate since the mentioned techniques, as previously discussed in this chapter, can have their appeal on purely secular grounds: the need to handle the demands made on individuals in the workplace in the era of neo-liberal economic and political dominance.

One effect of the intensified individualism is that it is no longer, for the individual or for the group, a question of either/or, but both/and regarding affiliation with religious groups/organizations. It is no longer a question of choosing to become a member/affiliated of a single group. Instead one can choose to be a member/affiliated of two or multiple groups. Today, this pattern of behavior is also accepted by the religious groups/organizations, and perhaps more rightly; they have been forced to accept it, under the pressure emanating from the intensified individualistic atmosphere in the surrounding culture. The limitations in this regard among certain groups derive from the state demands on the groupings approved as religious communities. The regulations namely express that an individual shall not have membership in any other group besides the one in question. (Despite this, several approved religious communities have no problems with double membership). This individualistic attitude has had the effect that the borders of religious entities have become increasingly fluid, since fewer and fewer demands are made on both members/affiliated and potential ones. The individuals with multiple affiliations present a mapping project for the question: To what religious entity is the individual to be referred?

One characteristic of contemporary society, according to Beck, is therefore the dissolution of earlier very firm borders. Beck and Lau (2005) points out that the boundaries of the concepts used and definitions are something that ought to retain our attention. As he says: if the old boundaries are "replaced with a multiplicity of boundary definitions that are simultaneously valid, then these boundary definitions lose their fundamental 'naturalistic' character" since "boundary definitions can be altered again at any time" (542–543).

We possibly get an illustration of this characteristic when looking at the spiritual milieu in Aarhus. This milieu is here defined as consisting of the traditional New Religious Movements, together with the Hindu-groups and Buddhist-groups, with native Danes as members/affiliated. Another part of this includes the free-floating spiritually inclined, not being members or closely affiliated to any religious/spiritual group. These people are broadly excluded from the discussion, since we do not have any thorough studies of them. We have, in fact, nothing except for the previously mentioned study of the visitors to the Mind, Body and Spirit Fair.

The fluid character is accentuated by the generally non-existent demands both on potential and actual members/affiliated. It is all up to the individual. The few cases with strict demands are limited to core members of the group. Another characteristic further stressing the fluidity is that it appears to be a totally open option for individuals simultaneously to be members/affiliated with more than one group.

In looking at what the studied groups/religions consider themselves related to within this network, it becomes rather clear that there is one spiritual network in Aarhus. One milieu falls outside this network, and that is the neo-pagan. The same is true of other two single groups, and that is Soka Gakkei and Falun Gong, which do not have any relations to other groups in Aarhus.

When discussing the spiritual network in Aarhus, it is possible to find some nodes, such as the theosophical, the Buddhist and the Hindu milieu. These three are not isolated from each other, but have contacts with one another. However, there is one more node with which the other three are in contact, bringing the network together. That is a node outside Aarhus, namely The Growth Center. This is a center for consciousness training, offering instruction in meditative practice and various forms of self-development. Jes Bertelsen, who founded it in 1982, leads the center and continues to be the principal teacher (Wikipedia). The role of Jes Bertelsen in the spiritual network is highlighted by the fact that he is, along with Deepak Chopra and C. G. Jung, the most important source of inspiration among the alternative therapists in Aarhus (Ahlin 2007).

One conclusion that arises from this is that membership/affiliation can be considered a "zombie-category" at least regarding the groups in the spiritual milieu of Aarhus. Furthermore, many religious groups/religions are not sufficiently distinct for it to be reasonable to consider them different religions. Therefore, "religion" as an organizational entity, at least among the new religious groups, might possibly be considered a "zombie-category". Naturally, both conclusions have a direct impact on a mapping project.

3.11 Conclusion

During the last 50 years, the religious field has changed dramatically and these changes can all be derived from the societal changes that Ulrich Beck mentions as the ones challenging the first modernity. This situation has changed the preconditions for all research working with contemporary religion. That is also true of religious mapping projects. For a project concerned with religious pluralism, the preconditions have not changed very seriously. Presumably, the actors acting on the religious field are largely the same as those of 50 years ago, that is, the established Christian churches and denominations. Due to globalization, some new actors have also become visible. In Denmark, the most important are the Muslim umbrella organizations but, in addition, a more charismatic Christian wing has developed. All the religious actors must achieve a certain size to be taken seriously as counterparts to other actors. A project focused on pluralism is focused on organizations of a certain minimum size. Such organizations are today, as they were 50 years ago, rather well-defined organizations with official membership registers.

The situation is very different for a mapping project focused on religious diversity. Here the ambition is to map all kinds of religions at hand in the location of interest. Moreover, it is a goal to obtain the numbers of persons affiliated with the specific religions. As previously mentioned, this has become a very complex endeavor. This has primarily been discussed regarding the spiritual milieu. One conclusion was that it might be preferable to stop looking at different groups in this milieu and instead focus on the milieu as such. This is because this milieu seems to be greatly affected by the characteristics of the second modernity. The same can probably be said about the charismatic milieu. Therefore, we should also consider this as one entity and not focus on the individual groups in the milieu.

Other problems to consider are the result of the "both/and" stance, which makes it very difficult to differentiate between diverse entities. Alternative therapy is about health, but to some degree it is also about spirituality/religion. Alternative therapy, including yoga, meditation and mindfulness, also belong to a societal sector other than health and religion, namely economy. This is because the demand for these techniques originates in how today's labor market is organized and functions (see earlier discussion).

Despite the problems for a mapping project working with religious diversity, outlined in this chapter, we must continue with such an endeavor. It is essential to produce a map that is as precise as possible of the different religious presences. Therefore, we must aim to complete more research in relation to the problematics that such a mapping project faces. However, in carrying out such work, the preconditions that are in fact present must be carefully considered.

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Part II
Congregations and Diversity

Chapter 4
Be Fruitful and Multiply… Fast! The Spread of Orthodox Churches in Italy

Giuseppe Giordan and Marco Guglielmi

Abstract Historically, the presence of the Orthodox Churches in Italy is a reality established over a number of centuries; from a sociological point of view, however, their significance is a relatively new phenomenon. This comes as a result of the huge influx of Eastern European immigrants over the last fifteen years, which meant that their importance within the social and religious contexts has grown considerably, to the point that Orthodox Christianity has become the second largest religion in the country together with Islam. Despite this, very few studies have focused on the settlement of Orthodox Christianity in Italy. From the socio-cultural point of view there is no global, current description of the Orthodox Churches presence in the Italian territory, except for the first study carried out during the year 2011. In this article, we start by presenting some outcomes of a new study carried out during 2015 where we map the surprisingly quick spread of the various jurisdictions throughout the Italian regions. We then compare the new outcomes with the results of the previous study, deepening some elements such as the relationship with the Italian state, the leadership of the various communities, and the dynamics of interaction between the Orthodox Churches and Catholicism.

Keywords Eastern Orthodox christianity · Orthodox diaspora · Religious diversity · Religion and migration · Religious settlement · Religion in Italy · Transnational religion

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_4

4.1 Introduction[1]

In Italy, Orthodox Christianity contends with Islam for the place of second most widespread religion in the country, obviously after Catholicism. According to the latest available data, Italy has the highest number of Orthodox Christians in Western Europe, and one of the highest growth rates in the Orthodox population. It should be remembered from the outset that these are purely estimates: as we shall see in greater detail in this chapter, the rough estimate for 2014 is 1,528,500 people.

However, despite the data we have expounded, the relevance of the Orthodox presence in Italy has caught the attention of scholars only recently, and the same is true concerning Western Europe. At the European level, after the pioneering work of Christine Chaillot (2005), who published a collection of articles written by Orthodox authors about the presence of Orthodoxy in Europe, the first scientific contribution on this subject was recently organized by Maria Hämmerli and Jean-François Mayer (2014), to which we can add the very recent "special session" edited by Victor Roudometof (2015) in the journal *Religion, State & Society* (2015: 3). As for Italy, the first empirical study by Luigi Berzano and Andrea Cassinasco (1999) mapped the presence of the Orthodox Churches in the Piedmont region alone. Massimo Introvigne and Pierluigi Zoccatelli (2013), with the Center for Studies on New Religions based in Turin, have for years produced a catalogue of religious pluralism in Italy. The University of Padua has promoted a general overview of the whole national territory, with the first quantitative data on the organization of places of worship (Pace 2011; Giordan 2013a, b, 2015).

This scarcity of scientific studies deserves a brief investigation: from the socio-cultural viewpoint, it is useful to investigate the causes for such a delay in studying this relevant phenomenon that has affected virtually all the Western European countries to varying degrees. Why have social scientists, and especially sociologists of religion, not paid attention to a phenomenon whose proportions significantly change the socio-cultural and socio-religious panorama of many national situations? As we have highlighted in previous works (Giordan 2013a), there are at least four good reasons that can justify this delay: we will recall them briefly because they help us understand the context of reliability for the data presented in the following paragraphs.

The difficulties that could prevent a scholar from undertaking a scientific research on Orthodoxy reside primarily within Orthodoxy itself: it consists in a plurality of Churches, technically defined as jurisdictions, which refer to the different patriarchates and to different *autocephalies*. Therefore, it is not easy to navigate within this complex world, where diversity is certainly an asset but could even generate a sense of loss. As pointed out by Kallistos Ware (2005, 45), one of the main experts of Orthodoxy in the West, "the Orthodox form a unity in diversity, though too often diversity is more evident than unity".

[1] This chapter was jointly conceived in dialogue between both authors. Giordan took the lead in writing Sects. 4.1, 4.4 and 4.5; Guglielmi took the lead in writing Sects. 4.2 and 4.3.

The difficulty in rebuilding the Orthodox presence in a Western country goes beyond assembling the pieces of the puzzle of the various jurisdictions forming the Orthodox universe; once a specific jurisdiction is identified, mapping the places of worship requires considering the diversity of liturgical services that can be offered within the same jurisdiction. Such differentiation within the individual jurisdictions makes it somewhat difficult simply to list the parishes present in the territory.

To give an example and to forewarn the reader seeing the maps that appear on the following pages, other items must be added to the already established parishes, such as parishes in the process of formation, chapels in which celebrations take place only once or twice a month (or even less), cemetery chapels, and the diaconates in prisons and hospitals. As if that were not enough, some parishes or monasteries may shift from one jurisdiction to another for various reasons: a phenomenon not at all uncommon in the past and one that has not entirely disappeared even today.

To this difficulty, institutional and internal to Orthodoxy, is added another of a more general nature, which must be considered when reconstructing the presence of the Orthodox Churches in Italy. This is the speed with which waves of migration have reshaped the social and religious panorama of the peninsula since the early 1990s and accelerating intensely at the beginning of the present century. The speed of this change has rendered unreliable and incomplete any "photograph" attempting to show the different religious "minorities", qualitatively and especially quantitatively.

There is a fourth and final reason that makes the study of Orthodoxy not very attractive to researchers. It relates to the visibility and relevance of such religion within the public sphere. A comparison with Islam, in this respect, can be very instructive. The "newsworthiness" of some news items is conveyed immediately and effectively by referring to the protagonists as *Muslim*, and this label almost obscures their territorial origins. As for those Christians who come from Eastern Europe, however, their nationality either hides their religious identity or places it firmly in the background. In other words, television and newspapers will talk about a Romanian, rather than a Moldovan or Ukrainian, and never an *Orthodox* individual. The exact opposite is true for those who come from Arab countries; thus, when we hear about a Muslim, it is not always clear whether this refers to a Moroccan, a Syrian or an Egyptian individual. The reasons for such a situation are largely political, although there are also considerations of a more socioreligious and cultural nature affecting the different ways of linking daily life and religious beliefs, depending on whether we are referring to Muslim or Orthodox people.

Bearing in mind the four difficulties listed above, the first aim of this chapter is to update the first mapping of the Orthodox Churches in Italy carried out in 2011, by providing data gathered in January 2016. This 5-year interval shows that the presence of Orthodox places of worship in Italy continues to increase considerably: the growth is therefore not only widespread but also rapid. As we shall see, all the most represented jurisdictions are growing in the number of parishes, and in some cases the percentage increase is surprising.

For example, we can observe the case of Germany, the country that has always had the highest Orthodox population in Western Europe: according to Johnson and

Grimm (2014), the estimate for 2015 stops at 1,400,000.[2] The comparison with this country is useful for highlighting the amazing growth of Christian Orthodoxy in Italy over the last 15 years: if the Orthodox Christians in 2000 in Germany numbered 1,263,800, they were fewer than 200,000 in the same year in Italy. This acceleration is readily observed in the establishment of new Orthodox parishes in Italy, linked to the various jurisdictions almost uniformly country-wide. This quantitative increase corresponds to a complexification at the organizational level, expanding the scope of activity well beyond the typically liturgical dimension, including supporting initiatives of a charitable, cultural and ecumenic character.

The second objective of the present chapter is to show how, in addition to the quantitative increase, the presence of Orthodox Christian Churches in Italy is, so to speak, shedding its skin, shifting from diaspora Churches to local Churches. Referring to previous historical investigations including those of Maria Hämmerli (2010 and 2014) and Suna Gülfer Ihlamur-Öner (2014), we shall see how, after a first wave of immigration into Italy dating to the 1990s, some Orthodox communities began to be perceived as centers of spiritual support, not only providing care for migrant people who face dealing with the concrete difficulties of immigration, but also acting as local Churches bringing together stable communities who progressively feel more at home even in the host countries. As we shall see, it is a process that leads to renegotiating social and religious identity in a perspective that no longer anticipates returning to the country of origin and establishes a different religious identity within the context of a large Catholic majority.

To situate the contemporary sociological novelty/discontinuity of the presence of the Orthodox Christian Churches in Italy (Cassinasco 2005) in a perspective of historical continuity, let us examine some historical background to these Churches: while in previous centuries the settlement of the Orthodox Churches was completely marginal, today the Orthodox Christians seem to have literally followed what is written in the first chapter of Genesis, verse 28: they have borne fruit and have multiplied, and in fact have done so very quickly.

4.2 A Historical Overview of Orthodox Christianity in Italy

Given the nature of our contribution, we cannot dwell on the study of the historical path of the different Orthodox jurisdictions in Italy. We therefore will limit ourselves to offering the most significant historical references of the Churches mainly present in the Italian territory: the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Russian

[2] This datum then corrects with a bearish trend what was reported by Reinhard Thöle (2014). Quoting estimates made in 2011, he speaks of 1.5 million Orthodox Christians present in Germany. Even the number of Orthodox parishes present in Germany is lower than the number of Orthodox parishes present in Italy: again, according to what was reported by Thöle (2014), there are about 400 Orthodox parishes in Germany, while according to our research updated to January 2016, there are 486 in Italy.

Orthodox Church and the Romanian Orthodox Church. Altogether their parishes represent almost 80% of the Orthodox parishes present in Italy (378 out of 486).

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople boasts the most ancient Orthodox presence in the Italian peninsula. The presence of Greek-Orthodox communities is linked to the influence of the Byzantine Empire in Italy and is concentrated in the southern regions. In the fifteenth century, the rise of the Ottoman empire in the Balkans and in the Middle East produced great flows of migration of Orthodox populations, especially the Albanian wave, which increased the presence of the Eastern communities in the Italian territory. However, in the mid-nineteenth century, they declined due to their gradual assimilation into the Catholic Church and their immigration to new diaspora centers in Europe.

In the twentieth century, however, the presence of Greek-Orthodox parishes and monasteries in the Italian territory stabilized. Since the beginning of the last century, these religious communities have begun to organize themselves, and in the post-World War II period their activity has begun to grow significantly, especially because of the numerous Greek students enrolled in Italian Universities (Piovano 2011, 73–74).

During this last historical period, the Greek-Orthodox parishes in Italy belonged to the Archdiocese of Thyatira and Great Britain (1922–1963) and later to the Exarchate of the Archdiocese of Austria-Hungary (1963–1991). Given the strong Orthodox presence and the great influx of migration from Eastern Europe, in November 1991 the Patriarch Bartholomaios I formed the Holy Orthodox Archdiocese of Italy located in the historical church of Campo dei Greci in Venice, and in 1996 appointed Gennadios (Zervos) as Bishop of Italy.

Currently, the Italian diocese is divided into 15 vicariates and has been officially recognized by the Italian State since 1998. The Ecumenical Patriarchate is, finally, the only Orthodox jurisdiction in Italy to have reached an agreement (technically called "Intesa") with the Italian State. This agreement, drawn up in 2007 and ratified in July 2012, grants the practice of spiritual support in the national health and military structures, together with the recognition of some religious festivities. In addition, it resolves the question of the civil effect of religious marriage and acknowledges certain economic aids to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, such as the deduction of donations from state taxes and the participation in the distribution of the so-called "Eight per thousand", a share of the taxes that the state donates to the religious institutions that have signed the agreement (Parlato 2012).

Also, the Russian Orthodox Church has a long history in Italy, even if its initial difficulty in settling and the subsequent internal vicissitudes make its experience in Italy manifold and complex (Talalay 1998). The first attempts at settling date to between the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries with the construction of small Orthodox churches in the Russian embassies. After a first failed attempt in the "Sarda" embassy in Turin in 1791, in 1802 a church was opened sporadically for about a year at the embassy of Naples. In 1810 a military church was settled in Florence, which was transferred in the following decades to various cities up to its return to Russia. Even the embassy church in Rome, the center of Russian Orthodox life in Italy, had to change location several times until the early twentieth century.

More than 20 years after its foundation, in 1866 the embassy church of Naples was transferred to Florence, the new capital city of the kingdom of Italy. In that city, after various permits were obtained, the first Russian Orthodox church was built in Italy in 1903. This was followed by those of Merano (1895–1898) and Sanremo (1913), attended by Russian tourists, and by that of Bari (1913), a center of attraction for pilgrims. However, after 1917 the situation changed considerably, the material support of the Russian Foreign Ministry disappeared and the embassy churches risked the nationalization of Soviet Russia. The number of Russians in Italy grew significantly, although a great many exiles tended to prefer France. These were the first Russian-Orthodox communities in the Italian peninsula; the first parish closed at the end of World War II was born in Milan in the 1930s.

Even the Russian community in Italy experienced the schism between the two foreign jurisdictions in 1926: the Archibishopric for Russian Orthodox Churches in Western Europe, based in Paris, and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR), based in New York. The shifts of parishes from one jurisdiction to the other, which affected major cities such as Rome and Bari, were followed by a period of decline of Russian Orthodoxy. However, in the 1970s, when the parishes slowly began to die out, the Russian Church was reinvigorated by the birth of Italian Orthodox communities guided by the Patriarchate of Moscow. Some Catholic faithful in fact undertook a search for their Christian roots and, returning to the Church of the Fathers, converted to Orthodoxy. In the first half of the 1980s, this phenomenon favored the establishment of five new parishes in Milan, Pistoia, Palermo, Brindisi and Modena. In the following decades, the increased migration caused by the fall of the Soviet Union allowed the Church to found new parishes and to expand in some of the major Italian cities, such as the community of San Massimo in Turin founded in 1994 (Berzano and Cassinasco 1999, 115–121).

Currently there is an administration of the Moscow Patriarchate parishes in Italy, legally recognized by the Italian state in May 2012, which is negotiating an agreement. Since 2015, it has been guided by Bishop Antonij (Sevrjuk) of Bogorodsk, who also holds the post of responsible for the foreign institutions of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The history of Romanian Orthodoxy in Italy, on the other hand, is much more recent, and its birth is linked to an event that we may define as unique. Father Mircea Clinet, a Greek-Catholic priest who arrived in Italy in the 1960s to assist the Romanian community, became a lecturer of Romanian language in 1966–1967 and a professor of Romanian literature at the Catholic University in Milan in the 1980s. During his studies at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, father Mircea first met the young Greek-Catholic Romanian Jesuit father Vasile Bărbat and later, on his deathbed, asked him to continue his activity of scientific exchange with the Romanian Patriarchate, so that the two Churches could meet fraternally at the end of the dictatorship. Having accepted this commitment, father Mircea came to Milan and tried to establish collaboration between the Catholic University and the Orthodox Theological Faculty of Bucharest, managing to obtain a 2-year doctoral scholarship reserved for one Romanian student. It was father Traian Valdman who

Table 4.1 Religious adherence of immigrants in Italy: Catholic, Orthodox, Muslim

	Catholics	Orthodox	Muslims
2001	362.066	198.824	488.300
2002	363.809	204.373	553.007
2003	496.051	446.099	723.188
2004	629.712	565.627	919.492
2005	668.048	659.162	1.009.023
2006	685.127	918.375	1.202.396
2007	775.626	1.129.630	1.253.704
2008	739.000	1.105.000	1.292.000
2009	700.777	1.221.915	1.354.901
2010	876.087	1.404.780	1.504.841
2011	960.359	1.482.648	1.650.902
2012	994.000	1.534.000	1.708.000
2013	911.200	1.459.300	1.628.000
2014	917.900	1.528.500	1.613.500

received the scholarship, a young priest who, at the end of the biennium, established the first Romanian Orthodox parish in Milan in 1975. The following year, the second scholarship for a new doctorate was granted to Gheorghe Vasilescu, the founder of the first Romanian Orthodox parish in Turin in 1979 (Alzati 2011, 193–195).

The establishment of these two parishes was followed by those of Bari (1983) and Florence (1984), and later those of other Italian towns where small groups of Romanians were present. However, it was in the 1990s, after the fall of the Communist regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu, that a first large flow of Romanian immigrants came to Italy. Although 34 parishes were already present in the Italian territory in 2004, the Romanian diaspora began in 2007 with the entry of Romania into the European Union. Thanks to the socio-cultural affinities and the solid historical and diplomatic relations between the two countries, Italy soon became the first country of the Romanian diaspora not just in Europe but in the world, with a community of more than 1,130,000 people.

Since 2001, the Romanian parishes in Italy have depended on the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of Western and Southern Europe directed by the Bishop Iosif (Pop). In June 2004, Bishop Siluan (Span), at that time Bishop Vicar of the Metropolis indicated above, was appointed Bishop Vicar for Italy. In 2007, the Saint Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church approved the creation of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Italy and, in February of the following year, Bishop Siluan was appointed Bishop of Italy. The Church obtained legal recognition from the Italian State in 2011, and negotiations are currently in process to reach an agreement.

What we have briefly outlined shows how the main changes in the presence of Christian Orthodoxy in Italy have occurred from the 1990s. This "revolution" took place not only in terms of quantity, but also in forms of structuring and rooting of the Churches in the Italian territory. As shown in Table 4.1, then, it is from the year

2000 that the presence of the Orthodox in Italy is constantly increasing.[3] Such an increase has further accelerated since 2003, very likely because of the immigration norms introduced by the Italian Government the previous year. The Orthodox immigrants have exceeded the number of the Catholic ones since 2006, and in the subsequent years they have approached the number of the Muslim ones.

In 2010, the difference between the Orthodox and the Muslim migrants was almost 100,000 units, to the point that some scholars theorized that "in the hypothesis that this trend remains constant, in three years the Orthodox are bound to surpass the Muslims, while subsequently the expected decline of flows from Eastern Europe will cause a reversal of positions" (Perego and Gnesotto 2010, 207). In fact, in the three subsequent years the quantitative distance between the two religious traditions has considerably increased, probably as an effect that the international economic crisis and the recent conflicts in the African continent have produced over the migration flows. However, this distance seems to have been considerably reduced in 2014, to the point of reaching the lowest difference since 2001. The 1,528,500 Orthodox immigrants in Italy, to whom the Italians of the little-investigated phenomenon of conversions from Catholicism to Orthodoxy should be added, confirm the "historical continuity and social discontinuity" of Christian Orthodoxy in the Italian territory (Giordan 2015).

4.3 The Plurality of Orthodox Churches in Italy

According to our analysis, at the beginning of 2016, 18 Christian-Orthodox jurisdictions are present in Italy, which have 486 parishes distributed over the whole national territory.[4] Table 4.2 allows comparing this datum with that of 5 years ago. In 2011, there were 16 jurisdictions and 355 parishes: the latter have increased by 37% in only 5 years. In closer detail, the data indicate that the most relevant increases have concerned the Moscow Patriarchate (43%), the Patriarchate of Romania (37%) and the Coptic Church (52%). The Metropolis of Milan and Aquileia, which has shown a surprising rise in percentage, has its own interesting narrative bringing together religious personnel and believers of different ethnic groups. In Table 4.2,

[3] As far as the period from 2001 to 2011 is concerned, the data we set in Table 4.1 originate from the Immigration Statistical Dossier compiled by IDOS Study Centre in collaboration with the Italian Caritas and the Migrantes Foundation. However, the data from 2012 to 2014, following editorial changes, are drawn from the same Study Center in collaboration with the National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR), and the last datum of 2015 is also worked out in collaboration with the magazine *Confronti* and the financial support of the Waldensian Church. A previous table containing the above data updated to 2010 was already published in Giordan (2013a).

[4] To collect these data, we first referred to the liturgical calenders issued annually by some jurisdictions. Given that such calenders are published only by the most represented jurisdictions in Italy, we continued the research on the internet and integrated the findings with personal meetings and telephone contacts. Communications were not always easy, not only because of the language barrier, but also because of fear from the staff of some jurisdictions of disclosing confidential information.

Table 4.2 Orthodox Churches in Italy (2011 and 2016)

Jurisdiction	Parishes and monasteries in January 2011	Parishes and monasteries in January 2016
Romanian Orthodox Church (Patriarchate of Rumania), Diocese of Italy	166	228
Sacred Orthodox Archdiocese of Italy and Malta (Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople)	84	87
Russian Orthodox Church (Patriarchate of Moscow), Administration of the Churches in Italy	44	63
Coptic Orthodox Church	21	32
Greek Orthodox Church of the Calendar of the Fathers – Synod of the Resistant	9	12
Archbishopric for the Russian Orthodox Churches in Western Europe (Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate), Deanery of Italy	7	7
Ethiopian Orthodox Church Tewahedo	5	6
Serbian Orthodox Church (Patriarchate of Serbia)	4	5
Romanian Orthodox Church of the Old Calendar	3	4
Autonomous Orthodox Church of Western Europe and the Americas – Metropolis of Milan and Aquileia	3	14
Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Patriarchate of Bulgaria)	2	2
Eritrean Orthodox Church	2	3
Macedonian Orthodox Church	2	3
Armenian Apostolic Church	1	2
Russian Orthodox Church of the Ancient Rite (Metropolis of Belokrinitsa)	1	1
Orthodox Church in Italy	1	2
Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Patriarchate of Kiev)	–	5
Georgian Orthodox Church	–	10
Total	355	486

we have included the Orthodox Church in Italy, which has, however, a rather controversial history.[5]

[5] The history of this Church is characterized by schisms and internal vicissitudes, to the point that today three Churches claim to guard the same religious traditions. However, an institution named "Othodox Church of Italy" was founded in 1991 by the former Catholic priest Antonio De Rosso (1941–2009), after whose death Basilio Grillo Miceli succeeded as metropolita. In 2011 a group of faithful left the Church and formed the "Metropolita Antonio Association", which has passed under the Orthodox Roman Vetero-Catholic Church since 2013. In 2014 a second split took place. The Church Bishop Vitaly Kuzhelnyy, guided by Grillo Miceli, adhered to the Orthodox Church of Europe (a group in Paris headed by Nicholas, a Primate who claims the title of Patriarch), of which he was elected Archbishop of Italy. Currently Grillo Miceli does not claim to have any episcopal titles or to represent Italian Orthodoxy, while the other two Churches, of which we counted a parish each, are still operative. In this note we have not addressed the genesis of the group known as the "Synod of Milan", nor have we included in our research the newly-formed Italian Orthodox Church led by Alessandro Meluzzi.

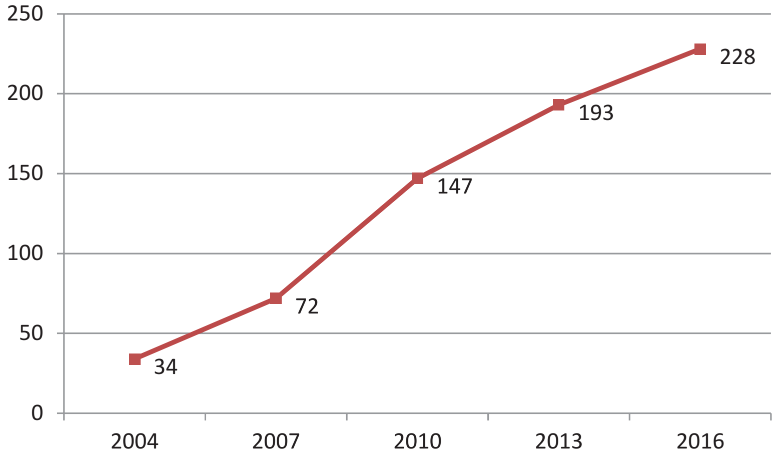


Fig. 4.1 Number of Romanian orthodox parishes in Italy from 2004 to 2016

The growth of the Romanian Patriarchate parishes has been amazing in terms of both quantity and speed: as clearly shown in Fig. 4.1, the Romanian parishes in Italy increased from 34 to 228 in 12 years: a growth rate that, as we have seen, has also resulted from the change in the European legislation on migration. Obviously, from a quantitative point of view, it is precisely the Orthodox Romanians who make a difference within the panorama of the Orthodox Christian Churches in Italy.

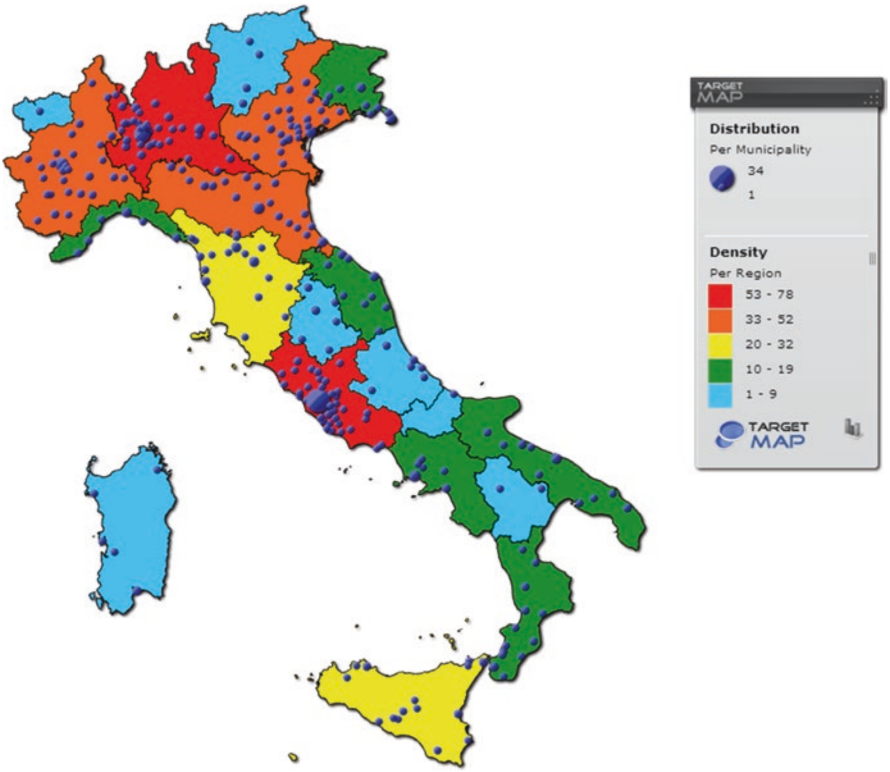
Table 4.3 shows the number of Orthodox parishes present in each region of the Italian peninsula at the beginning of 2016. The regions with the largest number of parishes are Lombardy and Lazio, the main places of the religious diasporas in Italy, and Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna and Veneto, the The distribution of the places of worship involves all the major cities of every Italian region (see Map 4.1). However, compared with their consistent presence in northern Italy, Orthodox rooting is evidently more limited in the central regions, excluding Lazio, and in the southern regions, except Sicily.

Maps 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 show the territorial settlement of the three main Orthodox jurisdictions in Italy. The Romanian Church is present in all regions and in all major cities, while the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ecumenical Patriarchate do not have any places of worship in four and in three regions respectively, and are less present in the major Italian cities.

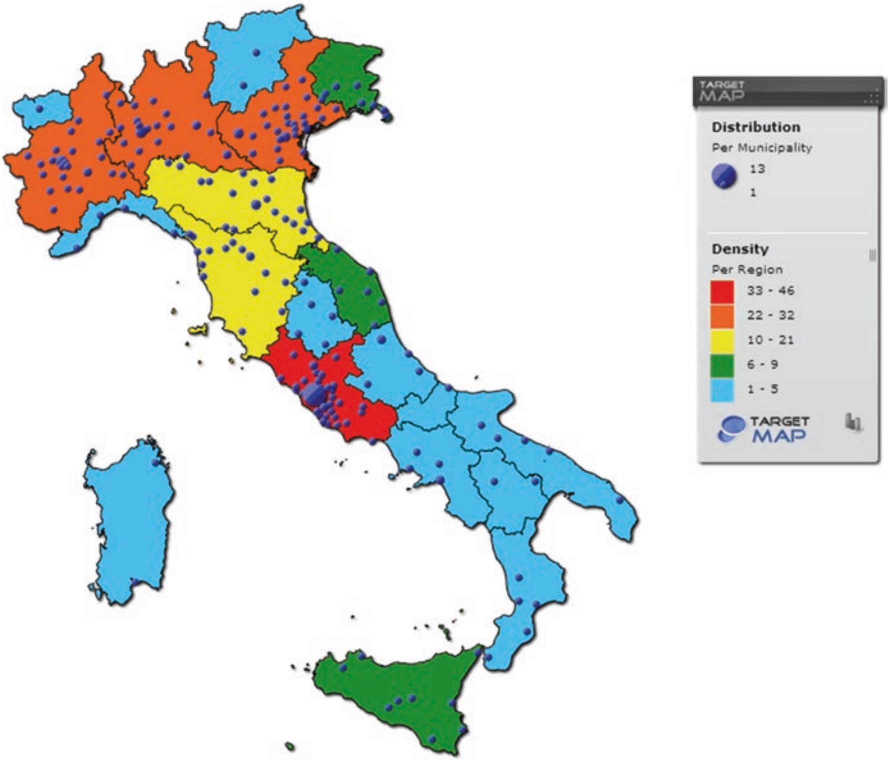
These maps show how the 18 Orthodox jurisdictions present in Italy form a dense network of parishes involving the whole country. The Romanian Church and the other two main jurisdictions form the backbone of the Christian-Orthodox communities in Italy.

Table 4.3 Orthodox Parishes and Monasteries in Italy per Region (2011 and 2016)

Region	Parishes and Monasteries 2011	Parishes and Monasteries 2016
Abruzzo	8	8
Basilicata	2	2
Calabria	21	19
Campania	12	15
Emilia-Romagna	31	45
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	10	16
Lazio	57	75
Liguria	9	12
Lombardia	48	78
Marche	9	14
Molise	3	1
Piemonte	38	52
Puglia	14	19
Sardegna	8	8
Sicilia	19	24
Toscana	20	32
Trentino-Alto Adige	4	6
Umbria	10	9
Valle d'Aosta	1	1
Veneto	29	50
Total		486



Map 4.1 Orthodox Churches in Italy in 2016



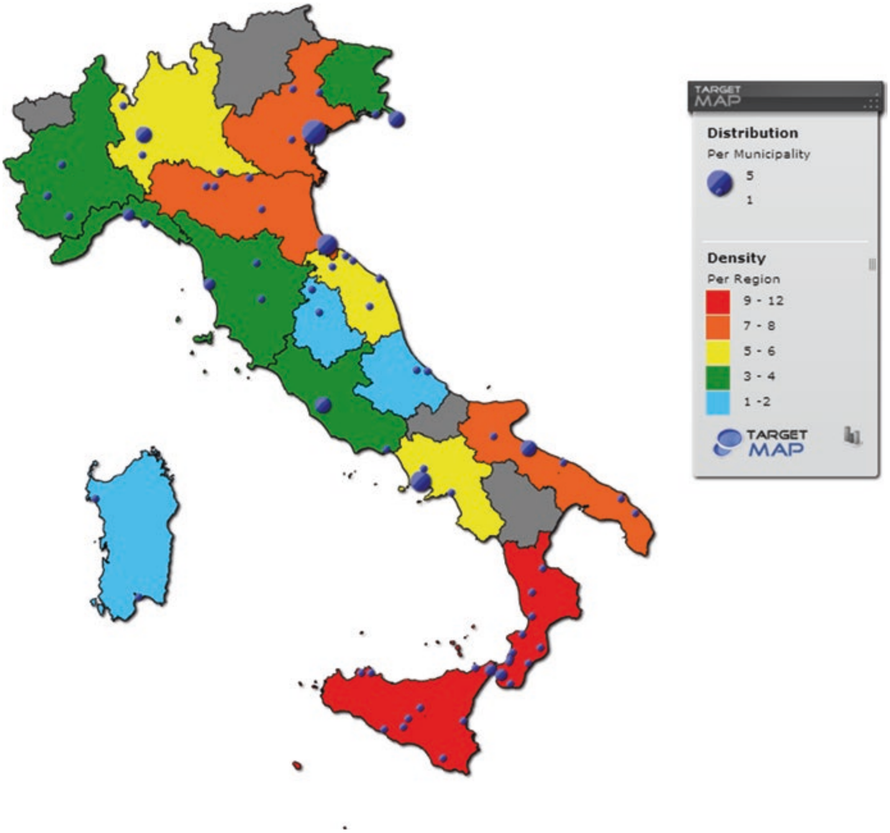
Map 4.2 Romanian Orthodox Churches in Italy in 2016

actual needs of their faithful, thus moving from a provisional situation (renting Catholic churches, temporary lodgings in sheds or shelters meant for other uses) to a stable situation made manifest by buildings made of bricks or wood. In recent months, the first Romanian Orthodox churches in Italy have been consecrated (Moncalieri, Chivasso, Verona); others are under construction (Brescia, Guidonia, Ostia, Venice, Turin), while in Cremona, Ferrara and Padua the churches have been purchased by the Italian State.

In this stabilization process, there is more: in the words of father Athanasius, vicar general of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Italy, what is happening is the shift from a "static pastoral" to a "dynamic pastoral" situation, or "learning the Pastoral pratices from our Catholic brothers".[6]

This innovative perspective has led to an important change in the tasks and mission to which Romanian Orthodox priests are called in Italy. As already pointed out by Hämmerli (2014) referring to the Swiss case and Ihlamur-Öner (2014) referring

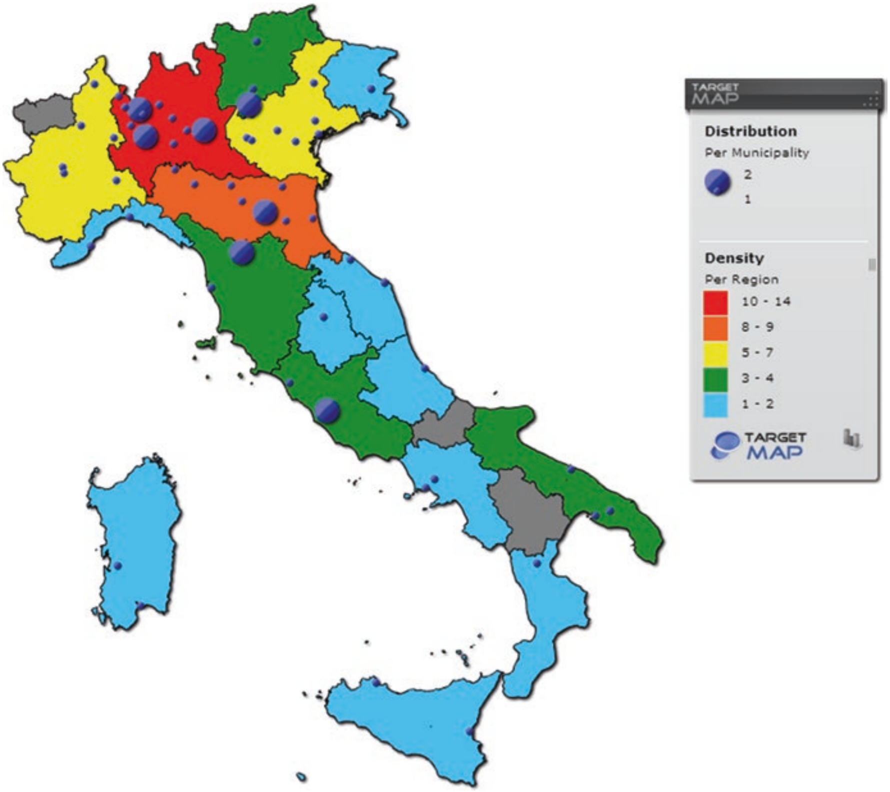
[6] Interview with Father Athanasius, Vicar General of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Italy, Rome, 10 December 2015.



Map 4.3 Ecumenical Patriarchate of Costantinople in Italy in 2016

to the Italian case, it is a decisive change that has significant consequences on the way of understanding the presence and activities of the Orthodox parishes. Besides the traditional liturgical role, the Romanian Orthodox priests in Italy undertake an intense pastoral activity that includes youth camps, pilgrimages and the management of cultural, sporting and recreational activities. These are activities already practiced by their counterparts in Catholicism, where the priests always join the liturgical dimension with the assistential, recreational and cultural ones.

We are evidently facing a hybridization process, where the boundaries of the spiritual and symbolic capital become more fragile and faded, and where the reference to ethnic identity is perhaps destined to slowly fade into the background. After all, it is inevitable for the process of inclusion into the "new motherland" to cause dynamics of adaptation into a society somewhat more modern and less traditional than the "old motherland".



Map 4.4 Russian Orthodox Church in Italy in 2016

4.5 Conclusions

The first aim of this chapter has been to show the amazing quantitative growth of the Othodox Christian parishes in Italy, which have increased from 355 to 486 in the past 5 years.

This growth is due to the influx of migration, which in some cases has more than doubled the presence of some ethnic groups in Italy. In line with the data proposed, the largest migrant community is the Romanian, accounting for 22.9% of immigrants to the Italian territory (from 297,570 immigrants in 2006 to 1,151,390 in 2016). The reason for this extensive immigration, the largest Romanian diaspora in the world, is detectable in the cultural and linguistic proximity of the two countries, rooted both in the common Roman inheritance that constitutes a "shared Latinity" between Italy and Romania and in their close historical relationship. Even the Russian diaspora has almost doubled in the last decade (from 18,689 immigrants in 2006 to 35,791 in 2016), as well as the Moldovan one (from 47,632 immigrants in 2006 to 142,266 in 2016). It is interesting to note that in Italy this last ethnic group attends not only the Russian churches and the Romanian ones, but also the parishes of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Besides highlighting this growth, however, our contribution has had a second aim: to elucidate how a well-documented quantitative change accompanies one of a more qualitative nature. This is the shift in the presence of the Orthodox Christian Churches, from being communities in diaspora or "guests" in the host social and cultural context to being local Churches firmly integrated into the religious, social and cultural dynamics of the new environment.

If this hypothesis were confirmed in the coming years, the ensuing consequences would be significant on several fronts. The transition from "Orthodoxy in diaspora" to "Orthodoxy as local Church" in the Western European context brings with it a new understanding of Orthodoxy itself. This process requires breaking down the dimension of ethnic identity refering to the Church of origin, to discover what is at stake in relation to a context where there are other religions, other identities and other cultures (Giordan 2015). Some forms of nationalism typical of specific Orthodox experiences seem to stop working in a different geographical and cultural context such as Italy, compelling the different jurisdictions to interinteract at an unprecedented level compared with what happens in the nations of origin. In this regard, the example of the Orthodox Episcopal Conference of Italy and Malta is a first attempt at pan-Orthodox coordination among the Bishops who have jurisdiction over the Italian territory.

But the even more important challenge is that of the relationship between Orthodoxy and modernity: it is on this ground that the real possibility of a significant Orthodox presence in the countries of Western Europe is realized. Obviously, we do not refer to a single model of modernity, and the contributions present in the book edited by Hämmerli and Mayer (2014) show in a very rich and documented way how the adaptation processes vary according to the different cultural, legal and religious frameworks of the different European nations. However, the underlying issue is the same: how far is the Orthodox religious tradition capable of getting out of its specific context of origin to open out globally? Roudometof (2014) and Roudometof and Makrides (2010) have already addressed this issue in the perspective of an increasingly globalized world, where the liturgical element would seem no longer sufficient to ensure the survival of a religious tradition. The new issues linked to public ethics, to bioethics and to human rights are major challenges for all the religious traditions, but they are particularly so for Orthodoxy. We might ask ourselves, as Vasilios Makrides does (2012a, b), how much modernity Orthodox Christianity can afford. Or, reversing the question, which level of tradition can the Orthodox communities present in Western Europe afford without risking to be driven to a niche of irrelevance by the modernization and globalization processes.

The example of Romanian Orthodoxy in Italy we referred to above seems to open the possibility of a process of change and innovation within the Orthodox tradition, a process that will have consequences even within the same religious tradition in the country of origin, as well as within the Italian society homogeneously deemed Catholic. The developments of the coming years, perhaps also resulting from the instructions to be given by the Pan-Orthodox Synod in June 2016, will indicate whether and how it is possible to think of an Italian Orthodoxy – namely, whether and how one can imagine being simultaneously Italian and Orthodox, as well as truly Orthodox and Italian.

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Chapter 5
Congregational Development and Organization-Mindedness: Results from the German Church Barometer

Hilke Rebenstorf

Abstract Congregations in contemporary Germany are hybrids (Hauschildt E, Pohl-Patalong U. Kirche, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh, 2013). They are communities coming together for worship and social gatherings. They are modern organizations in their role as, e.g., employers, real estate owners with their own statutes. And they are competitors on the market of welfare and educational services, of cultural and leisure time activities, and, of course, on the market of meaning and spirituality. Furthermore, facilities and activities of the congregations are marked by religious, social and cultural pretensions (Rebenstorf H, Ahrens P-A, Wegner G. Potenziale vor Ort. Erstes Kirchengemeindebarometer, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, Leipzig, 2015). Accordingly, Christian congregations or members of the parochial church councils respectively, make use, similar to complex societies, of more than just one mechanism of social coordination (Streeck W, Schmitter C. Eur Sociol Rev 1:119–138, 1985). In the case of parishes the coordinating mechanisms of market, organization and community are effective in the manner of a regulator system (Wiesenthal H. Markt, Organisation und Gemeinschaft als "zweitbeste" Verfahren sozialer Koordination. In: Jäger W, Schimank U (eds) Organisationsgesellschaft. Facetten und Perspektiven, 223–264. VS, Wiesbaden, 2005). A congregation typology, derived from the first survey ever conducted under the elders of a representative sample of parishes of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), shows how these regulators effect development as well as "well-being" of congregations, as perceived by the elders. Organization matters. However, the typology also demonstrates the limited effect of organizational endeavours under the condition of demographic decline.

Keywords Protestant congregations · Congregation typology · Social coordination · Parochial church councils · Representative survey

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_5

5.1 Introduction

In Germany, as in the other states of Northern Europe, churches are in decline. Continuing losses in membership are already showing significant consequences for the infrastructure of the congregations – fewer resources mean fewer offerings, less visibility, and perhaps poorer performance, which might lead to an accelerated downfall. Thus, parishes are coming under increasing pressure. Cooperation, regionalization and parish mergers are the most common administrative responses to the shortages resulting from this decline in membership. And as if these constraints and imposed changes were not enough, in Germany the reform paper issued by the Council of the Evangelical Church (Rat der EKD) in 2006 raised the prospect of further heavy demands being made on parishes, even threatening their existence by promoting new forms of community beyond the traditional local parish. The expectations were high: the then-proposed church reform aimed to bring about an increase in the numbers of occasional services, and to achieve a "higher quality" of religious service. These goals would have to be accomplished with fewer funds and with a declining number of local parishes and pastors (EKD 2006).

The expectation that the reforms proposed in that document would be actively adopted by local parishes assumed that the parochial church councils (PCCs), the elected representative bodies that administer the parishes' affairs: (1) can take effective action, (2) perceive themselves to be the governing bodies of their parishes, and (3) share the core aspirations of the reform paper.

None of these assumptions, however, could be taken for granted. The truth is that the authors of the reform paper did not appear to know what the situation in fact was in the parishes (see for example Hermelink and Wegner 2008; Karle 2010, 2009), what attitudes prevailed at the local level – and how far these attitudes differed according to region, congregation, overall religiosity, degree of urbanization, etc. Depending on these factors and a parish's history, there may be profound differences in self-perceptions and local agendas, degrees of organization, professionalization and awareness of being just one provider of spiritual guidance among others – not only among individual parishes but also in relation to the visions of church leaders.

This obvious lack of systematic knowledge on the life of Protestant parishes in Germany[1] gave rise to the idea of conducting a broad, representative survey covering a wide range of topics to (1) derive a broad, descriptive picture of the work on the parish councils and parish life; (2) to assess how realistic the assumption of church reformers was that parishes simply needed to apply some tools of organizational development to grow or at least survive. This paper deals with the latter point.

[1] There exist, of course, some studies on specific issues, e.g. the Christian ministry as a profession (e.g. Kronast 2005; Magaard and Nethöfel 2011; Schendel 2014), or the church as an organization (Lindner 1994). Most of these studies are restricted to single church provinces, are of qualitative character and as such do not provide a comprehensive picture of the diverse landscape of Protestant parishes in Germany.

To approach the topic, this chapter opens with a brief description of the Evangelical Church in Germany and its parishes/congregations[2] (5.2). Then a theoretical model for assessing the role of market-, organization- and community-mindedness for members of PCCs is introduced (5.3). We then describe the sampling and methodology of the German Church Barometer (5.4), present results concerning the relationship between market-/organization-mindedness and the assessment of the parish's development, (5.5) and we finish with some tentative conclusions (5.6).

5.2 The Evangelical Church in Germany and Its Parishes or Congregations

The Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)[3] is an umbrella organization currently embracing 20 member churches. All of them are Protestant, of course, but they vary in their denominations. Eight member churches are Lutheran, which means that all the congregations follow Lutheran theology; one is Reformed; while the others embrace both Lutheran and Reformed congregations as well as Uniate ones. Each of the 20 member churches has its own constitution and statutes regulating the organization of its parishes. The churches vary widely in size (from 42,000 to 2.8 million members, from 22 to 2300 parishes) as well as in their strength in the community: the level of church membership in the population varies from 13% in one member church in eastern Germany[4] (Anhalt) to 61% in one member church in western Germany (Schaumburg-Lippe). On average, members of the Evangelical Church made up 28.9% of the population in the year 2013, a total of 23.6 million people. This legal structure of an umbrella organization, independent member churches, and a diversity of denominations and statutes reflects the history of Christianity in Germany as strongly connected to the political power struggles up to the nineteenth century. And although the typical religious milieus of nineteenth century Germany (Lepsius 1973) were not re-established after World War II, the centuries-old cultural heritage is still imprinted today on the religious culture of each member church under this big umbrella.[5]

[2] The dominant organizational form of congregations in Germany is the territorially defined parish. Thus, the respondents to our questionnaire nominally represent all members of the Evangelical Church living in the territory assigned to their parish. In German, there is no terminological distinction between parish and congregation.

[3] The EKD, although the official translation is "Evangelical Church in Germany", is not "evangelical" as that term is normally understood in English, but Protestant.

[4] The terms "eastern Germany" and "western Germany", or just "eastern" and "western", refer respectively to the area of the former East Germany or German Democratic Republic (DDR) and the area of the former West Germany (the pre-reunification Federal Republic of Germany).

[5] On the territory of the political state of Lower Saxony, for instance, there are still five Protestant churches, reflecting the political organization before the founding of the German Empire in its boundaries of 1871. These churches are the Lutheran Church of Hanover, the Lutheran Church of

Church life takes place in roughly 15,000 parishes, which of course also differ greatly, not only in their size but also in the range of their activities. It is in their local parishes that people attend religious services, parents want to have their children baptized, couples marry, the deceased are buried, and pastoral care and spiritual guidance are provided; it is there that people come together for a variety of purposes: to read, to discuss, to party, and to pray.

5.3 Organization, Community, Market (OCM): Basic Mechanisms of Social Coordination

Governing the parish, organizing a rich parish life, facing challenges and influencing future developments demand coordinated action. In the social sciences, the idea that social order derives from the interplay of different mechanisms of coordination was described explicitly for the first time in 1985 by Streeck and Schmitter, who identified three such mechanisms: community, market and state. This triad has been modified by other scholars, though always with the same intention of describing the basis of social order as an interplay of different mechanisms of social coordination. In his summary of the various approaches, Helmut Wiesenthal recommends the use of the triad of organization, community and market. Obviously, church parishes combine characteristics of all three of these elements – they are hybrids (Hauschildt and Pohl-Patalong 2013; see also Krech et al. 2013).

1. They are organizations insofar as they are subject to church constitutions, have employees, manage funds and provide regular and reliable services as part of their legal mandate.
2. Nobody will question their character as social communities, or of "Gemeinschaft" to use the concept elaborated by Ferdinand Tönnies.
3. Finally, parishes find themselves exposed to market mechanisms. Competing on the market for spiritual interpretations of existence is only one facet of this. They also compete with other organizations that offer cultural and leisure time activities, and on the market place for welfare and educational services (Stolz 2013).

All activities of and within local parishes can be considered on the basis of these three aspects. This is of great importance when addressing the question of the self-image and self-governance of parishes (Ahrens and Wegner 2012: 11) They are neither just communities nor just organizations nor just market players; they are something of each – in varying constellations. Thus, we must think in terms of a model with three regulators, showing different amplitudes from parish to parish (Fig. 5.1).

Brunswick, the Lutheran Church of Oldenburg, the Lutheran Church of Schaumburg-Lippe, and the Reformed Church. The only case in which the boundaries of a church correspond to those of a single German state is that of Bavaria.

Fig. 5.1 Mechanisms of social coordination – a set of regulators

One important question for dealing with the contemporary challenges and for shaping future development is whether a certain profile of preferences concerning these three mechanisms of social coordination indicates higher resilience to the jeopardies.

Of further interest is the content orientation as primarily religious, social or cultural. The religious dimension is a basic one – to preach the gospel. The social dimension is commonly the one assigned to churches by the public. The cultural dimension is inherent in values supported by religious organizations as well as in cultural events such as concerts. Like with the mechanisms of social coordination, we must think of the content orientation also in terms of a regulator model. The importance of the content orientation for the development of the parish or congregation is less elaborated in the social science literature than the regulator model of social coordination. Also, it has hardly been tested empirically. However, approaches on religious economy and competition indicate that at least a certain degree of religious strictness has a positive impact on the commitment of church members and attraction for non-members (see e.g. Iannaccone 1994; Härle et al. 2008; in contrast Stolz et al. 2011). We therefore will also have a look at differences in the orientation of religious content.

5.4 The German Church Barometer: Sampling and Methodology

5.4.1 Sampling and Response Rate

The issues of social coordination and content orientation were among those addressed in our study "How is the parish doing?" – the first representative study ever undertaken among members of the Parochial Church Councils (PCC) in Germany. To obtain reliable and differentiated answers we drew on a representative random sample of 10%, but numbering not less than 20, of the parishes in each member church. As former state churches, all the individual member churches have their own histories of involvement with or interference by the authorities that have shaped their current constitutions, denominations and sizes – or in short, their individual cultures. 1508 PCCs were contacted by mail and asked to complete two kinds of written questionnaires. The first type of questionnaire was to be filled in by each member of the PCC. This covered a wide range of issues such as individual motivation for working on the PCC, an assessment of the parish's style of work and organization, the satisfaction of the individual PCC member with his or her work and with the development of parish life, the range of activities and an assessment of their importance, the existence of target groups, the extent to which organization and management methods are used, the quality of relations with other levels of church leadership, etc. The second type of questionnaire was a meta-questionnaire for each parish, designed to collect general information on that parish, such as the number of members, the type of settlement in which the parish was located, and information on public relations work, fundraising, and contacts with other church and non-church institutions. The fieldwork took place in the spring and summer of 2013; the response rate for the parishes was 53% (n = 801) and the participation rate of PCC members roughly 30% (n = 3980). The participation rate differed strongly across the 19 member churches that took part in our survey, reaching from 30% in the church of Central Germany[6] to 75% in Hanover and Oldenburg. Due to the oversampling of small churches as well as the biased response and participation rates, the data is weighted when statistical analysis is to be applied to the overall data. The dataset has two levels: the church parish and the individual members of the Parochial Church Council.

5.4.2 *Measuring Mechanisms of Social Coordination and Parish Development*

Questions concerning the coordinating mechanisms of organization – community – market (OCM) were put to the church elders in several ways. They were asked:

- "How important are the following points to you personally regarding your involvement on the parochial church council?" 16 statements were to be rated with a 5-point scale (from not important at all to very important); 11 of these statements were assigned to the coordinating mechanisms (OCM) by theoretical considerations (for details see appendix Table 5.1). However, or as anticipated in line with the idea of a regulator model, these dimensions are not clearly distinguishable statistically. Thus, no scales measuring the three dimensions have been created.

[6] "Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland": Thuringia, approximately 80% of Saxony-Anhalt, and a small northern part of Saxony.

- "How important are the following points to you overall in your parish?" Eight statements had to be rated on the same 5-point scale, three statements indicating OCM orientation: strengthening togetherness (c), setting targets and checking if these are met (o), creating competitive offerings (m).
- Which methods of organizational development are used in the parish: annual planning, regular meetings with employees, conferences/weekends in closed session, seminars and/or training, external consulting, formulating targets for fields of activity, feedback/self-monitoring methods, mission-statement development, and professional volunteer management. An additive scale on the number of methods applied was created.
- How work on the parochial church council is organized was surveyed with ten statements, again to be answered with a 5-point scale (completely false to completely true). Two scales could be created: "modern management" (five items, Cronbach's $\alpha = .732$) and "conflicts and frictions" (five items, Cronbach's $\alpha = .782$; see Table 5.2 for details)
- Personal experiences with the work on the PCC was measured with ten items, of which four items can be used to build a scale of "enriching involvement" (Cronbach's $\alpha = .766$) and two items for the scale "involvement is a strain" (Pearson's $r = .630$) (see Table 5.3 for details).
- Organization and management of the parish was surveyed with seven items, four of them constituting the scale "division of labor and controlling" (Cronbach's $\alpha = .750$); the remaining items build the scale "too much effort" (Cronbach's $\alpha = .776$) (see Table 5.4 for details).
- Keeping an eye on target groups can also be an indicator for conscious programming and development. We asked the individual members of the PCCs: "To what extent do the activities and programs of your parish/congregation address the following groups of persons?": the elderly, children, youth, families, people with low income, couples, people with high income, singles, single parents. Answers could be given on a 5-point scale (very strongly to not at all).
- In the meta-questionnaire one question touched the OCM dimension: whether the work in the PCC was organized in committees or working groups with an open space to write down their thematic focuses.

The focus mainly concerning content orientation was covered with the following question[7]: "And what focus do you want your parish as a whole to have?" Use the following scale to rate the three focuses "religious", "social" and "cultural": Pronounced, Average, Very little/not at all.

Parish development was assessed by three simple questions measuring a subjective dimension with three points in time – current state, past development, future expectation. We have deliberately chosen a subjective measurement because the

[7] Directly before this question was asked, respondents had been asked to indicate for a list of 20+ offers and activities how strongly they should be religious, cultural or social.

"success" of a parish can scarcely be determined in terms of any general indicators - as growth, for example, can.[8] The individual members of the PCCs were asked:

- "How satisfied are you overall with the current situation of your parish/congregation?[9]" (very satisfied / fairly satisfied/so-so/somewhat dissatisfied / very dissatisfied)
- "If you look back over the past five years: has the general situation of your parish/congregation improved or worsened during this period?" (improved very much/improved somewhat/remained the same/worsened somewhat/worsened very much) followed by an open question referring to the reasons and responsibilities for the development.
- "And now consider how you expect your parish to develop over the next five years: will the general situation have improved or deteriorated by the end of that period?" (will have improved very much/will have improved somewhat/will be the same/will have deteriorated somewhat/will have deteriorated very much) also followed by an open question

The correlations between these three assessments are less strong than one might expect, particularly those between the current state of the parish and the expectation for the future (Fig. 5.2).

The different strengths of bivariate correlations give rise to the assumption that there are a multitude of variations when we combine evaluations of past and future development and the present state. Therefore, we used the explorative method of cluster analysis to identify these variations. Since the answers to these questions are

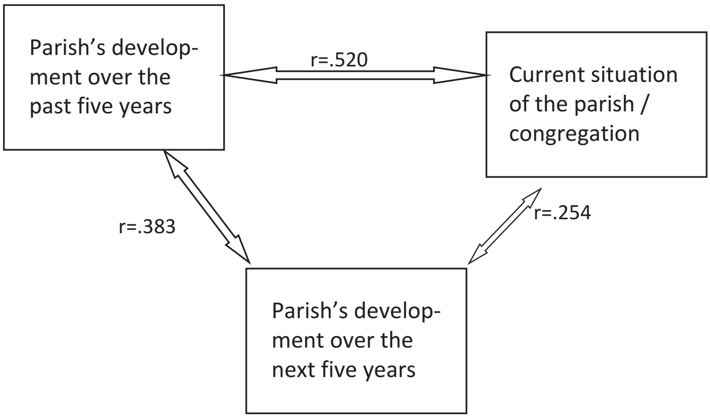

Fig. 5.2 Correlation between past and future development and present state of parish (Pearson's r, 2-tailed, p = .000)

[8] Even growth can be defined in various ways: an increase in the number of nominal members, the number of occasional services (baptisms, marriages etc.) carried out, the numbers of people attending services, the number of people volunteering to take on honorary activities, etc. On this problem, see also Härle et al. 2008.

[9] See Footnote 2.

the assessments of the individual members of the PCCs, the data had to be aggregated to determine a typology of congregations. For that we used the SPSS 'aggregate' procedure. With the cluster-analysis we identified ten types of parishes.[10] These types differ regarding not only their past and expected future development, but also the regulators described in our theoretical approach.

5.5 Organization – Community – Market and Parish Development: Some Findings

Correlations between the indicators for O – C – M and an assessment of the parish's well-being, as well as multiple regressions, are limited to a single dependent variable. As previous analysis showed (see Rebenstorf 2017), the assessment of the current situation through variables representing the organizational dimension works reasonably well ($r^2 = .18$), but not so for the future development. And, with one single dependent variable, we do not have the picture of a parish's trajectory as we can describe it with our typology integrating the three assessments: past development, present state, and future development. The disadvantage of the typology is some blurring, since the method of cluster analysis clearly assigns the cases per the given algorithm, but finally the clusters show some overlapping. Hence for now, the findings reflect an empirically based plausibility rather than clear-cut statistical knowledge.

One key result of this typology is the identification of a connection between the degree of well-being of a parish and the amplitude of the regulators of social coordination: the more the members of a parochial church council consider the mechanisms of "organization" and "market" in their work, the more positively they assess both the current situation of their parish and its development. Nevertheless, "community" is the main actuator in all cases. In this respect, there is no difference between the various types of congregation.[11]

Figure 5.3 presents a coordinate system with the vertical axis "Development of the parish" and the horizontal axis "Market- and organizational-mindedness". The further to the left a parish is located on the chart, the more market- and organization-mindedness are pronounced; the more to the top a parish is located, the brighter its development is assessed by the PCC members. This coordinate system is of course not a strictly mathematical one. As has been shown in Sect. 5.4.2, there is no single measurement for "market" or for "organization", let alone a combination of both. However, market-mindedness always goes along with organization-mindedness, with the market dimension always less accentuated. In addition, the vertical axis of

[10] The cluster analysis is based on the median of the three original variables, using complete linkage and squared Euclidian distance.

[11] A similar pattern is to be found in respect of the content orientation: the social dimension is predominant, followed by the religious dimension, with the cultural dimension playing only a lesser role.

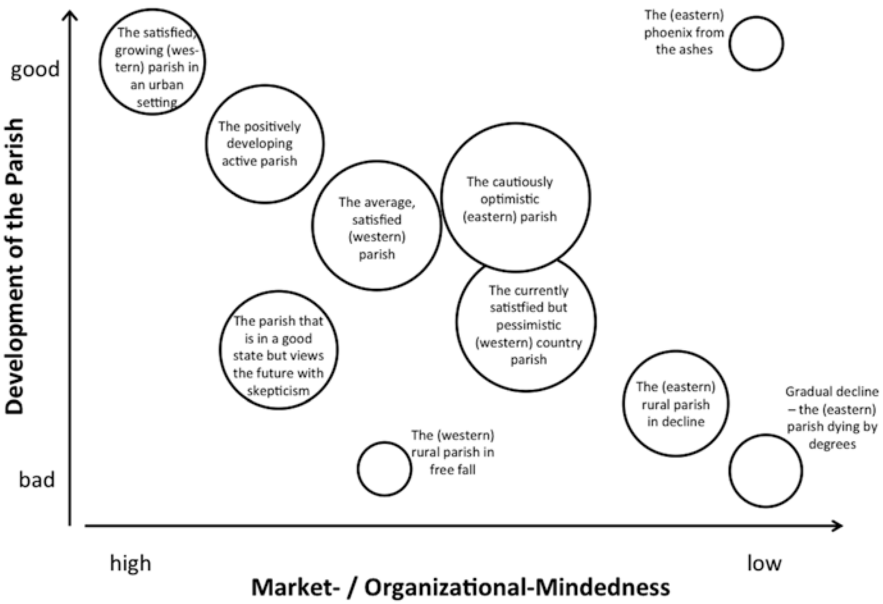

Fig. 5.3 A Parish Typology indicating a Connection between Parish and Market-/Orga-nizational-Mindedness and Parish Development

course represents just an approximation of the real trajectory of the parishes. Consequently, there are no exact correlations between the axes to report. However, in respect of some indicators significant differences manifest themselves: if not always between all types of parish, due to the overlapping that exists, then at least between some of them.

If the assumption about the relationship between development of the parish/congregation and the market- and organization-mindedness of the PCC members were unambiguous, all types of parish would be on a single line that would go from top left (good development and high market-/organization-mindedness) to bottom right (bad development and low market-/organization-mindedness). As can be seen, this is not the case: although six types follow that pattern, two types deviate somewhat, and two types fall completely away from that pattern. The types that follow the ideal pattern will be described first; the deviant cases will be dealt with afterwards.

1. "The satisfied, growing (western) parish in an urban setting": these parishes, making up 10% of our sample, show above-average engagement in the training of new members of the PCC and in commitment to the target groups of children, families, couples and well-off persons. The amplitude of the market dimension is a little higher here than in all other types, and the same is also true of the

religious content dimension. The PCC members consider this development to be the result of their own efforts; they do not consider demographic developments to be a threat to the future of their parishes. The organization of work in the PCC and in the administration of the parish shows a significantly higher use of elements of management and controlling techniques than in the other clusters. And they complain to a significantly lesser extent about being overburdened by the administration of the parish and their work on the PCC. Summing up, the attitude could be described as: "Everything is fine, has improved during the past period, and will continue to improve in the future." Regarding the content orientation of PCC members in this type of parish, the social dimension is found to be the biggest actuator (as is the case in all the other types of parish as well); however, PCC members of the "satisfied, growing (western) parish in an urban setting" emphasize the religious dimension to a significantly above-average extent.

2. "The positively developing active parish" makes up 13% of our sample. This type includes the somewhat bigger parishes. Past and future developments are assessed positively, while the current situation is viewed ambivalently. It is the work of the Parochial Church Council and of the pastors that is perceived as responsible for the state of development. To an above-average extent, PCC members report that they organize their work in committees. They are engaged in concept development and make use of external consultants, retreats, training and feedback as well as self-assessment procedures. Nevertheless, they score a little lower on the indicators for the use of management and control techniques than the previous type (Type 1). The content orientation of the PCC members is directed to an above-average extent toward the social and the cultural dimensions. The geographical distribution of these parishes, as between eastern and western Germany, corresponds to the overall distribution of the sample parishes.
3. "The average, satisfied (western) parish" type makes up 15% of our sample. The predominant attitude may be described as "The way things are is the way they were and the way they will go on"; it is dominated by cautious optimism and a relaxed approach. Parishes of this type can be found in rural as well as in urban areas and they symbolize "the average". Thus, they score significantly lower on the market and organization dimension than the parishes of the cluster described previously (Type 2); when it comes to content they may, similarly to the preceding clusters, focus a little more on the religious dimension.
4. "The currently satisfied but pessimistic (western) country parish" also makes up 15% of our sample. Such parishes are for the most part truly rural villages. Accordingly, they expect a demographically induced decline in church membership. Committees addressing future needs such as those for child care, youth work or public relations are underrepresented; however, we cannot say whether this underrepresentation is because such work has been escalated to the next

higher level, or is because there simply are no children or young people; or whether it arises out of resignation. Thus, overall, they show a lower degree of involvement with management techniques than the three types above and to the left of them.

5. "The (eastern) rural parish in decline" represents another 10% of the sample. The atmosphere can best be described in this way: "The situation is bad, has become worse, and will get even worse in the future." Although PCC members' involvement is motivated to an above-average extent by the wish to start something new, nothing in fact happens: no organization management, no committees, no training, no consultants and no target groups with a future. Since the parishes of this type are concentrated in villages in the countryside of eastern Germany, one can assume that there are simply no young families, young people or children. Accordingly, the PCCs see demographics and a shortage of resources as the main factors in the decline of their parishes. But they also attribute responsibility for these developments to internal church structures and to their own pastors.
6. "Gradual decline – the (eastern) parish dying by degrees". Parishes of this type are just 3% of the sample. They resemble those of the previous type, but everything is a little worse (past and future development and the current situation) – and a little less (organization, work in committees, target groups). One wonders whether this low level of commitment is the cause of the problems or already their result – resignation. Interestingly, PCC members make a distinction when it comes to attributing responsibility for past and future developments: in the past, the decline was due to demographic development, for the future it is attributed to internal church structures. The impression can arise that representatives of this type of parish feel rather left on their own regarding future challenges.

Then there are parish types lying on either side of the imaginary line marking the mainstream.

7. "The parish that is in a good state but views the future with skepticism" – 13% of the sample. These parishes focus on target groups that are important for their future development – children and youth – but also on the elderly. They are well organized: the work is done in committees, and annual planning, staff meetings, discussions and the establishment of targets are found to an above-average extent. And all these factors have paid off in past developments. Accordingly, the PCC members assess the past and present as good but for some reason or other they are pessimistic about the future. If we look a little more closely into the causes they mention for this assessment, we find demographic change given as one reason among others – but not afforded prominence. What is above average is the expectation that there will be changes in the resource situation that will bring about a decline. The constant reiteration of this negative mantra by church leaders seems to reinforce their pessimistic perception of the situation – even though in fact church finances have improved in recent years despite the

declining trend in church membership. This type of parish can be found in both the east and the west of Germany and in rural and urban areas, in line with the overall distribution of the sample parishes.

8. "The cautiously optimistic (eastern) parish" – with 18% of our sample, the biggest group. The atmosphere can be briefly summed up in the words: "The situation isn't really good, in the past it got worse – but in the future things will change for the better." Responsibility for the past development is attributed to demographics; what makes the PCCs think that the future will be better is difficult to determine. Everything is very much average. Regarding the content orientation, no clear profile is identifiable. Concerning techniques of organization and management, parishes of this type achieve a significantly lower score than those of all the clusters that are to the left of it in Fig. 5.3. One factor that may, at a guess, explain the optimism is that both the PCC and the parish staff concentrate on working with the core community. Parishes belonging to this cluster can be found in rural villages, in small towns, in urban settings, in fact everywhere – but they are more concentrated in the east than in the west of Germany.
9. "The (western) rural parish in free fall" – this group, only a little over 1% of our sample, shows some remarkable specifics: although past development is very positively assessed, the present situation is evaluated as so-so and the future is seen in the darkest colors. Demographic developments as well as internal church structures – this always means structures on the higher organizational levels, not the local ones – are held responsible. Work is organized in committees. Children and young people are considered important for providing a successor generation. One motive for becoming a member of the PCC, according to their answers to the questionnaires, is to address a new public. On the other hand, their main aim is to strengthen cohesion within the existing congregation, which is somewhat in contradiction to the openness for newcomers. With respect to techniques of management and controlling, they resemble the parishes of the previous type (8); however, they score somewhat higher even though, like them, they do not invest in training for new PCC members either. It seems as if the atmosphere is dominated by a feeling of helplessness.
10. In our last type, "the (eastern) phoenix rising from the ashes", representing a little less than 1% of our sample, we find just the opposite. Past and present could not be worse but the future looks fantastic. Responsibility for the past developments is attributed mainly to internal church structures, lack of resources and the work of the pastors; the present pastors, however, are expected to bring about positive changes. Work in committees or work on specific target groups is average or even below, while other organization management tools are not present at all. Striking features, however, are the strongly above-average use of external consultants and the mentions of conflicts within the PCC. Individual motives for working on the PCC are strongly dominated by the market dimen-

sion: looking for a new program, for new audiences, new activities and facilities. It seems as if it is in this group of parishes that we find those who are on the move, where perhaps some “entrepreneurs”, fed up with the decline, have been seeking support from external consultation, have not been afraid to bring conflicts into the open, and now believe in a better future.

5.6 Summary and Outlook

The overall picture of our Parish Typology provides some evidence that there is a correlation between, on the one hand, the use of organizational and management methods, the organization of work in committees, work with target groups, and the awareness of being an actor in a market for meaningfulness and for cultural activities and, on the other hand, the “success” of the parish. If all types of parish lay along one line from top left to bottom right of Fig. 5.3, this relationship would be linear and therefore unambiguous. In fact, six of the ten types identified generally correspond to this pattern and thus support the assumption that organization, planning and public relations are beneficial. They help the parishes to cope with the challenges mentioned in the introduction. However, our data do not allow claiming a causal connection.[12]

This result corresponds very well to the findings from some qualitative, non-representative studies. Lindner (1994), in a study restricted to the region of Bavaria, categorized parishes according to their degree of organization and management, defining five types: the religious movement, the family company, the not-for-profit organization, the classic bureaucratic organization and the functionally specialized organization. Härle et al. (2008), in their analysis of best practices in church parishes and congregations, found a mixture of organizational endeavor, religious orientation, active attempts to attract young families and so on to be the best way to grow the congregation. Wegner (2014, 30–33), in a study involving parishes that describe themselves as attractive, reports similar success factors: congregations must have defined aims; they must develop a profile and attract people. Although these studies offer some insights into the way a congregation or parish can be led successfully, they all have one shortcoming: they focus right from the start on best practice, investigating only communities that are flourishing. Therefore, they cannot tell us what it is that hinders the success of Parochial Church Councils elsewhere, or of others who are or feel responsible for the development of a parish/congregation, or why they might be in danger of failure.

[12] For this, we would need a before-and-after design with parishes having identical starting positions.

With our representative study, we get a clearer picture of the exceptions to the rule "the more organization and market, the better placed the parish"; although our findings are based upon the individual perceptions of PCC members and not on hard facts as they would be collected and catalogued by consultancies. While consultancies build upon causal and mechanical effects, we follow the approach that the mechanisms of social coordination must be applied through conviction, habitually and intrinsically, to unfold their potential. Thus, we must seek the market-, organization- and community-mindedness that becomes manifest through the application of certain management tools. Figure 5.3 identifies types of parish, clearly indicating that not in every single case is organization a sufficient remedy. We find them disproportionately often in rural areas and slightly overrepresented in eastern Germany. In some cases, the challenges are simply too great – for example those of demographics, characterized by the situation in the "shrinking regions", those areas where both populations and economic activity are declining. Strategies pursued by the PCCs are to focus on the core community or to cut off from the past and start something in fact new. Whether these strategies will be successful or not, we cannot finally determine at this moment. If PCC members focus on their core congregations, they might indeed work.

However, the main problems seem to arise in geographical areas where not only the churches but the entire communities, as represented by the local authorities, face challenges – namely, in the "shrinking regions". Here it will be of great interest to see whether, and if so how, church congregations, in cooperation with other players in civil society, will be able to counter the decline. In Germany, there is still little data available; research in this area is only just beginning (e.g. Dünkel et al. 2014; Kirchenamt der EKD 2016).

Given the pessimism that currently dominates discourse about the Evangelical Church in Germany, it seems almost surprising that about a quarter of PCCs are looking positively to the future (Types (1) and (2)) and another third also hold optimistic views (Types (3) and (8)). The data from our representative survey indicate that members of Parochial Church Councils are certainly aware of their parishes' individual environments. Accordingly, they perform their management tasks in a differentiated manner. In this way, they contribute to preserving the diversity that exists under the one roof of the Evangelical Church in Germany. It is now up to the church leaders, be it simply on the level of the member churches or of the umbrella organization as well, to take a closer look at the diversity of these situations and follow a strategy of correspondingly diversified support – instead of prescribing a uniform recipe adopted without further consideration from "best practice congregations".

Appendix

Table 5.1 Factor analysis of O – C – M-items important for work on PCC "How important are the following points to you personally regarding your involvement on the parochial church council?"

Principal Component Analysis – rotated Matrix (Varimax)	Factor 1	2	3
C A team spirit based on trust	–.133	.120	.750
O A clear management structure	.154	.385	.258
M Developing new programs and activities	.740	.138	.098
C Having a shared interest regarding parish work	.533	.042	.541
C Having contact with church council members	.228	.124	.734
M Achieving a new direction for work in the parish	.782	.143	.041
M Gaining new target groups to participate in parish life	.529	.344	.012
O Making more efficient use of resources	.236	.673	–.005
M Boosting the prominence and image of the parish in the public arena	.231	.708	.038
O Taking responsibility for planning and implementing parish work	–.018	.661	.184
O Boosting the application of clear evaluation criteria for parish work	.496	.479	.111

Table 5.2 Factor analysis of statements on Organization of work on PCC "To what extent do the following statements apply to work and organization on your church council?"

Principal Component Analysis – rotated Matrix (Varimax)	Factor 1	2
Members of the parochial church council regularly take part in parish-management training courses.	.077	.734
New members of the parochial church council are familiarized with their roles and trained.	–.145	.704
We communicate regularly about our next objectives and performance standards.	–.238	.648
The parochial church council strives to develop working and decision-making processes.	–.209	.683
Members of the parochial church council are given roles that match their skills, e.g. in committees, jobs in the parish itself.	–.285	.598
The parochial church council shows little openness to suggestions for changes and innovation proposed from members of the congregation.	.629	–.075
Conflicts and disagreements hinder the work.	.813	–.073
The climate in the parochial church council is cooperative, friendly and harmonious.	–.706	.332
The work of the parochial church council often seems little goal-oriented.	.653	–.334
The parochial church council often has issues of conflict between pastors and church elders.	.719	–.093

Table 5.3 Factor analysis on personal experience in PCC "To what extent do the following statements apply to your personal experience on the parochial church council?"

Principal Component Analysis – rotated Matrix (Varimax)	Factor		
	1	2	3
My commitment is recognized.	.737	.043	–.296
I can contribute my own skills.	.714	.199	–.315
Work on the parochial church council is versatile and interesting.	.752	–.014	.031
I feel my commitment is personally rewarding.	.778	–.111	.130
My workload is often too heavy.	–.006	.869	.017
I frequently don't have enough time for my private life.	–.048	.847	.077
I would like to become more involved.	.032	–.241	.561
I wish that others would speak up more often.	.066	.382	.611
I can strengthen my faith.	.583	–.215	.338
I would prefer less talk and more action.	–.163	.193	.704

Table 5.4 Factor analysis organization and management of parish "How do you rate the way your parish is organized and managed? Please rate each comment and state to what extent it applies to your parish" (use a scale ranging from 5 = absolutely true to 1 = is not true at all)

Principal Component Analysis – rotated Matrix (Varimax)	Factor	
	1	2
Decisions are quickly put into practice.	.717	–.184
Clear job descriptions exist for all employees.	.734	–.029
Areas of responsibility are clearly demarcated.	.771	–.076
Checks are run to makes sure decisions are implemented.	.772	–.040
The time required for the administration is too high.	.043	.877
Quite often something remains undone.	–.343	.713
The time required for the organization is too high.	–.050	.870

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Part III
Congregations and Pluralism

Chapter 6
The Established and the Newcomers. A Weberian-Bourdieusian View of Congregations in the Swiss Religious Field

Jörg Stolz and Christophe Monnot

Abstract At least since the work of Max Weber and Pierre Bourdieu, scholars have claimed that established and newcomer groups may compete for resources and power in religious fields. Remarkably, even though the religious field concept rests in important ways on the relationships between religious suppliers, there have, to date, been few quantitative studies that describe these fields on the congregational level. Using a representative National Congregation Study (NCS), we measure and compare the activities and resources of established and newcomer congregations across all major religious traditions in Switzerland. As expected, establishment status is linked to strong privileges for the established groups. Despite diminishing numbers of official members and diminishing attendance, established groups are much wealthier and have more staff than newcomer groups. Other than expected, established groups do not seem to compete with newcomer groups by using exclusion strategies. On the contrary, established groups explicitly seek ecumenical and interreligious contacts and are very tolerant concerning individual social and reli-

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This chapter is a revised version of an article "The Established and the Newcomers. A Weberian-Bourdieusian View of Congregations in the Swiss Religious Field" first published in the Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuse, vol. 97 (1), p. 69–90. This chapter is dedicated to Jean-Pierre Bastian, Professor Emeritus of the University of Strasbourg.

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_6

gious diversity. We suggest that this does not contradict the Weberian/Bourdieusian field theory, but can be viewed as a strategy by established groups to preserve their threatened establishment status.

Keywords Establishment of religion · Field theory · Congregation · Religious pluralism · Religious dialogue

6.1 Introduction

At least since the work of Max Weber (1978 [1920]) and Pierre Bourdieu (1991), and more recently Jean-Pierre Bastian (2007) or Franz Schultheis (2007), scholars have claimed that religious groups may compete for public recognition and resources in religious fields. According to this theory, established groups will enjoy a variety of privileges and will try to exclude non-established groups from these privileges by means of various strategies.

Remarkably, even though the religious field concept rests in important ways on the competitive relationships and power struggles *between religious suppliers* (leaders, congregations), there have, to date, been very few quantitative studies that describe such fields on the congregational level (see, however, Körs 2018).[1]

One important reason why the established/newcomer structure has not yet been empirically described in detail in respect of religious fields has been the absence of appropriate data. The Swiss National Congregations Study (NCS), conducted in the winter of 2008–2009, allows us for the first time to assess, in relation to a whole country, key differences between established and newcomer congregations concerning their resources as well as their intergroup behavior.[2]

We can therefore treat a *central question* that Weberian-Bourdieusian field theory suggests: Are established religious congregations in the Swiss religious field privileged when it comes to resources and, if so, do they defend these privileges by excluding newcomer congregations?

This article seeks to contribute to (a) the general literature on the empirical description of established/newcomer structures and religious fields, (b) the general literature on interreligious contact and dialogue between religious groups, and (c) the specific literature on the religious situation in Switzerland. Our main point is that the field concept and the established/newcomer structure lend themselves very well to a description of the religious situation in Switzerland, but that established

[1] Körs (2018) maps and describes congregations in the city of Hamburg. Many of her findings are strikingly similar to ours. See the next chapter of this present volume.

[2] We thus take up the invitation to engage in congregational studies made in Ammerman et al. (1998). There are, of course, various interesting European studies on the congregational level: see for example Rebenstorf et al. (2015), Hero et al. (2008), and Giordan (2013). We are not, however, aware of any other congregational study that allows comparisons to be made over the whole religious field of a given country.

groups – in a key point – do not behave as expected. That is, they do not exclude, but include, competitors in order to keep their privileged position.

The chapter is organized as follows: After an introduction, we describe the theory and hypotheses (6.2), the context (6.3), and the method (6.4). In our results section (6.5), we show how established congregations are privileged concerning resources, even when various background variables are considered, and demonstrate that established congregations try to maintain their privileged status not by excluding, but by including competitors. A discussion (6.6) is followed by concluding remarks (6.7).

6.2 Theory and Hypotheses

In general, "establishment" refers to preferential treatment of one or more religious groups, their members, or their institutions. If such preferential treatment is afforded by the state, we speak of *the legal establishment* (Whelan 1990). This may take many forms, including paying clergy salaries, collecting church taxes, harassing religious competitors, or giving preferential access to positions in schools, hospitals, media, or the military. If the preferential treatment is afforded by society (without explicit legal backing), we speak of *a de facto establishment* (Beyer 2013).[3] This is the case when groups are given special rights because they seem to "naturally" belong to the place, e.g. because of a long tradition of incumbency, or because they are in the majority. *De facto establishment* may also involve negative stereotyping and discrimination of groups that are not *de facto* established.

An important body of sociological literature has suggested that the relationship between established and non-established religious groups can be considered a social *field*. The idea itself – though not the term – goes back to Max Weber (1978 [1920], 424f. 439 f., 1158f.), who described how "priests" (the "religious establishment") would combat both "prophets" and "magicians" (the "newcomers"). Weber saw "priests" as keepers of religious tradition who deliver an official religious message, based on an "office" in an often bureaucratically organized "church"; "prophets" as preachers of a new religious message based on personal revelations and charisma who lead a small group of believers – a "sect"; and "magicians" as solving individual problems in miraculous ways based on personal charisma, often without a religious community. Bourdieu's approach to religion may be considered as a rearticulation of Weber's insight within a structuralist framework[4] generalized into the idea of "social fields" (Bourdieu 1990a, b, 1977). This approach saw social (political, artistic, philosophical, etc.) fields everywhere in social life. Bourdieu also

[3] For an interesting view on the complexity of "varieties of establishment", see various chapters in Sullivan and Beaman (2013). Much of the relevant literature can be found under the heading of "State-Religion Relations". For an overview of such relationships in the countries of the EU see Robbers (2005).

[4] See Verter 2003 152–153.

applied the field concept to the religious sphere (Bourdieu 1987a, b, 1991, 1998; Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1982).[5] "A field in Bourdieu's distinctive terminology is a hierarchically structured social arena (or market) in which actors compete for money, prestige and power" (Verter 2003, 153). Fields are then "structured spaces of positions" around a common stake, and including different types of symbolic capital, in which there is a battle going on "between the newcomer who tries to break through the entry barrier and the dominant agent who will try to defend the monopoly and keep out competition" (Bourdieu 1993, 67).[6] Thus in both the Weberian and the Bourdieusian versions of the religious field, established groups and actors defend their privileged position and try to exclude newcomers from different positions in the field.

Established groups may try to defend their privileged position against newcomers in various ways. A first possibility is to *limit contact with the newcomers* to prevent them from participating and enjoying the established groups' privileges. Norms of social closure are set up, and members of one's own group who transgress these norms are viewed as traitors or as people who have been contaminated by contact with the outsiders. In the famous community study by Elias and Scotson (1994 [1965]) the established group "excluded all members of the other groups from non-occupational social contact with its own members" (xvi). Means of social control ("blame-gossip") were used to keep the established group's own members in line. A second possibility is to *create a negative social image of the outgroup and a positive social image of the ingroup*. The outgroup is said to have all kinds of negative attributes in contrast to the positive attributes of the ingroup. It is then argued that one could not possibly extend the privileges of the ingroup to the outgroup as well. Again, the Elias and Scotson study is a good example: the established group was convinced that the newcomers (who were sociologically identical but had arrived later) were unclean, not well educated, poor and unsocial, and referred to them as "evacuees", "refugees", and "cockneys" (Elias and Scotson 1994[1965], 96 f.). A third possibility is to *appeal to the state and the officials in power*, to show them the importance of the established group for the state and society. The goal is to convince the state and its officials to continue to grant legal establishment (Fligstein and McAdam 2011).

Introductory texts routinely describe Weberian and Bourdieusian religious field theory as holding great promise for sociological analysis – but they have trouble in pointing to concrete studies that in fact apply the concept at the level of inter-group competition[7] (Pickel 2011, 238ff.; Knoblauch 1999, 212ff.; Rey 2004, 2007;

[5] For a critique of Bourdieu's approach to the definition of religion and the religious field see Pollack and Rosta (2015, 57f.).

[6] Other literature that treats the importance of the established/newcomer structure in religion in a different way is to be found under the category "economics of religion" (Iannaccone 1998). Here, the relationship between different religious groups is not called a "field", but a "religious economy" or "religious market". For a recent appraisal and critique see De Graaf (2013).

[7] As Verter underlines: "In order to see Bourdieu' relevance for sociologists of religion, one must – paradoxically – turn away from his writings on religion." (Verter 2003:150).

Schultheis 2007; Dianteill 2003; Swartz 1996). Thus empirical applications of the concept have so far mainly looked at the individual (and sometimes the intra-denominational) level, focusing on the social backgrounds and power relationships of, for example, different types of bishops (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1982),[8] "spiritual capital" (Verter 2003, Rey 2004), self-identification as spiritual or religious (Streib and Hood 2013), phenomena of individualization in the religious field (Pollack and Pickel 1999) or the acceptance of homosexuals in Anglicanism (McKinnon et al. 2011; Brittain 2011).

We define the term "*congregation*" as "a social institution in which individuals who are not all religious specialists gather in physical proximity to one another, frequently and at regularly scheduled intervals, for activities and events with explicitly religious content and purpose, and in which there is continuity over time in the individuals who gather, the location of the gathering, and the nature of the activities and events at each gathering" (Chaves 2004, 1–2). This definition covers the groups historically established in Europe, as well as those in the process of implantation (Monnot and Stolz 2014).

Based on the literature, we try to gain focus by concentrating on two hypotheses:

1. That the established groups have more income, staff and property than non-established groups, even when various background factors and the number of participants are used as statistical controls.
2. That the established groups seek ecumenical contacts mainly among themselves, thus excluding newcomer groups from privileged positions in the field.

When we have presented the following analyses at conferences and panels concerned with interreligious dialogue, we have sometimes met with the criticism that field theory wrongly assumes strategic thinking and power interests in a domain where the overall goal is precisely the opposite, namely understanding, peace, and the unmaking of power differentials. In response to this criticism we answer that – in a sociological perspective – no domain should be *a priori* seen as free from strategic interests (or, for that matter, completely dominated by them). In our view, it is an *empirical* question if, and to what extent, establishment has the effects predicted by our hypotheses.

[8] The one empirical application of the theory of religious field that Bourdieu contributed himself concerned the French Catholic hierarchy (co-authored with Monique de Saint Martin). Bourdieu and de Saint Martin (1982) argue that the image of unity of the episcopate hides a struggle between bishops from a modest social background ("*oblats*") and others from an upper-class social background ("*héritiers*"). These findings are also discussed in a more theoretical manner in Bourdieu (1998). It may be important to note that we do not apply the Bourdieusian approach in its entirety, but only insofar as he speaks of religious fields of groups with different power (just as Weber or other field theorists would), see: Wood and Altglas (2010).

6.3 Context

Switzerland is an appropriate country in which to study the established/newcomer structure, because a very clear case of a religious establishment has emerged during its history (Stolz and Buchard 2014).

The Reformed and Roman Catholic denominations are established in what may be called an *intermediate church-state system* (*Landeskirchentum)* (Pahud de Mortanges 2007; Cattacin et al. 2003).[9] In such a regime, the churches are not part of the state, but are recognized as separate by the state – although still state-regulated – institutions under public law. The political and the religious territorial community (*Gemeinde*) are most often completely identical. Such "*Landeskirchen*" or "Cantonal Churches" have special rights in that they have privileged access to state officials, are permitted to offer pastoral care in public institutions such as hospitals, schools, state-controlled media, universities, etc., and may receive state subsidies and be allowed to use public buildings free of charge and to levy an obligatory church tax. They also have duties in that they must introduce democratic governance and lay open their finances. The strength of the legal establishment is extremely different in the various cantons, ranging from very strong to very weak (SSK 2009); but even in the cantons with the weakest church-state relations (Geneva and Neuchâtel), the Reformed and Roman Catholic denominations enjoy at least some kind of public recognition and privilege.[10] In Switzerland, a half of the local religious groups are established. Two thirds of the population remains affiliated to the Catholic and Reformed churches in 2014 (de Flaugergues 2016).

Religious groups that are not established often came much later: non-established Christian groups split off from the established churches or immigrated in the nineteenth or twentieth century, while most non-established non-Christian groups immigrated only from the 1960s onward (Baumann and Stolz 2007a; Bochinger 2012). The non-Christians who have been in the country the longest are the Jews, whose communities can be traced back to the Middle Ages and who were granted full citizenship in 1866 (Gäbler 1999; Kupfer and Weingarten 1999). These newcomer groups have remained – with very few exceptions[11] – without public recognition.

[9] Historically, the intermediate church-state system (*Landeskirchentum*) grew out of a strong church-state system (*Staatskirchentum*) that was still in place in the eighteenth century. Vischer et al. (1994, 182ff.). When going over to an intermediate church-state system, cantons naturally initially recognized only their own traditional denomination; but during the twentieth century the "other" large denomination was recognized in all cantons as well (and sometimes the Christ Catholic denomination, too).

[10] In this paper, we do not focus on the causal effect of the strength of establishment, but instead compare established and non-established congregations on a variety of dimensions. For an investigation of the causal effect of strength of establishment see Stolz and Chaves (2017).

[11] By 2008 there were other groups that enjoyed some form of public recognition. Christ Catholics enjoy strong establishment, comparable to the Reformed and Roman Catholic Churches, in nine cantons, while specific Jewish congregations have degrees of recognition in six cantons (see Appendix). All these groups are small and for the sake of clarity we exclude them from our analysis. Non-established Jewish congregations are included. Our results are similar with or without this exclusion.

Among the non-Christian congregations, we can observe groups whose religious traditions based on a collective and organized ritual such as the Jews, the Muslims, the Buddhist, and the Hindu connected to the diaspora (Baumann 2007; Baumann et al. 2003; Knott 2009) and, also the "other" groups favoring networks and an alternative and individual spirituality. If nearly a half of the local religious groups are not established, only 15% of the population is affiliated to these groups.[12]

In public discourse, the legal establishment of the Reformed and Roman Catholic Churches is strongly legitimated by several arguments, the most important being that these churches (1) have a long history in Switzerland and preserve the Christian heritage of the country[13]; (2) embrace the great majority of the population; and (3) offer a kind of "public service" (welfare, help for the needy) not only for their own members but for everybody (Winzeler 2005). This legitimation has come under increasing pressure, especially because points (2) and (3) seem to be less and less true (Stolz and Ballif 2010, 49). Since ever greater numbers of individuals are either without any religious affiliation or are members of non-Christian religions, it is increasingly difficult for the established Christian churches to argue that they represent the whole population and that their services are important for everybody. Thus, several cantons (e.g. Basel Stadt, Vaud, Fribourg) have changed their constitutions to allow public recognition of newcomer groups as well.

The main points here are (1) that in Switzerland there has been a historical development of a clear established/newcomer structure; (2) that the establishment of the established groups is currently threatened; and (3) that we have representative data on congregations of all the religious traditions.

6.4 Method

The National Congregations Study Switzerland (NCS Switzerland) was conducted in 2008/09 (Monnot 2013; Stolz et al. 2011). It was modeled on the National Congregations Studies conducted in the United States in 1997–1998, 2006–2007 and 2012 (Chaves et al. 1999; Chaves and Anderson 2008; Chaves 2004).[14]

[12] Twenty percent of the Swiss population has no affiliation (de Flaugergues 2016).

[13] Very often, this is now expressed as the "Judaeo-Christian heritage", thus including the Jews in the group that represents the roots of Swiss culture. This is, of course, a very new kind of thinking. On the difficult history of the integration of Jews in Switzerland see Kupfer and Weingarten (1999).

[14] The National Congregation Study Switzerland (NCSS) was conducted by Christophe Monnot and Laurent Amiotte-Suchet and directed by Jörg Stolz and Mark Chaves. For a detailed account of the methodology of the NCSS, see Monnot (2013). For more details about the U.S. NCS, see http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong (Accessed 4 Feb 2016).

6.4.1 Sampling and Data Collection

In order to create the sampling framework, we conducted a census from September 2008 to September 2009,[15] counting all local religious groups in Switzerland. This was done by combining all sources of information we could find, such as: (a) existing lists of local religious groups by Churches and Federations; (b) existing lists (published or not) by scholars of religion; (c) existing lists appearing on institutional internet sites, directories or databases; (d) data collected from the terrain with, notably, snowball sampling and interviews with informed individuals within the religious milieus. We combined all this information, finely filtering the types of organizations so as to identify only the local religious groups (congregations). Each entry on the final list was checked by two independent sources of information.

All this information was collated and reviewed to identify local religious congregations. A congregation was retained in the final list only if it appeared in two independent sources of information. In the second phase of our study, we drew from the resulting list of 5734 congregations a representative sample of 1040 religious communities in Switzerland. The existence of the census data allowed us to stratify our sample and to overrepresent religious minority groups. This is why our data let us compare local religious groups across both majority (established) and minority traditions (newcomers). For every chosen congregation, one key informant (in most cases the spiritual leader) was interviewed by telephone (CATI) in one of the three national languages. A closed question questionnaire was used that was adapted from the American counterpart (Chaves and Anderson 2008).[16] Special care was taken to adapt the questionnaire to Swiss conditions and the whole range of religious traditions.

In order to avoid well-known types of bias in key informant studies, the approximately 250 questions were centered on concrete and verifiable practices as well as on the tangible characteristics of the organization for which the respondent could provide reliable information (Chaves et al. 1999: 463–465, McPherson and Rotolo 1995: 1114).[17] The various religious federations supported the project by

[15] The American and Swiss NCSs used different sampling strategies. A notable difference with the American study resides in the fact that, in Switzerland, a mapping of all the congregations in activity has been undertaken, see Monnot (2013, 243–254) for more sampling details of the Swiss case.

[16] For the adaptation of the questionnaire, we refer to Behling and Law (2000), Forsyth et al. (2007).

[17] For a key informant survey, the obvious question is if the key informant will give valid and reliable answers to our questions. The literature has shown many possible biases, e.g. the false consensus effect (the informant falsely believes that other members of the group have similar opinions to him or her), effects of limited information of the key informant, and so on. Our solution to this problem is not to ask the key informant any questions on the values and beliefs of the congregation members or on the goals or missions of the congregation, but only questions concerning directly observable facts. It has been shown that the answers to such questions are normally very valid and reliable. For example: key informants are normally well able to answer the question: Including you/the leader, how many people currently work in this congregation as full-time paid staff?

encouraging the local leaders to take part in the inquiry, thus producing a response rate of 71.8%.[18]

6.4.2 Operationalization and Data Analysis

Our key independent variable is a seven-step measure combining *religious tradition and a dummy variable measuring whether the religious tradition is legally established*. The variable distinguishes "Christian established", "Christian non-established", "Jewish", "Muslim", "Buddhist", "Hindu" and "Other". The "Christian established" category includes only Reformed and Roman Catholic congregations. The dummy variable measuring establishment captures whether a religious tradition was publicly recognized as an institution of public law or of public interest in 2008. We relied on the information in Cattacin et al. (2003), Pahud de Mortanges (2007), and Frey (1999).

De facto establishment was conceptualized in terms of the duration of the presence of the congregation and majority status. *Duration of presence* of the congregation was measured by asking the key informant in what year the local religious group was founded. *Majority status* was measured as the percentage of the population of Switzerland or the canton concerned according to the Census 2000 (Bovay 2004). We used the information on a *de facto* establishment not as a separate independent variable, but to provide a further description of the establishment situation in Switzerland.

A first set of dependent variables focuses on the "success" of the rituals of the religious traditions by looking at different types of members, at the age and gender of attenders, and at changes in attendance over the last 10 years. The number of *official members* in established groups was calculated per the Census 2000 following Bovay (2004). Further information on *membership structure* was gathered by asking the key informant how many persons were associated in any way with the religious life of the congregation ("members with any link"), how many persons regularly participated in the religious life of the congregation ("regular members"), and how many persons were present at the last regular religious celebration ("attenders"). *Change in attendance* was measured by asking the key informant on a 5-point scale whether the number of regular participants, as compared to 10 years earlier, had grown by more than 10%, grown by 10% or less, stayed stable, shrunk by 10% or less, or shrunk by more than 10%. *Social attributes of attenders* were measured by asking the key informant what percentage of participants at the last ritual were individuals in the age ranges 18–35, 36–60, and 60+. Similarly, the percentage of female participants was asked.

[18] The response rates correspond to RR1 calculated according to the standards defined by the AAPOR (2011).

A second set of dependent variables concerns the *resources* of the congregation in respect to wealth, staff and type of building. *Congregations' income* was measured by asking the key informant to specify the total amount of congregational income from all sources during the past year. This variable was logged (as log 10) in our analyses. *Spiritual leader's income* was measured by asking the yearly salary of the spiritual leader. *Staff attributes* were measured using three variables. Two dummies indicated whether the spiritual leader was paid and was working full-time for the congregation. A third variable measured the number of part-time and full-time staff. *Building attributes* were measured with three dummies indicating, first, whether the building in which the ritual took place was built for religious purposes; second, whether the congregation was the owner of the building; and, third, whether the building was subject to any kind of protection or preservation for historical reasons.

A third set of dependent variables concerned relationships with other congregations and exclusivism. *Relationships with other congregations* were measured by asking whether the congregation had organized joint rituals with other congregations, whether the congregation(s) joining in those rituals belonged to the same religious tradition as the surveyed congregation, and, if this was not the case, to what kind of religious tradition the other congregation(s) belonged.[19] This is, of course, only a limited measure of the possible relationships among congregations since congregations can be linked in many other ways (e.g. joint social and political activities; joint membership in overarching organizational bodies; ecumenical and/or interreligious talks, etc.). Nevertheless, we argue that joint ritual is a valid and central dimension of inter-congregational contact.

The exclusivism was operationalized with four dummy variables. Two dummies measured whether congregations would accept individuals as fully fledged leaders if they lived in an openly gay relationship and if they lived in cohabitation without being married. A third dummy variable asked if the congregation had a group that discussed other religions (yes/no). A fourth dummy – only for Christian congregations – asked if the congregation considered the Bible to be the literal and inerrant word of God.

Finally, three *control variables* are included in our models. The *size of the community* where the congregation is located was measured by an 8-level variable, based on Swiss government data, ranging from 1 (fewer than 1000 inhabitants) to 8 (100,000 or more). The *traditional denomination of the canton* was measured by two dummy variables where 1 denotes respectively the existence of a Catholic or Reformed tradition in the canton. If both dummies are zero, this means that the Canton has a mixed denominational tradition. The canton's denominational traditions were coded according to Pfister (1984). *Strength of regulation* in the different cantons is measured with a version of the scale described in Chaves and Cann (1992), adapted to capture as much of the inter-canton variation as possible.[20] The

[19] This last question permits multiple responses.

[20] See Stolz and Chaves (2017) for details of the scale. For a recent overview, comparison, and evaluation of different scales of church-state relationships – including the one used in this article,

scale ranges in principle from 0 to 10, though no canton received a score of 0, 9 or 10. Coders used information given in Frey (1999) and SSK (2009). Inter-coder reliability was.87, with discrepancies resolved by the first author. As shown in Table 6.5 in the appendix, the coding procedure yielded a distribution of cantons across the establishment scale that seems qualitatively correct.

6.5 Results

6.5.1 Duration of Presence in the Canton and (Threatened) Majority Status

As mentioned above, much of the legitimation of the legal establishment of the Reformed and Roman Catholic Churches rests on their historical importance and their majority status. In what follows, we will analyze the extent to which these arguments can be backed up empirically. We will also see that the reasons for the legal establishment are coming under increasing pressure (Fig. 6.1).

Let us first look at the *duration of presence* in the country. As can be seen in Fig. 6.2, more than 55% of established congregations were founded before 1800: indeed, the median established Christian congregation was founded in 1690! By comparison, Christian non-established and Jewish groups are much younger, with median foundation years of 1950 and 1971 respectively. Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Other groups are much younger still. Most of them have been founded since 1975 (median foundation years: 1992, 1997, 1991, and 1987 respectively). We are truly faced with a situation of established and newcomer congregations.

Turning to *majority status*, Table 6.1 shows that the Reformed and Roman Catholic denominations together make up roughly half of all the congregations in Switzerland (NCS) and 74.8% of the resident population (Census). All other groups are much smaller and have both fewer congregations and fewer members. The majority situation differs according to the canton: rural cantons are traditionally Roman Catholic, while urban cantons are traditionally predominantly Reformed (Bovay 2004; Baumann and Stolz 2007b).[21] But the overall finding is that taken together, the two established denominations are in a majority position, especially when it comes to official members.

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see Traunmüller (2012). We chose an adapted Chaves/Cann scale, since it allows the central church-state variation in Switzerland to be conceptualized and measured in a very straightforward way.

[21] Swiss cantons have either a Reformed, a Roman Catholic, or a mixed religious tradition. This goes back to the time of the Reformation (Maissen 2010; Vischer et al. 1994). During that time, the big city cantons and their territories became Reformed, while the rural cantons stayed Roman Catholic. There was, in other words, a "*cuius regio, eius religio*" ("who rules the land determines its religion") system. This was abolished in 1848 and freedom of religion introduced.

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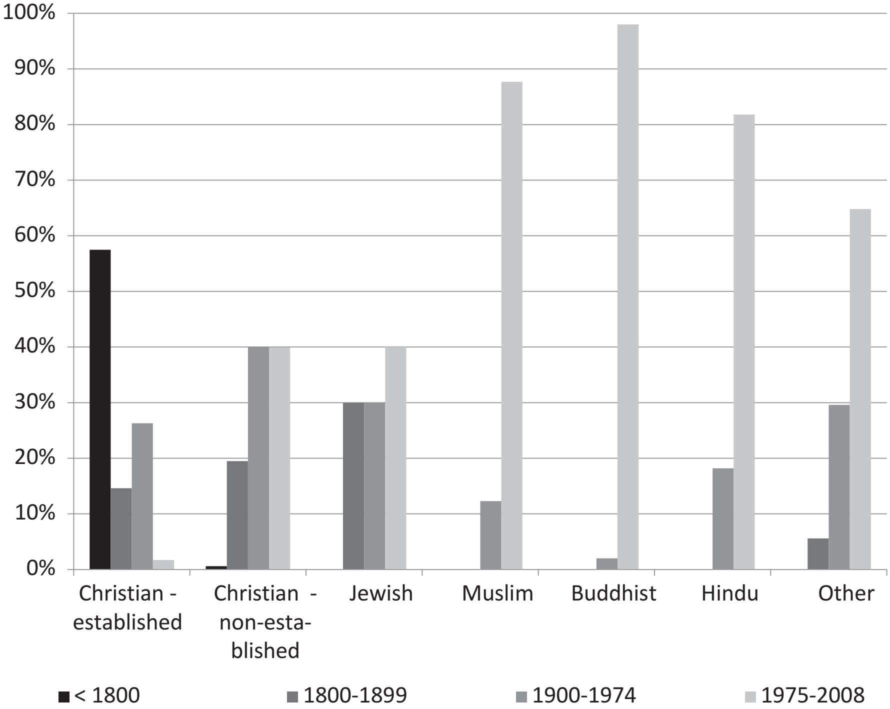

Fig. 6.1 Year of foundation, by religious tradition

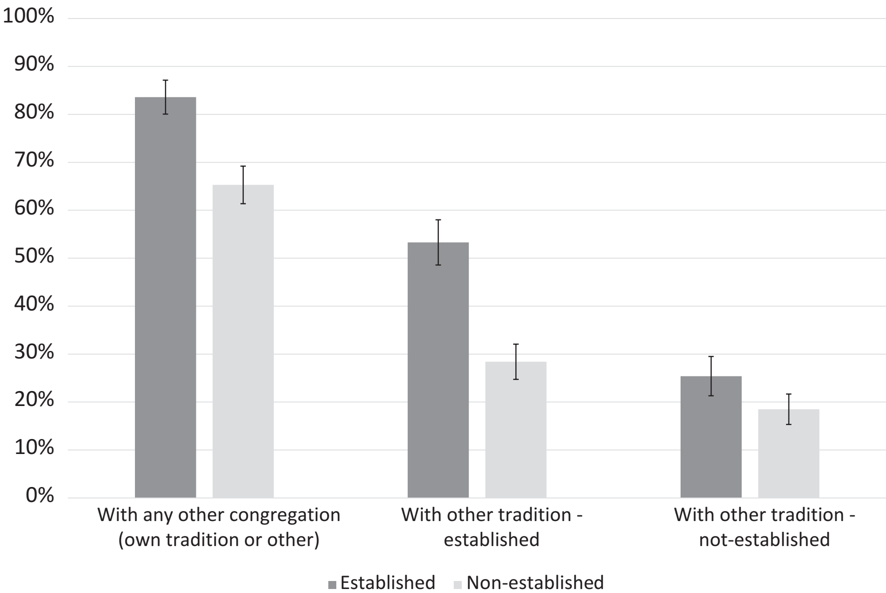

Fig. 6.2 Ecumenical/interreligious rituals of established and non-established congregations

Table 6.1 Numbers of congregations and their official members, by religious tradition

	Congregations[a]		Individuals[b]	
	N	%	N	%
Reformed	1094	19.1%	2,408,049	33.0%
Roman Catholic	1750	30.5%	3,047,887	41.8%
Christ Catholic	35	0.6%	13,312	0.2%
Evangelical	1423	24.8%	60,253	0.8%
Orthodox Christians	58	1.0%	131,851	1.8%
Other Christians	399	7.0%	115,207	1.6%
Jewish	33	0.6%	17,914	0.2%
Muslim	315	5.5%	310,807	4.3%
Buddhist	142	2.5%	21,305	0.3%
Hindu	189	3.3%	27,839	0.4%
Other	296	5.2%	7982	0.1%
None	–	–	809,835	11.1%
No indication	–	–	315,766	4.3%
Total	5734	100.0%	7,288,010	100%

Note:
[a]NCS Census 2008, according to Stolz et al. (2011)
[b]Census 2000 according to Bovay (2004)

Interestingly, this legitimation is increasingly threatened by the fact that the established churches are less and less able to claim that they embrace the whole of the Swiss population or that their services are geared to everybody (Monnot 2012).

The percentage of individuals who are *official members* of either the Reformed or the Roman Catholic Church dropped from 95.8% in 1970 to 66.6% in 2010. At the same time, the number of individuals without any religious affiliation has risen from 1.1% to 20.1%, while the proportion of non-established Christians and Muslims, taken together, has increased to about 8%.

The picture is no more encouraging for the established churches if we look at *attendance*. While they still have many more official members than all other religious groups, the number of individuals in fact participating in their local religious groups is relatively small and is only a tiny fraction of the official members. The ratio of attending member to member with any link to the congregation is lower for established congregations than for the congregations of all other religious traditions. Established congregations are twice as likely to have shrunk in attendance over the last 10 years (46.4%) than to have grown (21.2%) – in stark contrast to all other types of congregations, which on average have more often grown than shrunk. Finally, established congregations have a very high average age (58.2% of attenders are 60+) compared with the congregations of all other religious traditions, meaning that they are not able to draw in younger generations and pointing to future losses of attenders once the older generations have died (Tables 6.2 and 6.3).

Table 6.2 Official members and attenders: changes and attributes by religious affiliation

	Christian – established	Christian – non-established	Jewish	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	Other	None
Official members (%)[a]								
1970 (%)	95.8%	1.6%	0.3%	0.3%		0.1%		1.1%
1980 (%)	91.5%	2.0%	0.3%	0.9%		0.2%		3.8%
1990 (%)	84.7%	3.4%	0.3%	2.2%		0.4%		7.4%
2000 (%)	74.9%	4.2%	0.2%	4.3%		0.8%		11.1%
2010 (%)[b]	66.6%	5.5%	0.2%	4.5%		1.1%		20.1%
Change 1970–2000	−29.2%	+3.9%	−0.1%	+4.2%		+1%		+19.0%
Attenders								
Attenders (last weekend)[c]	50	70	53	80	10	12	14	
Regular members[c]	100	80	80	60	20	15	15	
Members with any link[c]	500	110	200	200	35	40	30	
Ratio: attending/any link[d]	10.0%	63.6%	26.5%	40.0%	28.6%	30.0%	46.7%	
Change in attendance (last 10 years)[e]								
Grown (%)	21.2%	44.6%	54.5%	61.7%	63.6%	46.9%	36.8%	
Stayed the same (%)	32.3%	24.1%	18.2%	35.0%	25.0%	28.1%	42.1%	
Shrunk (%)	46.4%	31.3%	27.3	3.3%	11.4%	25.0%	21.1%	
Attributes, attenders[e]								
Attenders 60+ (%)	58.2%	28.5%	30.9%	17.6%	12.3%	22.2%	24.5%	
Attenders 18–35 (%)	14.2%	29.7%	32.0%	40.7%	25.7%	30.7%	24.0%	

Note:
All overall differences significant with $p < .001$
[a]According to Bovay (2004, 110)
[b]According to the press release of the Federal Statistical Office (19.6.2012): One fifth of the population without religious affiliation (corrected version, 11.10.2012).
[c]We use the median
[d]Ratio of the medians
[e]We use the mean

Table 6.3 Financial resources, staff, and type of building by religious tradition

	Christian – established	Christian – non-established	Jewish	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	Other
Financial resources							
Annual income of congregation[a, b]	400,000	130,000	200,000	22,500	7250	7000	2450
Income of spiritual leader[a]	95,000	50,000	67,500	0	0	0	0
Staff							
Paid spiritual leader	97.5%	62.7%	88.9%	33.9%	6.5%	10.3%	9.8%
Full-time spiritual leader	72.1%	45.4%	44.4%	30.5%	0.0%	3.4%	7.3%
Paid staff (part-time and full-time)[a]	5	1	2	0	0	0	0
Building							
Religious building	97.9%	58.6%	72.7%	28.8%	8.0%	5.6%	8.5%
Owner of building	84.6%	56.4%	81.8%	37.9%	18.0%	11.4%	14.3%
May use building free of charge	13.1%	9.7%	0.0%	13.6%	20.0%	11.4%	28.6%
Rents building	2.3%	33.8%	18.2%	48.5%	62.0%	77.1%	57.1%
Protected heritage building	72.4%	17.3%	30.0%	10.3%	14.3%	0.0%	9.3%

Note:
All differences are significant where $p < .001$
[a]We use the median, in Swiss Francs (CHF)
[b]We calculate the income regardless of whether the cost of spiritual leaders appears in the budget. When the cost of the spiritual leader appears, the budgets rise to 500,000 for the Christian-established and to 180,000 for the Christian non-established

Our main point here is that Switzerland is an almost textbook example of a country where there are two established religious groups – Reformed and Roman Catholic – while (almost) all other groups are non-established. The established position of these two groups, however, is threatened because of waning numbers of official and attending members.

6.5.2 *Resources*

Our first hypothesis claimed that established groups would have more resources than non-established groups – regardless of the success of their religious rituals. In this section, we look at the first part of the hypothesis, the resources.

The results are very clear. What is striking is not so much the direction of the covariations, but their magnitude. Established Christian congregations have on average far more resources than non-established congregations. This is true of income, staff, and types and ownership of buildings.

The median established Christian congregation has an *annual income* of 400,000 CHF; this is more than three times what the median non-established Christian congregation collects, about 17 times more than the median Muslim congregation receives and more than 50 times what Buddhist, Hindu or Other congregations live on. The richest non-Christian congregations are Jewish, with a median income of 200,000 CHF.

These differences in income are partly reflected in substantial differences regarding *staff*. Of established Christian congregations, 97.5% have a paid spiritual leader; in 72.1% of the cases this spiritual leader works full time. The percentages are again much lower for non-established congregations. Thus, only 62.7% of non-established Christians pay their spiritual leader and only in 45.4% of the cases is this person employed full time. For all other religious traditions, the percentages are even much lower – except, again, for the Jews. Looking at the numbers of paid staff (part-time and full-time), we find that the median established Christian congregation employs five paid staff, the median non-established Christian congregations only one – and the median Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Other congregations none at all!

Concerning *buildings*, almost 100% of established Christian congregations have the use of a building built explicitly for religious purposes. In 84.6% of the cases they are the owners of this building, and in 72.4% of the cases it is a protected heritage building. Again, the differences from non-established Christians (58.6% buildings built for religious purposes; 56.4% owners; 17.3% protected heritage buildings) are important and the differences in contrast to Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and Others are huge. In this area once again, it is the Jewish congregations that resemble the established Christian congregations most closely.

These differences between established and non-established congregations *cannot be attributed to other underlying variables*. In fact, the findings are robust and highly significant even when we check for the influence of cantonal regulation, the size of the political community, the denominational tradition of the canton, or even the number of regular participants or participants with any link to the religious congregation.[22]

The striking differences in resources between established and non-established congregations are evidently rooted both in legal and *de facto* establishment. It is legal establishment, with its possibility of levying an obligatory church tax, even from members who have no other link to the congregation, that creates such a large income for established Christian congregations and that accounts for such high percentages with paid full-time and part-time staff. And it is because of *the de facto* establishment that they almost all have their own churches at their disposal – often heritage buildings worthy of protection.

[22] We do not show the models here for lack of space. Note that we did not introduce the number of regular participants and participants with any link at the same time for reasons of collinearity.

Table 6.4 Joint rituals and exclusivism according to confession

	Christian – established	Christian – non-established	Jewish	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	Other
Joint ritual with							
Any other congregation (own tradition or other)	83.3%	73.9%	45.5%	56.1%	59.2%	38.9%	50.0%
With other tradition	68.4%	56.0%	27.3%	42.4%	30.6%	19.4	30.0%
What other tradition: establ. (mult. resp.)	57.1%	33.2%	18.2%	31.8%	12.0%	13.9%	20.0%
What other tradition: non- establ. (mult. resp.)[a]	25.6%	16.9%	9.1%	27.3%	14.0%	16.7%	23.3%
Exclusivism							
Discussion group on another religion[b]	43.2%	42.1%	45.5%	48.5%	30.0%	25.7%	43.3%
Bible inerrant	28.8	80.6	–	–	–	–	–
Acceptance of Gays (as leaders)	57.1%[c]	8.7%	40.0%	14.5%	97.8%	66.7%	44.6%
Acceptance of cohabiting non-married couple (as leaders)	89.4%	21.8%	50.0%	48.4%	97.8%	85.7%	56.1%

Note:
All differences are significant where $p < .001$, unless otherwise noted
[a]Not significant
[b]Significant with $p < .05$
[c]Concerning acceptance of Gays, Reformed are significantly more open than Catholic congregations

6.5.3 Relationships

Field theories are built on the assumption that the established will try to preserve their privileges against newcomers. This is the second hypothesis that we attempt to test in our special case by looking at the actual behavior of Swiss congregations. Do established congregations exclude non-established groups to preserve their threatened privileges?

The most noteworthy result of our paper may be that this hypothesis fails (Table 6.4). Established Christian congregations do *not* seem to try to exclude other religious groups. On the contrary, they are both very inclined to be open to engaging in ecumenical and interreligious contacts, and comparatively tolerant concerning the religious and social diversity of their members. In the past year, established Christian congregations have engaged in a joint ritual with another congregation more often than any other religious tradition (83.3%). In roughly 70% of the cases,

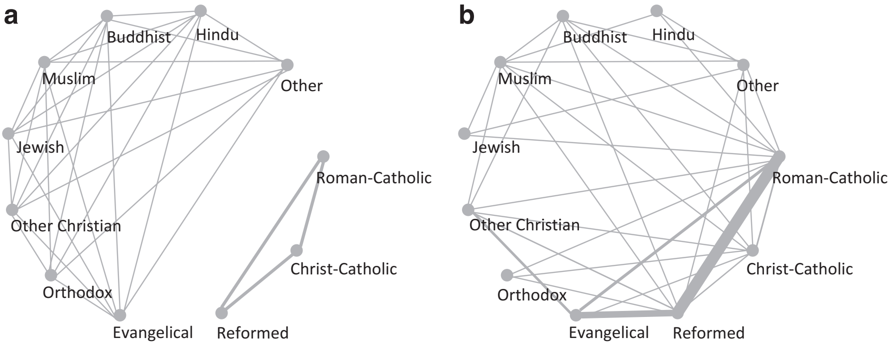

Fig. 6.3 Ecumenical/interreligious rituals between different religious traditions
Note: (**a**) expected relationships, (**b**) actual relationships (Links are weighted by the means of the number of joint rituals as reported from both partners. We multiplied all weights by 0.8 and omitted weights below 2 for better visual clarity. We introduced (established) Christ Catholics for this graphic)

this other congregation was of a different religious tradition from theirs (against 56% for non-established Christians). In most cases, this common ritual was with another Christian congregation, and in roughly 1/3 of the cases with another non-established congregation. In comparison, these numbers show somewhat more openness to ecumenism and interreligious dialogue than among non-established Christians and clearly more openness than among all the other religious traditions (at least when it comes to the items used here). These results remain highly significant when controlling for other variables (confession of the canton, regulation regime, size of the congregation). In Fig. 6.2, these same findings are presented graphically. Yet another way of visualizing this finding is shown in Fig. 6.3a, b. Here, the left-hand side shows what might have been expected in a situation where established groups had completely excluded non-established groups from joint worship (our hypothesis). The right-hand side shows the actual relationships, where links are weighted by the means of the number of joint rituals. Again, we see strong relationships among established groups, but also relatively high numbers of links between established and non-established groups.

In a similar vein, we find that established Christian congregations do not stand out regarding different items that may be grouped under the heading *"exclusivism"*. Compared with non-established Christians, they are about as likely to have a discussion group on another religion; they are much less likely to believe the Bible to be inerrant (27.8% for established Christians against 80.6% for non-established Christians); and they will strikingly more often accept gays and cohabiting unmarried persons as their members and leaders (in the table we show only data for leaders). While some religious traditions seem to be even more open in some of these respects (especially Buddhists and Hindus regarding liberal views on homosexuality and cohabitation), it is fair to say that Christian established congregations cannot be described as particularly exclusive. Again, this finding is stable when controlling for other variables.

6.6 Discussion

The findings in the preceding section pose the question if the Weberian-Bourdieusian theory should be rejected. After all, established congregations are immensely privileged but do not engage in exclusion strategies and power struggles with congregations of other religious traditions.

In our view, rather than reject the Weberian-Bourdieusian field theory, we should adjust it, as suggested by Verter (2003: 156), so that it can explain our findings. This is easily done when we recognize that established groups *can try to preserve their privileges not only by exclusion, but also by inclusion strategies*. They will choose inclusion rather than exclusion strategies if this seems to be furthering their interests more efficiently – given the socio-political context.

Already a short look at the current Swiss context shows that it does indeed seem to be more rational for established congregations to turn to inclusion strategies. Exclusion strategies such as criticism or denigration of other religious groups are seen in a very negative way by both the society and the state officials (Stolz et al. 2016, 109 ff.). In such a situation, established congregations may turn to inclusion strategies.

In fact, established groups may first use inclusion strategies to regain a kind of majority status. As Bourdieu observed, the groups can be close to one another "by choice or by necessity" (1989: 16). While losing members themselves, they can create a coalition of large religious groups. Second, they may thus present themselves as organizers of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, thereby demonstrating their important function for society. Third, they may thus motivate the state to opt for an extension of public recognition of religious groups rather than a separation of church and state.

There is much socio-historical evidence that corroborates this interpretation. To give just three examples:

1. In various Swiss cantons (e.g. Vaud, Fribourg), established churches have actively helped to put into place new constitutions that allow other religions to be publicly recognized. Establishment for new groups is, however, planned to be less far-reaching than the establishment that already exists for the Roman Catholic and Reformed congregations (Loretan and Weber 2013). Established congregations thus appear to include other groups, while at the same time preserving a considerable comparative privilege.
2. Established churches have also engaged in important ways in ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and have shown themselves to be the central organizing actors of these endeavors (Könemann and Vischer 2008; Bürgisser 2009). Many churches even put a certain percentage of work for ecumenical and interreligious practices into the job descriptions of their clergy (Bürgisser 2009, 52). These activities have helped the churches to gain a positive social image in society (Winter-Pfändler 2015; Willaime 2011; Könemann and Vischer 2008).

3. The example that best shows the strategic aspect of this interreligious dialogue is probably the foundation of the “Council of Religions” in 2006, with six members representing the Reformed, Roman Catholic, Christ Catholic, Jewish and Muslim faiths. This council was founded to furnish politicians with a partner for dialogue that represents the most important religious voices in Switzerland. When founded, it had the (at least implicit) goal of winning back the leadership in public discourse for the established churches (Baumann and Stolz 2007a, 368).

We do not mean to say that established churches engage in ecumenical and interreligious activity *only* for strategic reasons. Quite clearly, a genuine belief in the inherent importance of such endeavors is often involved (Bürgisser 2009, 51; Basset 1996); also, the theology of established congregations has been very dialogue-minded since the 1960s (Bernhardt 2008, 52). Nevertheless, in our view, strategic considerations are normally *also* involved.

To add another disclaimer, we do *not* wish to say that established congregations *never* engage in exclusion practices. For example, there undoubtedly exist certain exclusion practices concerning interreligious dialogues. Some more conservative Jewish or Muslim groups or new religious movements such as LDS (Mormons), Raëlians or Scientology are rarely or never invited.[23] Also, Reformed and Roman Catholic theological faculties have in the past lobbied to convince the state not to accredit evangelical theological faculties.[24]

However, overall, and in the light of our quantitative data, we can say that established congregations clearly seek to use inclusive rather than exclusive means to further their strategic interests.

6.7 Conclusion

In this paper, we have tested a hypothesis suggested by Weberian-Bourdieusian field theory, namely that established religious groups will try to retain their privileges by excluding non-established religious groups.

[23] An interesting reaction to such exclusion practices was the foundation of a group of excluded religious movements that formed an interreligious organization (CLIMS) in 1997, bringing together LDS, Scientology, the Unification Church, Sukyo Mahikari, and the Fraternité Blanche Universelle. For more information on CLIMS see http://www.clims.ch/index.php (Accessed 4 Feb 2016).

[24] This is an example that one of the authors has personally witnessed during his time as dean of a Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies.

We could address this question because we had the first National Congregation Study in a European country to hand, and since the Swiss religious field may be considered an almost textbook example of both the legal and *de facto* establishment of Reformed and Roman Catholic congregations, while (almost) all other congregations are non-established.

We found that established congregations in Switzerland are indeed strongly privileged and have much more plentiful resources than non-established congregations – even though they have a relatively low and shrinking attendance and an ageing attender structure. Other than expected, established groups do *not* seek to keep their threatened status by using exclusion, but do so by using inclusion strategies. They try to retain their privileges by engaging in ecumenical and interreligious contacts and rituals and by showing themselves to be tolerant concerning individual social and religious diversity.

Our contribution has been to apply one of the central theoretical tools of the sociology of religion – the religious field concept and more specifically the established/newcomer structure – to the religious situation in a whole country, and to show that Weberian-Bourdieusian field theory must be extended in a specific but important way: Established groups may use privilege-maintaining inclusion strategies.

Of course, this paper has its limits. Firstly, this being a descriptive-comparative paper, we have not looked at the explanatory question as to how much the differences found are caused by different degrees of establishment or other factors (see for this Stolz and Chaves (2017)). Secondly, in the interest of brevity we could not treat many intra-religious differences in more depth. Thirdly, our results are specific to the Swiss case. We suspect, however, that similar situations might be observed in other European countries.[25]

We welcome further studies in other countries, to see whether similar differences between established and non-established congregations can be observed and whether established congregations also seek to strengthen their situation by including rather than excluding newcomers (Table 6.5).

[25] See the study already mentioned by Körs (2018) on Hamburg; Vejrup, Nielsen and Kühle (2011), who describe the Danish Folkekirke as established, rich, threatened in its establishment - and very inclusive; and for the Nordic folk churches in general Gustafsson (1990).

Appendix

Table 6.5 Legal establishment of religious groups and strength of religious regulation in Swiss Cantons (in 2008)[a]

	Reformed	Roman Catholic	Christ Catholic	Jewish (some)	Strength of establishment[b]
GE	+	+			1
NE	+	+	+		2
AG	++	++	++		3
AR	++	++			3
NW	++	++			3
BS	++	++	++	++	4
SH	++	++	++		4
AI	++	++			4
GL	++	++			4
GR	++	++			4
ZG	++	++			4
LU	++	++	++		4
SZ	++	++			4
TG	++	++			4
SG	++	++	++	++	4
OW	++	++			5
SO	++	++	++		5
UR	++	++			5
TI	++	++			5
VS	++	++			6
FR	++	++		++	6
BL	++	++	++		6
VD	++	++		+	7
JU	++	++			7
ZH	++	++	++	+	8
BE	++	++	++	++	8

++Strongly recognized (as corporate bodies under public law)
+Weakly recognized (as playing a role in public life)
[a]Since 2008, some additional groups have been (weakly) established: the Christengemeinde (a free Evangelical Protestant congregation) in Basel-Stadt in 2010 and two Alevi groups in Basel-Stadt in 2012
[b]According to adapted Chaves and Cann regulation scale

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Chapter 7
Congregations in Germany: Mapping of Organizations, Beliefs, Activities, and Relations: The Case Study of Hamburg

Anna Körs

Abstract Because of the secularization thesis and the assumption of the de-institutionalization of religion that had been thought to be valid for a long time, it was primarily either the great trends of religious developments in a macro-perspective or individual religiosity in a micro-perspective that were dealt with in German sociology of religion. In contrast, the meso-level of social forms of religion including the congregations remained unconsidered for a long time. This is not only contrary to their numerical strength – with nearly 14,200 Protestant, 10,300 Catholic and a hardly comprehensible number of congregations of the many different Christian denominations as well as about 130 Jewish, more than 2,200 Muslim and 100 Alevi, several hundred Buddhist and Hindu, about 30 Sikh and a few hundred Bahá'í congregations throughout Germany – but also to the high expectations that are addressed to them, especially in the course of the increasing religious pluralization. Drawing on a locally representative study of congregations the paper maps the religious landscape in Hamburg in view of main characteristics such organization, activities, beliefs and networks. In view of the city's self description of being the "capital of interreligious dialogue" special attention is given to the interreligious practice and networks of congregations and thus their bridge building potential.

Keywords Congregations · Religious diversity · Interreligious relations · Germany · Urban space

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_7

7.1 Introduction

Because theories of secularization and de-institutionalization dominated the field for decades, German sociology of religion primarily dealt with either the great trends of religious developments in a macro-perspective or individual religiosity in a micro-perspective. In contrast, the meso-level of social forms of religion, including congregations, remained unconsidered for a long time. This neglect contradicted two things. First was the high number of congregations – about 14,200 Protestant, 10,300 Catholic and a hardly determinable number of congregations of the other Christian denominations, as well as more than 2,000 Muslim and 100 Alevi, about 130 Jewish, several hundred Buddhist and Hindu, and many more congregations of other religions and streams throughout Germany. Second was the high expectations that are addressed to them, especially during increasing religious pluralization. The aim of the article is therefore to map the congregational landscape in Hamburg, the second-largest city in Germany, employing main characteristics such as organization, beliefs, activities, and relations, with special attention on the interreligious practices of congregations and thus their potential as bridge-builders with religions and with secular society.

The following representation of selected descriptive results is based on a congregation study of Hamburg in which 350 of the 547 identified congregations were interviewed, the sample being representative for the religious composition of Hamburg congregations. A congregation, here, is defined as a group of people who belong to a shared religion – from the spectrum of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Alevism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Bahaism – and who gather in a real place in Hamburg regularly to practice it together. This understanding corresponds with the congregational studies in the USA: "Congregations – in the usual sense of the term – are places where ordinary people gather (…). If congregations do nothing else, they provide a way for people to worship" (Ammerman 2009, 564–565).[1] To the requirement of having a religious purpose and a real place is added that of assigning the congregation to one of the aforementioned religions. Thus, the present study concentrates on precisely such major religions.

[1] Or as Chaves (2004, 1–2) formulates more precisely: "By 'congregation' I mean a social institution in which individuals who are not all religious specialists gather in physical proximity to one another, frequently and at regularly scheduled intervals, for activities and events with explicitly religious content and purpose, and in which there is continuity over time and in the individuals who gather, the location of the gathering, and the nature of the activities and events at each gathering".

7.2 State of Congregational Research in Germany and International Perspectives

While congregational research constituted one of the main research fields of German sociology of religion in the post-war period until the mid-1960s, it was omitted almost completely during the following decades due to the prevalent secularization paradigm and the deficient appraisal of church congregations (Pollack 2014a). The situation has changed in the meantime. Only recently has the first representative study on Protestant congregations in Germany been presented, aiming to explore the determinants of the management processes in church congregations in the interest of their viability (Rebenstorf et al. 2015, 38). Published three years earlier, the first representative study on “Muslim community life in Germany” by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees on behalf of the “German Islam Conference”, aims to create a solid foundation for an integration policy regarding Islam (Halm et al. 2012, 14). This is an example of further research on congregations, which includes not only congregations of *churches* but also those of other than Christian religions. This research that focuses on congregations of one specific religion presents valuable insights and varied perspectives on content and method that are to be expanded in view of an otherwise rather narrow overall research status.[2]

The latter is even more applicable to research, different from such religion-specific investigation, which considers diverse religious traditions through a comparative approach. This kind of work includes the so-called “Mapping Studies” dedicated to intra- and interreligious plurality in selected cities or regions, recording, for that purpose, the different locally based congregations with their organizations. A pioneer work on this was the “Lexicon of Religious Communities in Hamburg” (Grünberg et al. 1994), followed by subsequent works on about 30 German cities and regions (Remid 2016). They all illuminate the local religious plurality but vary considerably regarding the geographical scope, the width and depth of the survey, as well as the standard of contents, which ranges from stocktaking to scientific studies (especially Hero et al. 2008). Explicitly on the topic, the mutual relations of congregations are evaluated in the still young so-called “dialogue studies” in which, however, mostly interreligious dialogue groups are investigated (Klinkhammer et al. 2011), genuine congregations being considered only as an exception (Schmid et al. 2008). This is surpassed by a sociological network approach, which investigates and systematically compares how migrant congregations relate among themselves and with other societal institutions (Nagel 2015, 2013).

How revealing a comparative perspective can be is shown by considering congregation research in the USA, which reveals a completely different situation, where “(i)n recent years, few topics in the sociology of religion have enjoyed more attention than congregations” (Demerath and Farnsley 2007, 193). Besides other

[2] For a detailed overview of the current state of research on Christian, Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu and Jewish religious communities and comparative approaches in Germany as well as international perspectives, see Körs (2018a).

significant interfaith studies (e.g. Ammerman 2005), the "National Congregations Study" (NCS) by Mark Chaves and team is considered a decisive methodological breakthrough. The "General Social Survey" implemented "hypernetwork sampling", as used in organization research. This generated a random sample survey of congregations based on those named by the interviewees, thus making possible a representative sample even without knowing the basic population (Chaves et al. 1999). The NCS was first carried out in 1998, with three survey waves thus far, enabling statements on continuity and change as well as on expected future trends in the USA (Chaves 2011). This study was adapted in the German-speaking region in the project "National Congregations Study Switzerland" at Lausanne University (Stolz et al. 2011). This likewise aimed to provide fundamental information about the structures and activities of congregations, making a comparison across all religious traditions. Unlike in the NCS, a complex local census of all the local congregations of the country was carried out, which was nevertheless feasible due to the country's relatively small size. In a random sample drawn from it, telephone interviews were carried out with a "key informant" at a rate of 70%. This enables structuring the Swiss religious field in institutional profiles, and facilitates organizational, geographic, structural, and cultural comparisons across religious traditions (Monnot and Stolz 2014). In addition, it offers empirically founded and valuable insights into theoretical questions, such as established-newcomer relationships in the Swiss religious field (Stolz and Monnot 2018).

This brief glance at the studies from the USA and Switzerland suggests that even congregational research in Germany could benefit from such perspectives. With the empirical coverage of congregations and their comparative description, the congregational landscape in Germany could be "measured" for the first time, providing statements on hitherto unanswered questions and material to process interesting theoretical questions. Furthermore, the regionally limited focus, especially on urban spaces – as pursued in the congregational study presented in the following – promises insights even beyond the concrete case study. Religious pluralization (and secularization) can increasingly be found in cities (Wolf 1999, 329; Krech 2008, 36 and 41), which can therefore also be considered as laboratories for future developments in the religious field. Thus, the study presents a religiously differentiating overview of the congregational landscape with central characteristics and, moreover, is to be understood as a contribution to comparative and interreligious congregation research.

7.3 Case Study of Hamburg

Shaped by Christianity, the city of Hamburg is religiously plural and secular at the same time, thus constituting the case of a religiously relativized city. The German micro-census 2011 shows that 33.9% of the population of Hamburg belong to the Protestant Church, 10.9% to the Roman Catholic Church, 0.9% to Evangelical free churches, 1.7% to Orthodox churches, 0.1% to Jewish communities, and 3.7% to

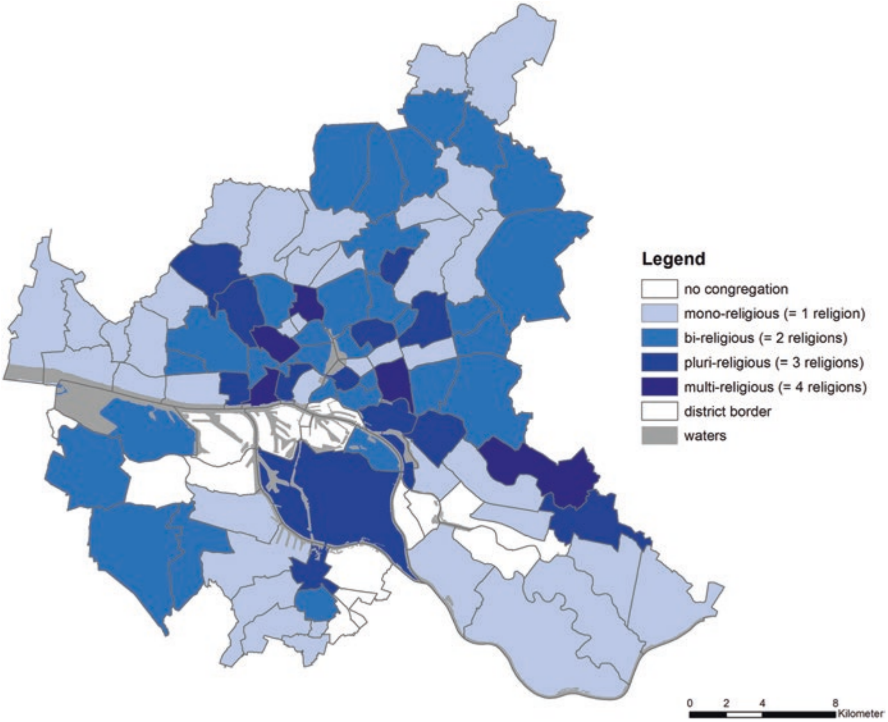

Fig. 7.1 Diversity of congregations in urban districts of Hamburg (N = 547).
Own figure: The map shows the diversity of the 547 identified congregations in the urban districts of Hamburg measured by the number of religions – from the spectrum of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Alevism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Bahaism – that are represented in each district by at least one congregation. While the light gray districts are mono-religious, i.e. the located congregations all belong to the same religion and generally to Christianity respectively, the gray and dark-gray districts are diverse and either bi-, pluri- or multi-religious, i.e. the located congregations belong to two, three or four different religions. The darker the color of the district, the more religions are represented by congregations. In the uncolored districts, no congregations were found, because these are either waterfront or other uninhabited areas or because former congregations have merged. However, religious life can still take place, as in the "Ecumenical Forum", an association of 17 different Christian churches situated in the new upcoming district HafenCity.

other religious communities with the status of a body under public law. The remaining 48.8% belong either to no religion or to a religion without the status of legal recognition, among them – as estimated – about 10% Muslims and Alevis and about 1% Buddhists and Hindus. This religious plurality is also reflected at the congregation level. Already in the 1990s, more than 100 different religious communities were identified in Hamburg and documented along with their individual congregations (Grünberg et al. 1994) and this has been the only database so far. In recent decades, however, religious pluralization, especially in the non-Christian spectrum, has clearly increased, and we find many districts with congregations of different religions (see Fig. 7.1).

Hamburg, however, is not only religiously plural in fact but also understood as the "capital of interreligious dialogue". While this is a self-ascription that cannot be verified here, it corresponds to many events and developments that together bear witness to a plurality-open context in Hamburg (in detail cf. Körs 2018b). Of special interest are the "State Treaties" concluded in 2012, in which the Senate of Hamburg granted recognition to the Muslim and the Alevi umbrella organizations, consequently leading to negotiations for similar treaties between Buddhist and Hindu organizations and the Senate. The fact that, at the same time, Hamburg has experiences with the extremist scene, for example, the fundamentalist Salafists, and was a place where 9/11 was planned, has not resulted in hindering interreligious dialogue, but has even stimulated it. The extent to which these contextual issues are also reflected in interreligious practices on the congregational level will be considered in the following.

7.4 Representative Survey of Congregations in Hamburg

The data underlying this study were generated in a survey of congregations in 2013. To that end, a database of congregations in Hamburg was compiled using the above-quoted lexicon (Grünberg et al. 1994), address lists provided by umbrella organizations, extensive internet research, and the "snow ball" method. All congregations first received a short letter and a telephone call requesting their participation in the study. The survey consisted of computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) of the leader or primary person responsible for the congregation, as the key informant.

As presented in Table 7.1, a total of 608 congregations were researched and included in the list in the run-up to the survey. This unadjusted address list was reduced, for the reasons mentioned, in the phase of first phone contacts to 547 (population I), whose existence is assumed although personal contact could not be made to 84 of them for the reasons mentioned. Out of this population I, 463 congregations could be reached by phone during field time (population II). In the census, a total of 350 congregations were in fact surveyed, thus reaching a participation rate of 64 or 76%, which is to be considered rather high for telephone surveys. The failures are hardly due to explicit refusals but, for the most part, rather to the non-accessibility of the target person. In addition, language barriers did not play any significant role. The survey was conducted only in the German language based on clarification by pre-contacting the umbrella organizations. The religious composition of the sample matches that of the population, which suggests that it can be considered representative of Hamburg's congregations (Table 7.2).

For the further investigation, the congregations were categorized per their religious affiliation in six groups, namely, Protestant, Catholic, congregations of other Christian denominations, Muslim, Buddhist and congregations of other non-Christian religions (i.e. Judaism, Alevism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Bahaism). Other

Table 7.1 Response rate and reasons for failure

	Total quantity	% Address list	% Population I	% Population II
Congregations in address list	608	100.0		
No congregation (but umbrella organization, cultural association etc.)	13	2.1		
Congregation no longer existing	17	2.8		
Twice registered congregation	17	2.8		
Congregation outside Hamburg	14	2.3		
∑ data cleansing	61	10.0		
Population I	547	90.0	100.0	
Without contact information	12	2.0	2.2	
Without phone number	20	3.3	3.7	
Wrong phone/fax number	23	3.8	4.2	
Nobody reached	14	2.3	2.6	
Only voice mail reached	15	2.5	2.6	
∑ failure without contact to the congregation	84	13.8	15.4	
Population II	463	76.2	86.7	100.0
Phone contact comes about but …				
Target person not reached during field time	37	6.1	6.8	8.0
Interview not carried out for reasons of time	7	1.2	1.3	1.5
Interview not carried out for reasons of language	15	2.5	2.7	3.2
Interview not carried out for other reasons	24	4.0	4.4	5.2
Interview interrupted for reasons of time	1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Interview interrupted for other reasons	1	0.2	0.2	0.2
Refusal for reasons of time	4	0.7	0.7	0.9
Refusal for reasons of contents	2	0.3	0.4	0.4
Refusal for other reasons or without reason	18	3.0	3.3	3.9
Refusal because it was a phone interview	4	0.7	0.7	0.9
∑ failures with contact to the congregation	113	18.6	20.7	24.4
Conducted interviews and response rate	350	57.6	64.0	75.6

existing groups (from the spectrum of esoterism, Masonic Lodges, new religious movements, Scientology and others), which are religious or spiritual in their own self-understanding and are potentially relevant for interreligious understanding (Beyer 2014, 59) were not included in the survey and cannot be considered here.

Table 7.2 Response rate according to religious tradition

Congregations affiliated to …	Population I		Population II		Conducted interviews	
	N = 547		N = 463		n = 350	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
Christianity	415	75.9	352	76.0	266	76.0
Thereof…						
Protestant	127	23.2	125	27.0	101	28.9
Catholic	43	7.9	38	8.2	24	6.9
Other Christian denominations	245	44.8	189	40.8	141	40.3
Islam	64	11.7	53	11.4	43	12.3
Buddhism	46	8.4	41	8.9	25	7.1
Judaism	3	0.5	2	0.4	2	0.6
Hinduism	5	0.9	3	0.6	3	0.9
Alevism	4	0.7	3	0.6	3	0.9
Sikhism	3	0.5	2	0.4	1	0.3
Bahaism	7	1.3	7	1.5	7	2.0

7.5 Results

7.5.1 Organization

Religious plurality within the congregational landscape in Hamburg is not a new phenomenon (Grünberg et al. 1994); however, especially Islamic and Buddhist diversity is recent, as measured by the foundation years of the congregations. Thus, of the total congregations, 60.5% of the Muslim, 64% of the Buddhist, and 43.8% of other non-Christian religions were founded since 1990. The same applies to only 28.4% of the Christian congregations outside the Protestant and Catholic spectrum, since 92.1% or 95.9% respectively were founded before 1990, with virtually no exceptions.

In order to make comparative statements about congregation activity, i.e. how many people actively participate in congregational life, the congregation size was measured. For this purpose, the number of actual attenders was collected, since this information is much more informative for the practice of the congregations than the otherwise commonly asked question of the number of formal members, whose measurement has been dispensed with for reasons of content and methodology. The congregation size was addressed by two questions: on the one hand, the question of how many people meet on a high holiday in the congregation, and, on the other hand, the question of how many people are present at regular meetings, that is to say, regular Sunday worship, Sabbath, Friday prayer, Cem ritual, Nineteen-Day Feast, or other rituals. As a result, the maximum and the regular numbers of attenders were determined. As the pre-test showed that the respondents were often unable to precisely specify the number of attenders and in order to avoid the resulting missing values but to generate reliable data, the number of attenders was not collected

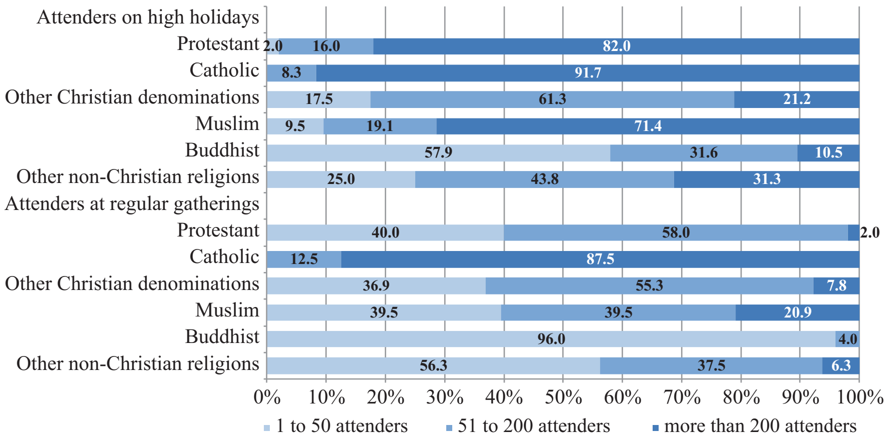

Fig. 7.2 Size measured by attendance on holidays and regular attendance, according to religious tradition (Note: Differences between religious traditions are significant at a level of $p < 0.001$)

Table 7.3 Estimated numbers and proportions of attenders according to religious tradition

Congregations affiliated to…	Attenders on high holidays		Attenders at regular gatherings	
	Absolute number of attenders	Proportion of attenders in %	Absolute number of attenders	Proportion of attenders in %
Protestant	64,720	48.9	7,425	17.3
Catholic	17,850	13.5	13,675	31.9
Other Christian denominations	24,815	18.8	14,470	33.8
Islam	18,915	14.3	5,595	13.1
Buddhism	2,760	2.1	590	1.4
Other non-Christian religions	3,265	2.5	1,115	2.6
Total	132,325	100.0	42,870	100.0

openly in the survey as a number, but by seven response categories. These are grouped into three categories in the following analysis and Fig. 7.2 shows to which proportions the respective congregations are smaller (1–50), middle (51–200) or larger (more than 200 attenders). The categorial data do not allow precise statements on the total or average number of congregation attenders, but estimates are possible by transforming the response categories into mean values. It can then be shown how much the communities of the different religions share in the religious life in Hamburg (Table 7.3).

As Fig. 7.2 shows, the size of the congregations differs considerably among the religious traditions and, moreover, varies greatly depending on whether one considers maximum attendance on high holidays or normal attendance at regular gatherings. Thus, on high holidays, Catholic congregations have the greatest attendance, of which 91.7% are visited by more than 200 people. This applies to 82% of the Protestant and 71.4% of the Muslim congregations. While 87.5% of the Catholic congregations are also visited by more than 200 people for weekly services, making them the largest congregations even in regular attendance, this applies to just a tiny 2% of the Protestant congregations and to a larger 20.9% of the Muslim congregations. By far the smallest are the Buddhist congregations, although a few large congregations can also be found among them.

Based on the diverse numbers in which the congregations are represented, the question arises as to what proportion they are of the total number of attenders of congregations in Hamburg, and how far they thus influence religious practice there. For this purpose, the numbers of attenders originally recorded in eight categories were transformed into the mean value of the respective category, including the open-end category of 1000 attenders and more with the minimum value of 1000, and the totals and shares were calculated from this. This estimate indicates that all the congregations interviewed reach a total of 132,325 attenders when they are well attended, as on a high holiday, and a total of 42,870 attenders when normally attended, as at a regular meeting.

For the question of the proportion of different religious traditions, how the attendance is determined again makes a difference.

Regarding attendance on high holidays, the Protestant congregations constitute the largest proportion with almost half of the total number of attenders (48.9%), which is unsurprising, considering their numerical superiority. The proportions of attendance in the Catholic, other Christian, as well as the Muslim congregations are between about 14 and 19%, while the Buddhist congregations and the congregations of other religions each constitute a proportion of about 2% of the attenders. A different picture emerges, however, regarding regular attendance: This is primarily influenced by the Catholic congregations and the congregations of other Christian denominations, which each constitute about one third of the regular attenders, while the proportion of the Protestant congregations drops to about 17% and the Muslim congregations reach a proportion of 13%. Thus, the Protestant congregations dominate the congregational landscape in Hamburg insofar as they have a prominent position in their numbers, reaching a high range of attendance on holidays. However, a clearly larger number of regular attenders gather in the Catholic and other Christian congregations, and the number of regular attenders in the Muslim congregations is not substantially smaller than in the Protestant congregations. Religious plurality thus becomes obvious especially in everyday religious practice, which proves itself more plural than the number of congregations, attendance on holidays, or even the affiliation statistics mentioned above in Sect. 7.3.

However, the fact that religious plurality is not very visible thus far is also connected with the spatial situation. The congregations of the two large Christian churches, 100% of the Protestant and 87.5% of the Catholic congregations, normally have a place of assembly of their own and in the property of the religious community, usually a church building shaping the cityscape with its church spires visible from afar. This situation of owning their own place of assembly still applies to two thirds of the other Christian congregations (65.2%), but only to 39.5% of the Muslim congregations and even less to the Buddhist (20%) and those of other religions (18.8%). This discrepancy between presence and representation is especially conspicuous for the Muslim congregations, with three recognizable mosque buildings but with more than 60 Muslim congregations in Hamburg (Koch and Reinig 2013). These differences in spatial conditions are mirrored by differences in personal resources. While nearly all the congregations of the two great Christian churches, 100% of the Protestant and 95.8% of the Catholic congregations, have full-time and paid employees at their disposal, the same applies only to about half of the other Christian congregations (56.7%) and Muslim congregations (51.2%), and significantly less for the Buddhist (24%) and other non-Christian congregations (12.5%). Even if the two great churches are experiencing a loss of meaning, they have considerable resources, with the church tax of all their formal members as their most important source of income.

7.5.2 Religious Belief: Concept of Truth

It is of special interest in a religiously plural situation how the understanding of one's own religion presents itself in relation to other religions. Among other things, the understanding of truth was investigated here as pictured in corresponding items relating to the "Exclusivism-Inclusivism-Pluralism Typology" developed in theological debates and used in empirical research: either only one's own religion is considered true (exclusivist), one's own religion is considered at least superior (inclusivist), or one's own religion is considered co-equal with other religions (pluralist). To these classical positions, a dialogic understanding of religion was here added, making an exchange between religions a condition, and thereby shifting plurality into the process of finding truth: "Truth precedes all religions but can be approached by a discussion between the religions". While the exclusivist and inclusivist view can be considered as mono-religious positions claiming the superiority of one religion, the pluralist and dialogic position can be considered as plural, both assuming equality between different religions.

As Table 7.4 shows, there are highly significant differences in religious beliefs, depending on religious traditions. The plural understanding of religion (pluralist/dialogic) is shared almost exclusively by the Buddhist (84%) and other non-Christian congregations (87.6%) as well as by large proportions of the Protestant (79.4%) and Catholic congregations (70.8%); however, the 56.9% and 53.8% majorities respectively within the other Christian and Muslim congregations agree with a mono-religious position (exclusivist/inclusivist). The exclusivist understanding that is based on the exclusive validity of one's own religion is here primarily represented, in Christian congregations, by the spectrum beyond the Protestant and Catholic congregations (39.4%), and by the Muslim congregations (20.5%).

The overall rather small distribution of an exclusivist position tends to correspond with the attitudes within the German population in which an exclusivist attitude is

Table 7.4 Concept of truth according to religious tradition, agreement in %

Wording of statements	Protestant	Catholic	Other Christian denominations	Muslim	Buddhist	Other non-Christian religions	Total
There is truth only in one single religion (exclusivist)	1.0	0.0	39.4	20.5	0.0	0.0	18.6
There is truth in several religions but one religion is superior to the others regarding truth (inclusivist)	14.4	20.8	17.5	33.3	8.0	6.3	17.5
∑ *Mono-religious positions*	*15.4*	*20.8*	*56.9*	*53.8*	*8.0*	*6.3*	*36.1*
There is truth in several religions, and all religions are equal in this regard (pluralist)	18.6	25.0	5.1	17.9	44.0	68.8	17.8
Truth precedes all religions but can be approached through discussion between the religions (dialogic)	60.8	45.8	28.5	20.5	40.0	18.8	38.5
∑ *Plural positions*	*79.4*	*70.8*	*33.6*	*38.4*	*84.0*	*87.6*	*56.3*
None of the statements	5.2	8.3	9.5	7.7	8.0	6.3	7.7

Differences between religious traditions are significant at a level of $p < 0.001$

represented by 15% of the religious people in West Germany and by 23% in East Germany (Pollack and Müller 2013, 13); it is, however, noteworthy insofar as elsewhere, like in the USA, a greater discrepancy appears between the leadership of congregations and the population, the former being only marginally liberal-minded theologically (Chaves et al. 2009, 13). Presumably, this widespread religious tolerance that appears in this survey is also influenced by the described plurality-open Hamburg context, which, in the inverse conclusion, would also mean that it could only be generalized in a limited way.

Nevertheless, the results also tend to correspond to the attitudes of the German population where an exclusivist attitude is increasingly to be found among the members of Islam and those of the Evangelical and Pentecostal churches (Pickel 2013, 33f.). This proportion is significant because studies show that there is a relatively stable connection between an exclusivist attitude and the avoidance of interreligious interaction on the congregational level (Scheitle 2005, 18) and the individual level (Smith 2007, 349; Merino 2010, 239), or that an unfavorable attitude to the religious Other is to be assumed (Pollack 2014b, 49ff.). The results of the present study confirm this insofar as those with an exclusivist attitude enter comparatively fewer interreligious relationships than those with an inclusivist, pluralist or dialogic attitude. However, the association is only weak, and in any case one third of those with an exclusivist attitude have interreligious contacts. An approach to explaining this is offered by McCarthy (2007, 199) who, in her study "Interfaith Encounters in America" finds equally "important counter-currents in this pattern" and shows that certain reasons, such as attaining social goals or perhaps building social relations, can also motivate exclusivist-minded groups to take part in interreligious relations or even to initiate them. This is also plausible for the present study, insofar as the Muslim congregations display a high degree of activity and, in this process, an orientation towards the outside, as the next two sections show.

7.5.3 Practice

Regarding practice, it was also of special interest to see how far the congregations concentrate on their own community with their activities or, reaching beyond that, are socially active.

Here, their spectrum of activities was investigated through ten different activities that can be summarized in three fields by means of a factor analysis (KMO measure = 0.748):

(a) "Community building" activities in the form of shared religious celebrations, offers for children and youth, as well as activities with senior citizens in which the community aspect is in the foreground (three items, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.650$).
(b) "Mediation" activities through religious education and training, support in everyday life, and in case of conflict, guidance for working and professional life, as well as through offers to interested people outside one's own congregation, with a focus on the community and social services (four items, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.689$).
(c) Activities of "social engagement" through participation in events in the neighborhood, statements on religious issues and policy issues transcending one's own congregation and addressing the whole society (three items, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.741$).

Considering the commitment of the different religious traditions regarding the three fields (Table 7.5), four patterns of activities become visible: First, the Muslim congregations show an exceptionally high activity in all three fields, which also applies, although in an attenuated way and in a different accentuation, to the congregations of other non-Christian religions. Second, in contrast, the Buddhist congregations show below-average activity in all fields, this applying especially to the field of community building. Third, the congregations of the two great Christian churches

Table 7.5 Practice of congregations according to religious tradition

	Protestant	Catholic	Other christian denominations	Muslim	Buddhist	Other non-christian religions	Total
Activities (mean; 1=not important at all, 5=very important)							
Community building (3 items: religious celebrations, work with youth and children, work with senior citizens)	4.24	4.14	4.13	4.27	2.37	4.15	4.05
Religious and social services (4 items: religious education and training, advice for everyday life problems and conflicts, career and job guidance, offers for interested people)	3.06	3.29	3.63	3.95	3.19	3.59	3.45
Social engagement (3 items: neighborhood events, statements on religious issues, statements on political issues)	3.08	3.07	2.59	3.53	2.31	3.29	2.90
Public Relations (mean; number of measures)							
Media-based measures (4 items: booklets, internet presence, flyers or posters, event announcements in the press)	3.93	3.75	3.36	2.26	2.88	2.88	3.36
Interaction-oriented measures (4 items: Open Days, neighborhood festival, commissioner for public relations, commissioner for interreligious dialogue)	2.54	2.13	1.81	2.79	1.60	2.67	2.19

Differences between religious traditions are significant at a level of $p < 0.001$

are each exceptionally active in the fields of community building as well as social engagement but relatively little active in the fields of religious and social mediation. Four, in contrast, religious and social mediation is exceptionally significant for the congregations of the other Christian denominations, which are relatively little active in the field of social engagement.

This also corresponds to the public relations work that was inquired in altogether eight items and can be summarized as media-based (internet presence, booklets, flyers or posters, event notes in the press) and interaction-oriented public relations work (open days, neighborhood festivals, commissioner for public relations, commissioner for dialogue). The congregations were asked whether or not they use the given four media-based and interaction-oriented measures respectively and Table 7.5 shows the particular average number. While the Muslim congregations are the least active in media-based public relations work, they are, on the other hand, most engaged in interaction-oriented public relations work, which is true, in a similar way, also for the congregations of other non-Christian religions. In contrast, the Buddhist congregations show comparatively low activity overall in public relations. The Christian congregations and primarily the Protestant congregations are still active in interaction-oriented public relations but comparatively much less than in the media-based field.

It can thus be stated that the congregations from the non-Christian spectrum – except for the Buddhist congregations – present an altogether high and comprehensive level of activities, increasingly offering social services and showing a strong social engagement, which is linked with interaction-oriented public relations work. Presumably this also depends on their status within the urban society that is shaped by primarily Christian and, at the same time, secular influences, in which they build on the life world of their members and seek contact with wider society. The fact that they increasingly offer social services or, conversely, that these services are far less offered precisely by the congregations of the two great Christian churches is plausible, because the latter maintain charitable institutions, while Muslim social welfare organizations are yet to be created. The low activity level of the Buddhist congregations can be understood (considering the individual items) by the fact that they often meet in relatively small groups concentrating together on religious or spiritual practices and especially on contemplation, this also being presented to the outside world through corresponding offers, while they otherwise act in a relatively reserved way.

7.5.4 Relations with Society and Congregations

The following relations of congregations are considered as indicators for their integration and, at the same time, as a hint at their bridge-building potential. For this purpose, their social as well as religious contacts are inspected in the following; in the latter case, their interreligious contacts are of special interest as compared with their intrareligious contacts.

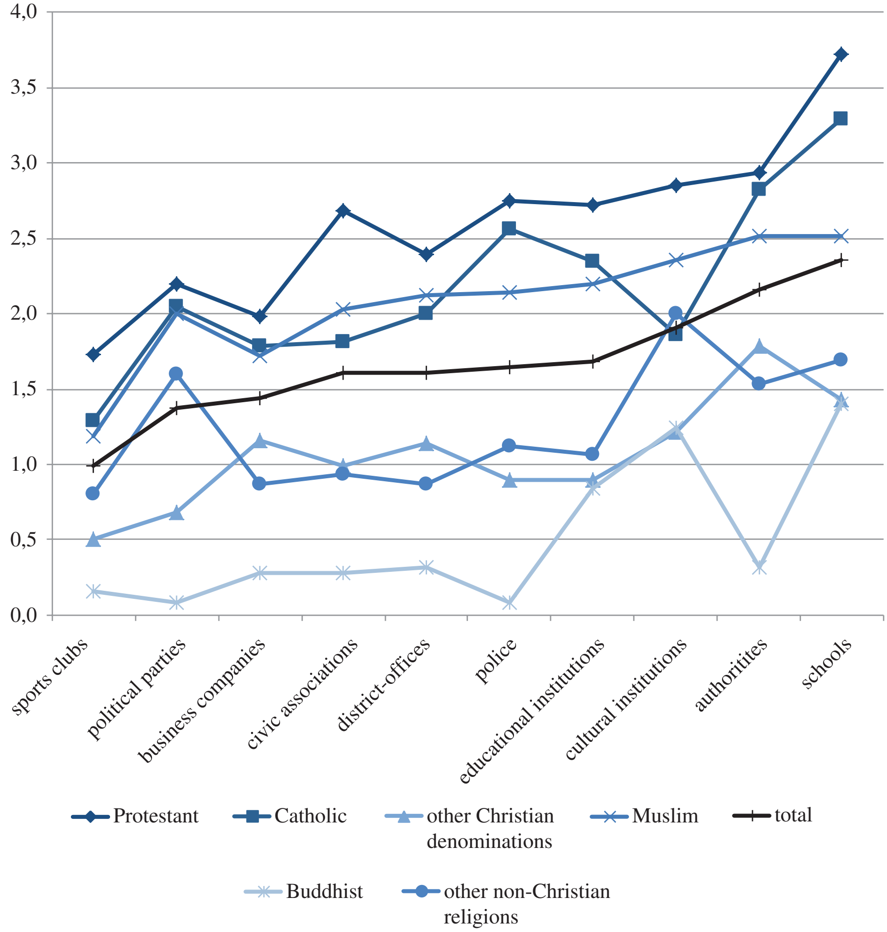

Fig. 7.3 Societal relations according to religious tradition (Note: Differences between religious traditions are significant at a level of $p < 0.001$)

Regarding the societal field, it may be stated that the congregations are in contact with an average of 5.5 (of 11 queried institutions in politics, culture, the social sector, education, economy, administration, and leisure), thus being relatively well connected. In this context, as Fig. 7.3 shows, the Protestant congregations have the highest contact rate, consistently being the most in contact, on average, with all institutions; in addition, the Catholic congregations are exceptionally well linked. It is noteworthy that the Muslim congregations, with contacts to 6.4 institutions, are linked almost as well socially as the two great Christian churches. Clearly less connected, on the contrary, are the congregations of other Christian denominations as well as the congregations of other non-Christian religions. The least connected are the Buddhist congregations, being most often in contact with schools, other educational facilities, as well as cultural institutions.

Thus, the societal relations tend to mirror what was stated previously regarding social engagement: on the one hand, the exceptionally high activity of the congregations of the Muslims and those of the two great Christian churches, and on the other, the comparatively low activity of the Buddhist and the other Christian congregations. It is only the congregations of the other non-Christian religions that are embedded rather below average, although a high social engagement applies to them as well.

Thus, a tendency towards social isolation or "parallel society", as repeatedly assumed in the case of Muslim congregations, cannot be established. Instead, a dividing line of social integration becomes visible between, on the one hand, the congregations of the two great Christian churches and those of the Muslims, with diverse and frequently activated relations and, on the other hand, the congregations from the spectrum of the diverse Christian denominations and from other non-Christian religions (especially the Buddhist congregations), with far fewer social relations (Table 7.6).

Regarding the religious field, it may be stated that almost all congregations (95%) have *intra*religious contacts with congregations of the *same* persuasion (for example Sunni-oriented congregations among themselves), and 75% are in contact with congregations of *other* persuasions (for example Sunni congregations with Shia ones). Interactions in the religious field seem to organize themselves following the principle of similarity; not only similar beliefs but also e.g. similar institutional embeddedness may promote the intrareligious contact. Much rarer, in contrast, are *inter*religious contacts, which were specified by 46%. When interreligious contacts exist, they most often are with congregations of one other religion (25%), while only 12 or 10% maintain contacts with congregations of two or three and more other religions. Interreligious contacts therefore mainly cross the boundary to one single other religion, while only a small proportion of the congregations is active in multireligious relations. Thus, interreligious contacts are certainly widespread in general but are obviously not at the forefront of activities.

In this context, there are significant differences among the congregations of the different religious traditions. It is especially striking that the congregations of non-Christian religions – again except the Buddhist congregations – clearly maintain interreligious contacts more frequently than Christian congregations. This applies especially in comparison with the Christian congregations beyond the Protestant and Catholic churches, which are by far the least interreligiously active. The trend to similar findings is also revealed in other studies (Rebenstorf et al. 2015, 62; Halm et al. 2012, 113). This imbalance can be explained by the fact that minorities, in principle, have statistically better chances for building interreligious contacts with the majority than vice versa. Since, however, the minority congregations behave quite differently here, there must be other reasons for especially the Muslim and other non-Christian congregations to prove themselves interreligiously active. An obvious reason is that Muslims – unlike many of the Christian minority denominations and the Buddhist groups who are hardly perceived as conflictual in this coun-

Table 7.6 Religious relations according to religious tradition

	Protestant	Catholic	Other Christian denominations	Muslim	Buddhist	Other non-Christian religions	Total
Intra-religious and interreligious contacts (percentage)							
Intra-religious contacts within one's own religion and persuasion***	99.0	100.0	96.4	93.0	80.0	81.3	95.1
Intra-religious contacts within one's own religion***	87.1	100.0	67.4	70.7	76.0	26.7	74.9
Interreligious contacts with congregations of other religions***	55.4	54.2	26.4	76.7	40.0	81.3	46.4
Interreligious networks***	16.2	21.7	5.7	48.8	8.0	37.5	16.8
Rating (mean; 1=very good, 5=not at all satisfying)							
Intra-religious contacts within one's own religion and persuasion**	1.79	2.04	1.57	1.53	2.15	1.54	1.70
Intra-religious contacts within one's own religion (n.s.)	2.16	2.09	2.01	1.79	2.16	2.67	2.06
Interreligious contacts with congregations of other religions*	2.79	2.79	2.94	2.14	2.82	2.31	2.66

Significance of differences between religious traditions: ***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

try – top the scale of perceived threat in the population due to their assumed potential for conflict (Pickel 2015, 26–42), which confronts them, as it were, with high social-normative expectations. Especially for Muslim congregations, their own integration and legitimation could therefore be an important motivation for interreligious contacts, which suggests an interpretation of interreligious contacts also as a capacity for integration.

While interreligious contacts (and even more so the participation in interreligious networks) are comparatively less widespread than intrareligious and societal contacts, their rating is comparatively moderate. Thus, it can be stated: Bridges between the religions are built more rarely and are more problematic than bridges inside one religion or spanning its different persuasions, as well as bridges between religion and society. Perceived religious and cultural differences, lack of interest among members of the congregations, lack of opportunities, and low demand from the outside are contributing factors that slow the interreligious development (Körs and Yendell 2016). How interreligious relations arise, however, remains an important question that needs further investigations.

7.6 Conclusion

The landscape of congregations in German cities has become considerably more plural during the past years. In the Protestant-influenced city of Hamburg that is considered here, not only have the number of congregations beyond the Protestant ones greatly increased, but plurality is expressed especially in their religious everyday practice. While the numerically dominant Protestant congregations reach extended circles of attenders on holidays, religious everyday practice is more characterized by the Christian and non-Christian minority congregations, which are frequented by a larger number of regular attenders. At the same time, they have fewer resources at their disposal and are less visible than the comparatively well-equipped Protestant and Catholic churches that shape the cityscape. This discrepancy between activity and resources or presence and representation applies especially to the Muslim congregations, which also show a strong outward orientation and a high level of engagement both in the social and in the interreligious field. While this indicates an advanced integration process (rather than "parallel societies"), the Christian congregations beyond the two great churches also constitute a considerable proportion of the religious field but remain considerably more self-centered by comparison. This tends to apply also to Buddhist congregations, but their overall size is considerably smaller. Some of them, on the one hand, are often a loose assembly of a few individuals while, on the other hand, some larger congregations show a high degree of social and interreligious engagement. In view of the increasing religious pluralization, it would be worthwhile to follow up the focus on the interactions and relations between the congregations, as well as with society, and to shed light on the influencing factors of their bridge-building potential.

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Chapter 8
Religious Congregations in Italy: Mapping the New Pluralism

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Abstract This paper deals with the increasing religious diversity of Italy. The Italian religious landscape is a good example of how, and to what extent, a society historically monopolized by Catholicism is being transformed exogenously by unprecedented and unexpected religions. Mapping the new places of worship – belonging respectively to Islam, Orthodox Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Neo-Pentecostalism-, the author focuses on the impact of the new cultural and religious geography both on the self-representation of the Catholic Church as a pivotal belief system in the public sphere and on its traditionally privileged position, still essentially unchanged by political factors.

Keywords Italy · Catholicism · Islam · Orthodox Christianity · Sikhism · Buddhism · Hinduism · Neo-Pentecostalism

8.1 Introduction

Due to the influx of many people from various countries – more than 190 – around the world, to what extent is the Catholic monopoly in Italy challenged by an increasing degree of religious diversity? First, the question concerns the relation between religion and migration in Europe, especially in the Southern countries, focusing on their switch from being countries of emigration to becoming countries of immigration. Second, this process affects the peculiar religious structures of those countries. Many of them – such as Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain (Vilaça et al. 2014; Vilaça and Pace 2010; Perez-Agote 2012; Dobbelaere and Perez-Agote 2015) – have historically been countries with a dominant religion: Orthodox Christianity in Greece and Catholicism in the others.

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_8

The monopolistic structure of the religious field is now challenged by the increasing religious diversity. It means a greater social complexity that implies differentiation of the religious field in relation and tension with the dominant belief system: Catholicism. This new religious landscape is an unexpected effect, an exogenous process that erodes the social bases of self-representation of Catholicism as the single and fundamental matrix of the common values of the Italian people. All this adds to the internal process of differentiation that Catholicism has experienced in the last 50 years in Italy. What we conventionally call secularization has not meant a drastic reduction of beliefs and practices. Instead, there was a growing fragmentation among different ways of being and living the creed and of belonging to the Catholic Church. Facing the movements for spiritual awakening that have arisen in Catholicism since 1970 (Contiero and Pace 2014), secularization in Italy has taken the form of a low intensity religion (Garelli 2011; Turner 2011, 2012; Diotallevi 2017). It means a combination of differentiation and the individualization of belief and belonging. These are, in brief, the two formulas that contain and describe socio-religious change in Italy. As an organized system of religious belief, Catholicism is coping with a social environment of increasing complexity, with a high degree of religious diversity. The Catholic Church can no longer take for granted that its symbolic borders, both spiritual and material, are secure. The new congregations are drawing new boundaries. The competition between different religious confessions is now more highly structured than in the past, when the only real competitors for the Catholics were the Italians who joined the Jehovah's Witnesses and came knocking on doors every Sunday to distribute "The Watchtower". The religious supply is thus expanding and many Italians will not just imagine changing religion, but will do so without having to search outside the country for prophets, masters, gurus and shamans.

The question is how to read these two processes (differentiation and individualization) not as a setback or loss of importance of Catholicism in Italian society, but as a change. This change allows a religious monopolistic system (Catholicism) to transform the external socio-religious complexity that is generated in the society into internal complexity, which is both historically determined and socially bounded to "rethink itself." In other words, how to retain social centrality, despite the risk of eventually becoming a minority among many other religious minorities?

Therefore, from the theoretical viewpoint, it seems useful to conceptualize the socio-religious change occurring in Italy in terms of systems theory (Luhmann 1977, 1987, 2012; Laermans and Verschraegen 2001; Pollack 2006; Pace 2011). The focus of this approach is an analysis of what happens in a society when its environment experiences changes often not easily attributable to the apparatus of social cohesion and social control (political, ideological, economic and cultural) applicable to a relatively more stable and homogeneous society. If we assume, following Luhmann's approach, that secularization means functional differentiation, religion becomes a sub-system among other sub-systems, with a relatively specialized function. The relationship between the function, performance and reflexivity of a sub-system (in our case, Catholicism in Italian society) is challenged by the transformation of the religious field. For instance, the Catholic Church could cease to be in a unique partnership with the political subsystem because other religious actors are becoming visible in the public sphere and are fighting for recognition (Honneth 2000; Voirol 2005; Monnot 2013).

All this causes increased awareness within the Catholic Church, which until now has been central to the religious, social and political scene in Italy, of the need to rethink its functions and performance as a belief system in a social environment characterized by a higher level of religious diversity. In Italian society, religious semantics is no longer narrowly single and exclusive, not only because the meanings attributed to the symbols, practices and ethical codes of the Catholic tradition differ among Catholics, but also because the new religious congregations have other ways of interpreting them.

For example, an older Catholic woman, together with a younger Romanian woman who is providing her with child care, may discover that they share religious symbols but are divided on one major point: Orthodox priests can marry, while Catholic ones cannot.

Thus, if Catholicism in Italy was a social system of religious belief until a few decades ago, the impact of an unexpected religious pluralism has at least two important aspects. First, it reduces Catholicism's claim to represent the moral unity of the Italian people. Second, the Catholic Church must learn to act with the understanding that there are many ways to believe. Its performance, therefore, must be commensurate with a more complex society, where there are different religious minorities that do not traditionally identify with what the Catholic Church says and does. In this aspect, the Catholic Church in Italy must reconsider its historical role, which it can no longer take for granted. In the language of systems theory, it means that the external religious complexity outside its symbolic boundaries provokes the self-reflexivity of Catholicism. Instead of closing and defending the positions acquired historically and politically, the Catholic religious system seems more interested in redefining its role in a pluralistic society, trying to reduce the external complexity in accordance with its internal semantics. Words such as hospitality and mercy are constantly repeated top-down in the public discourse of the Catholic Church. These two words have become, in these years of intensive immigration to Italy, the guiding compass for the action of the Catholic majority toward migrants (legal or illegal, regardless of religion). In doing so, the Catholic Church preserves its publicly central role, maintaining the privilege of relating to other sub-systems (especially the political and legal), although it is aware of dealing with a process that will eventually transform Italy into a multi-religious society. Consequently, nothing will remain the same regarding the function, performance and reflexivity of Catholicism.

The risk of entropy, both for Italian society and for Catholicism, is greater when the flow of immigration from various countries is not homogenous. There is diversity within the diversity. This would include not only Islam, but every variety of Islam; not only Orthodox Christians, but Romanians, Ukrainians, Serbs, Moldovans, Greeks and Russian Orthodox, each with specific religious characteristics; not only Asians, but Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus, Christian Tamils and so on; not only Pentecostals, but African, Latin-American and Chinese Pentecostals representing many different denominations.

In Italy, the political system is called upon to rethink the way the State has traditionally managed the relationship, on the one hand, with the Catholic Church – representing the religion of the majority – and, on the other, with the other denominations considered minorities, today legally accepted in the public sphere. The issue is how Italy manages religious diversity. The specific policy of religious pluralism in Italy contributes to the evidence for the varied concepts introduced by many scholars (Beckford and Demerath 2007; Doe 2011; Stark and Finke 2000; Richardson and Bellanger 2014; Wuthnow 2005).

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part aims to outline the issue of religious diversity. The second part documents the spread of major new religions in Italy today, supported by maps of places of worship.

8.1.1 Method

The data reported here are the outcome of a national survey that I conducted in 2010–2012 thanks to a grant from MIUR, the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research. In the absence of a national census on religions in Italy and reliable data on the socio-religious composition of the Italian population, the survey sought to initiate a preliminary description of the visible presence of various religious congregations (old and new: from the Waldensian Church to the new African Pentecostal Churches, from Islam to Buddhism, from Hinduism to the Sikh community). Therefore, it was decided simply to locate the places of worship of different religious realities (Finke and Scheitle 2012). This is the first step of a deeper investigation on the composition of each religious congregation, the profile of the religious leadership and the intergenerational dynamics. For some places of worship, the work was easy (for example, the location of synagogues, temples or churches of the major Protestant denominations, which have been in Italy for at least two centuries and whose addresses are easily available from the congregations' offices); however, for other new presences, the work was more complex. To obtain basic information, such as the addresses of places of worship (including the postal code) for some important religious congregations (Islam, Pentecostal churches, Hindu temples, Buddhist Centers), it was necessary to contact the main associations or organizations that represented the religious worlds that we wanted to study. To verify the reliability of the addresses, we then checked the actual existence of a place of worship in the territory. At the end of this first phase, it was possible to create a database, comprising thousands of addresses divided by congregation. Next was the creation of geographic maps that visually represent the location and density of the places of worship and prayer all over the Italian territory.[1] These pinpoint the locations, on the national, regional and local level, by means of colored dots of different sizes, depending on the number of places of worship in a town or a city area.

[1] We used the software TargetMap (www.targetmap.com)

Table 8.1 Protestant denominations, Jewish communities and Catholic Parishes in Italy

	Membership	Congregations	Agreement with the State
Waldensian and Methodist Church (unified since 1975)	25,000	22	1984
Lutheran Church	8000	11	1993
American Episcopal Church	600	2 (Rome and Florence)	No agreement
Christian Evangelical Baptiste Federation (UCEBI)	25,000	100	1995
The Church of Brethren	14,000	216	No agreement
Assemblies of God	150,000	1131	1986
Pentecostal Church Federation	35,000	520	No agreement
Seventh-Day Adventist Church	7000	18	1986
Jehova Witnesess	430,000	3070	Agreement in 2000 not ratified by Parliament
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Days Saints	20,000	3 missions and 14 districts	Agreement in 2004 not ratified by Parliament
Jewish Communities	25,000	21	Agreement in 1987
Catholic Church	[a]	28,000 parishes	Concordate in 1929, modified in 1984

Source: Introvigne and Zoccatelli (2006), Naso (2013) and Pace (2013)
[a]As regard the Catholic Church's membership it is very difficult to be more precise, taking into account that in 2010. Over 80% of Italians say they are Catholic, according the more recent survey conducted by Garelli (2011) on a national sample

Before examining and commenting on the main research outcomes, let us consider a synthesis of the Italian religious landscape, from its historical characterization to its unchanging nature, even after the arrival of immigrants from more than 190 countries. All the data given in Table 8.1 are not the result of our research or of censuses and national surveys; they are, however, either provided by the religious organizations or derived from their official sources. In Table 8.1, I summarize the data concerning the various Protestant denominations, the Jewish congregations and the Catholic parishes. The picture that emerges is sufficiently clear: while the Catholic Church with its 28,000 parishes has a molecular presence throughout the national territory, other congregations had much less branching, although some have a long history in Italian society, such as the Methodist and Waldensian Church, on the one hand, and the Jewish communities, on the other. Other Protestant churches are the result of more recent settlement (for example, the Adventist Church and the Mormons). Quantitatively, the various religious minorities are not growing, except for the Assemblies of God (ADI). The latter congregations, in fact, began to establish themselves in Sicily and Lombardy in the early twentieth century, thanks to the missionary action of two Italian-Americans. In the last 20 years, the ADI has been growing in contrast to the other Reformation churches. However, the Jehovah's Witnesses are stable. A reading of Table 8.1, in conclusion, gives an immediate understanding of the monopoly rule of the Catholic Church in the religious landscape. At the same time, it suggests how, historically, Italy has known the presence of various religious minorities which, however, have never threatened the monopoly of Catholicism.

8.2 The Impact of Immigration on Italian Society

I propose to analyze the social changes taking place in Italy from the perspective of the transformation of a society monopolized by Catholicism to one characterized by an unprecedented and unexpected religious pluralism. The maps illustrating the presence of many different religions in contrast to the religion of a typical Italian's *birth* (Catholicism) show how the country's social and religious geography is changing. Such a change is a major novelty in a country that has always seen itself as Catholic, both for long-standing historical reasons and for deeply-rooted and still strong cultural motives.

Despite the religious diversity that is beginning to make itself socially obvious, the Catholic Church continues to have a central role in the public arena. However, it is beginning to realize that Italian society is *moving* on, not only because other religions are striving to gain visibility and public acknowledgement, but also because they are contributing in some cases to making the religious field more variegated. The Catholic Church is a belief system that is still well-organized, with a complex *protestas indirecta* (Poulat 1974) in the sphere of political decision-making. This is the *birth religion of the Italian people.* Albeit with growing difficulty, it has continued to withstand the onslaught of secularization, as an analysis of a representative population sample (Garelli 2011) and an ethnographic study (Marzano 2012) have recently confirmed. In comparison with other situations in Europe (Perez-Agote 2012), Italy appears to have become secularized while remaining *faithful* to its image (in collective representational terms) as a Catholic country, thanks to the Church's organizational strength. It is no longer a Catholic country in terms of many Italian people's practices, but the collective myth of the Italians' Catholic identity still seems to hold (Garelli et al. 2003). But the socio-religious shift is taking place: from a religiously single culture to a novel form of religious diversity. This is a slow process that is going largely unnoticed, generating no remarkable tension or conflict (except in the case of the Muslim places of worship), but it is ultimately producing a change in the country's socio-religious geography. Italian people are no longer born inherently Catholic. Despite this collective representation, Italian society has been shaped by various Protestant confessions (see Table 8.1).

My aim in the following pages is to describe this change with the aid of data collected in a study completed in 2012 (Pace 2013), which enable us to go beyond mere generic estimates of the presence of other, non-Catholic religions in Italy to map the different places of worship, by region and by religious confession. Although the number of immigrants reached more than five million in 2014 (accounting for 7% of the population), neither the central Italian Statistics Institute (ISTAT) nor the Ministry of the Interior have succeeded in providing a circumstantiated picture of the real presence of the various religions in the country, apart from the case of the Muslim places of worship, which are monitored by the police and the intelligence services on behalf of the Ministry of the Interior for reasons of public security. Indeed, this source provides a good starting point for examining and further analyzing the situation, as was done recently by Allievi (2010) and Bombardieri (2012).

The 190 different nationalities of Italy's immigrants make it plain that religious diversity is now part of our lives: at the local market, in our hospital wards, prisons and school rooms, at the offices of our local social services, and so on. Estimates may be a starting point, but they no longer suffice to give an accurate picture of Italy's socio-religious geography, capable of *realistically* illustrating people's experiences and ways of belonging to a given religion. In other words, estimates cannot answer the question of what the people formally classified as Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Pentecostals, and so on, in fact believe in.

We are beginning to gain an idea of the areas where the immigrants' different religions tend to become concentrated, but we have only a very incomplete and imprecise map of their places of worship. These places are still not obvious to the naked eye – to our cursory gaze, at least: though we are accustomed to recognizing a Catholic church at a glance, we are less well equipped to notice buildings that identify the presence of other, non-Catholic religions. Our eyesight has a role in religions. Our eyes reflect and record an orderly outside world, where we see things that are familiar to us.

To begin in fact to *see* how Italy's socio-religious geography is changing, we must step beyond mere estimates of the different religious realities that have become well-established in our country. Some religious communities show a marked degree of homogeneity, while others show clear differentiation. It is easy to find information on the former, much more difficult for the latter (for example, the Muslim communities that refer to different associations, some of which represent the whole group of believers, while others are based on geographical origin). For some religions, despite some degree of differentiation, we can address the problem of obtaining a credible picture of their places of worship through a network (that we have patiently constructed) of witnesses, who have provided addresses and other precious details.

Maps are used for travelling and, combined with a compass, they help us to orient ourselves and to interpret the new map of religions in Italy. If somebody were to travel through Italy from north to south, and from west to east, they would certainly not be immediately aware of any Sikh temples or mosques, nor would they know how to recognize an Orthodox church (barring a few exceptions in Trieste or Venice, or in Bari or Reggio Calabria in the south, where there are churches that bear witness to the historical presence of flourishing Greek and Albanian Orthodox communities). They would be even less likely to stumble upon evidence of Hindu mandirs or Buddhist temples, and would have virtually no chance of noticing any African, South American or Chinese neo-Pentecostal Churches. While the African neo-Pentecostal Churches have been the object of a specific investigation (Pace and Butticci 2010), their Latin American and Chinese counterparts have remained in the background. A problem with the new Churches, moreover, lies in that they are often very difficult to find, because they are often born and survive in very precarious logistic and operating conditions. It is nonetheless common knowledge that some Latin American mega-Churches, and particularly the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (born in Brazil in 1977) are now widespread in many countries (Corten et al. 2003; Garcia-Ruiz and Michel 2012). This Church has ten locations in Italy (in Rome, Milan, Turin, Genoa, Mantua, Verona, Udine, Naples, Florence, and Syracuse). Then again, little or nothing is known about the religious habits of the Chinese, except for a study conducted in Turin (Berzano et al. 2010).

8.3 Mapping Religious Diversity

Taking a quick look at the map of religions in Italy, we see the following situation concerning the places of worship (Tables 8.1 and 8.2).

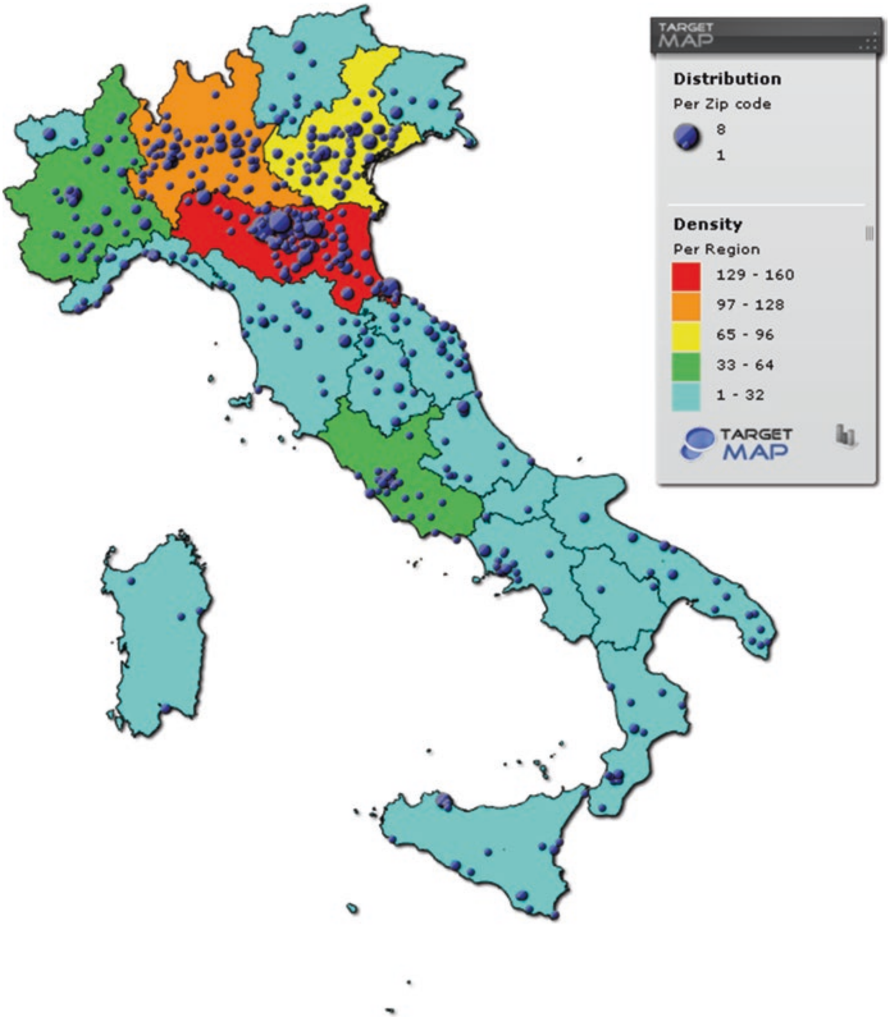
As we can see, the Chinese and Latin American evangelical Churches are not on the list: the former are difficult to survey; the latter are beginning to spread, but they are of little importance in comparison with the other denominations included in the above table.

There are Islamic places of worship dotted all over the country, with a greater density where the concentration of small and medium businesses (in the numerous industrial districts of northern and central Italy) has attracted many immigrants from countries with a Muslim majority. This means not only the Maghreb countries (Morocco in first place, with half a million men and women who have now been residing permanently in Italy for 20–25 years), but also Egypt, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The relatively large Iranian and Syrian communities date from further back, having become established at the time of their two countries' political trou-

Table 8.2 Places of worship of the new religions in Italy in 2012

Denomination	Places of worship	Immigrant population by religious affiliation (Caritas/Migrantes estimates)
Islam	655	1,645,000
Orthodox Churches	355	1,405,000
African Pentecostal Churches	858	150,000
Sikh	36	80,000
Buddhist	126	80,000
Hindu	2	1500
Total	2032	3,265,000

Source: Pace (2013) and Caritas-Migranti (2011)



Map 8.1 The Muslim mosques and prayer halls (*musallyat*) (2012, by Region). (Source: Rhazzali 2013)

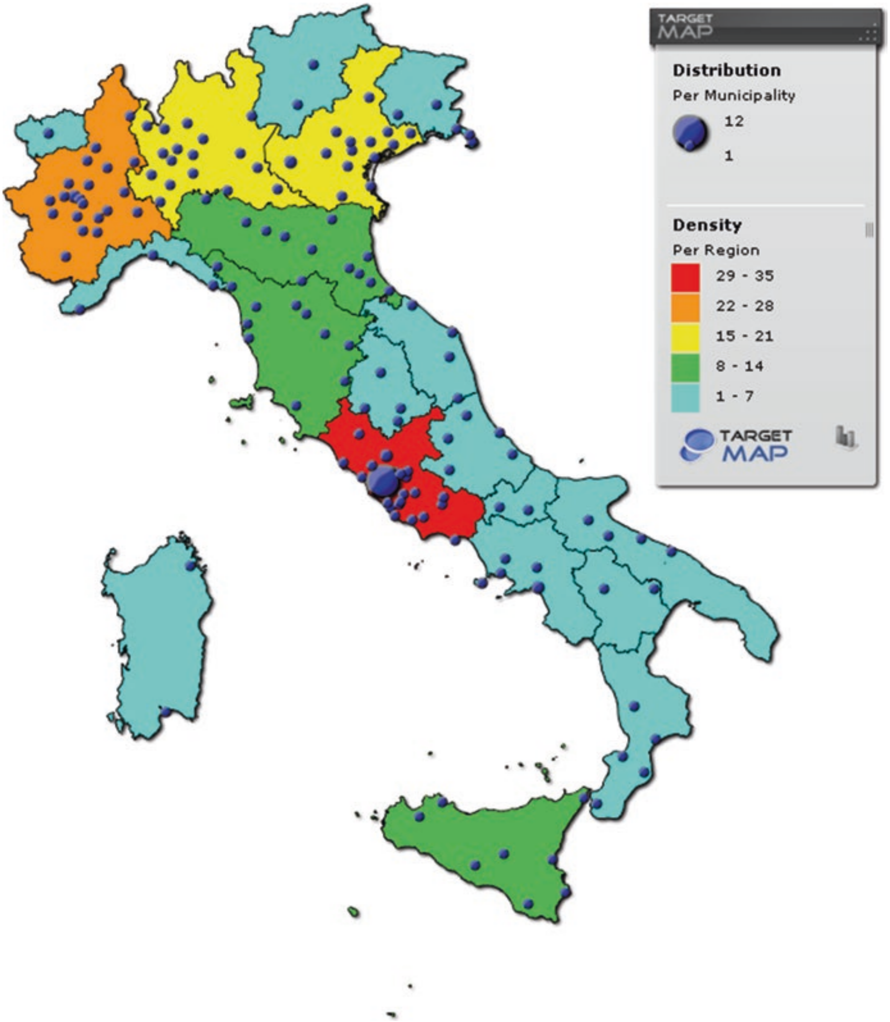
bles, with the advent of Khomeini's regime in Iran, and Hafez el-Assad's repression of the political opposition in Syria in the 1980s.

The following map gives us an idea of the uneven distribution of the places of worship, which are mainly prayer rooms (*musallayat*), sometimes precariously occupying uncomfortable premises. In fact, the number of mosques, in the proper sense, can be counted on the fingers of one hand: there are only three, the most important being the one opened in Rome in 1995, which can contain 12,000 faithful (Map 8.1).

We can see from the above map that the prayer rooms are concentrated mainly along the west-east axis, peaking in Lombardy, followed by the Veneto and Emilia-Romagna regions. This distribution also reflects the different components of the Muslim world, recognizable in some of the most important national associations – if for no other reason than because almost all the places of worship included in the census refer, from the organizational standpoint, to one of these associations. On the one hand, there is the Union of Islamic Communities of Italy (UCOII), which is historically close to the Muslim brotherhood (though it is currently undergoing internal change): this is one of the best-organized associations, which manages 31% (205) of the prayer rooms identified in the census, while another 32% (209) are part of the new Italian Islamic Confederation, (CII), which mainly enrolls Moroccan immigrants (and their families). The other 240 *musallayat* belong to other, smaller associations, at least one of which – called the Islamic Religious Community (COREIS) – was founded by an Italian converted to Islam (through the esoteric tradition that goes back to the figure and thought of René Guénon), so it is easy to imagine that this is, strictly speaking, an Italian Islam. Although this is numerically a small group, it has a public visibility unlike any of the other, abovementioned associations.

The presence of the Orthodox Christians appears to be much more stable and well-defined than the still precarious position of the various Muslim communities (also in terms of the often poor, derelict urban locations made available to them as places of worship), since the latter are still waiting to see their legal position confirmed on the strength of an understanding between these Muslim communities and the Italian State, in accordance with the Italian constitution. This difference is not only because one of the Orthodox Churches was recently recognized (in December 2012) by the Italian State, but also because their inclusion in the Italian social and religious fabric has been facilitated – for the Romanian, Moldavian and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches, at least – by the bishops of the Catholic Church. In many a diocese, where there was a visible and pressing demand for places of worship or parishes, the Catholic bishops have authorized Orthodox priests to use small churches left without a priest, or chapels that had remained unused for some time (located on the outskirts of towns). By comparison with the Muslim communities, the Orthodox parishes are more evenly distributed all over Italy, as we can see from the following Map 8.2.

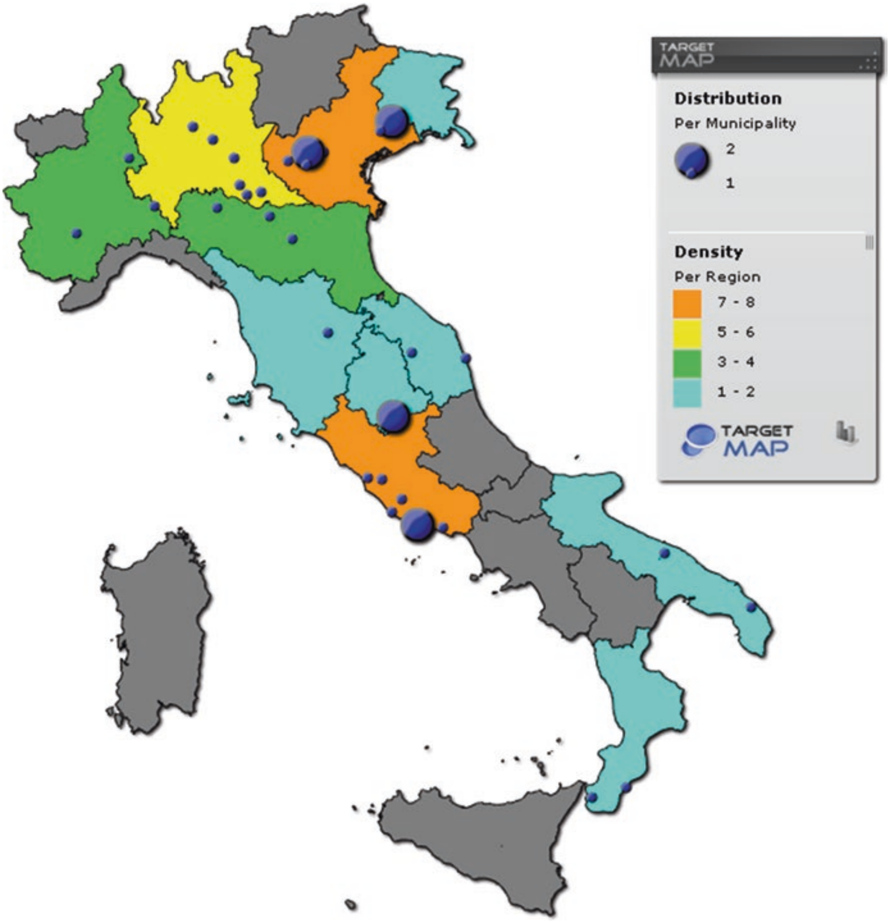
If we now look at the 36 Sikh temples (*Gurudwara*) (Map 8.3), their uneven territorial distribution stems from the segments of the job market that immigrants from the Punjab have gradually come to occupy. A sizeable proportion of these workers has filled the space abandoned by the Italians throughout the central portions of northwest and northeast Italy, including parts of Emilia, as breeders of cows serving the large dairy industries and pigs for pork meat products: the historical figure of the Italian *bergamini* (as they were called throughout the Po valley) has been replaced by men with a turban, the Sikh. By contract, these migrants have not only benefited from a good salary, they have also been given a home (usually adjacent to the stables so that they could take care of the animals around the clock), and this has made it easier for them to bring their families to Italy – something that is much harder for



Map 8.2 Orthodox parishes in Italy (2012 per Region). (Source: Giordan 2013)

other communities of migrants to do because they are usually unable to demonstrate that they have a stable home. Consequently, a generation of Italian Sikhs was soon to develop (either because they arrived at a very young age, or because they were born in Italy).

Of the 120,000 immigrants from India, the Sikh communities now amount to about 80,000. Most of them arrived in Italy around 1984, driven by a combination of factors and severe social problems in the Punjab region because: Great Britain (the country to which these migrants had historically flocked) refused them entry; there was a crisis in the farming sector; and there was political conflict between the



Map 8.3 The 36 Sikh temples (*gurudwara*) in Italy (as at 2012 per Region). (Source: Pace 2013)

Punjabi separatist movement and the New Delhi government (Denti et al. 2005; Bertolani 2005, 2013; Bertolani et al. 2011).

The map first shows a gradual institutionalization of the Sikh communities that have proved capable not only of finding the financial resources needed to renovate old industrial sheds and convert them into places of worship, but also of negotiating with the native communities without encountering any special administrative difficulties or political obstacles (unlike the Muslim communities when they try to set up a prayer hall or mosque). The map also shows the early signs of a differentiation among the Sikh: there are two different associations (the Association of the Sikh Religion in Italy and the Italy Sikh Council), to which the various temples refer. There is also a religious minority that mainstream Sikhism considers heterodox, the Ravidasi, followers of a spiritual master called Ravidas Darbar, who appears to have lived between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Punjab; for his wisdom and authority, he was recognized as a new guru and added to the ten that the whole Sikh world venerates. Although some hymns attributed to Ravidas have been included in the Sikh's sacred text (the *Granth Sahib*), most Sikh deny him the same status as the gurus officially acknowledged by tradition.

So far, I have chosen just a few of the maps now available to document the slow movement of Italian society toward an unprecedented, unexpected socio-religious configuration that is still, in some aspects, unknown to many Italian people. To give a single example, in the areas where the Sikh have settled, for a long time they were mistaken for Arabs with a turban, or Orthodox Christians; few people grasped the differences that exist between them in terms of their different national Churches.

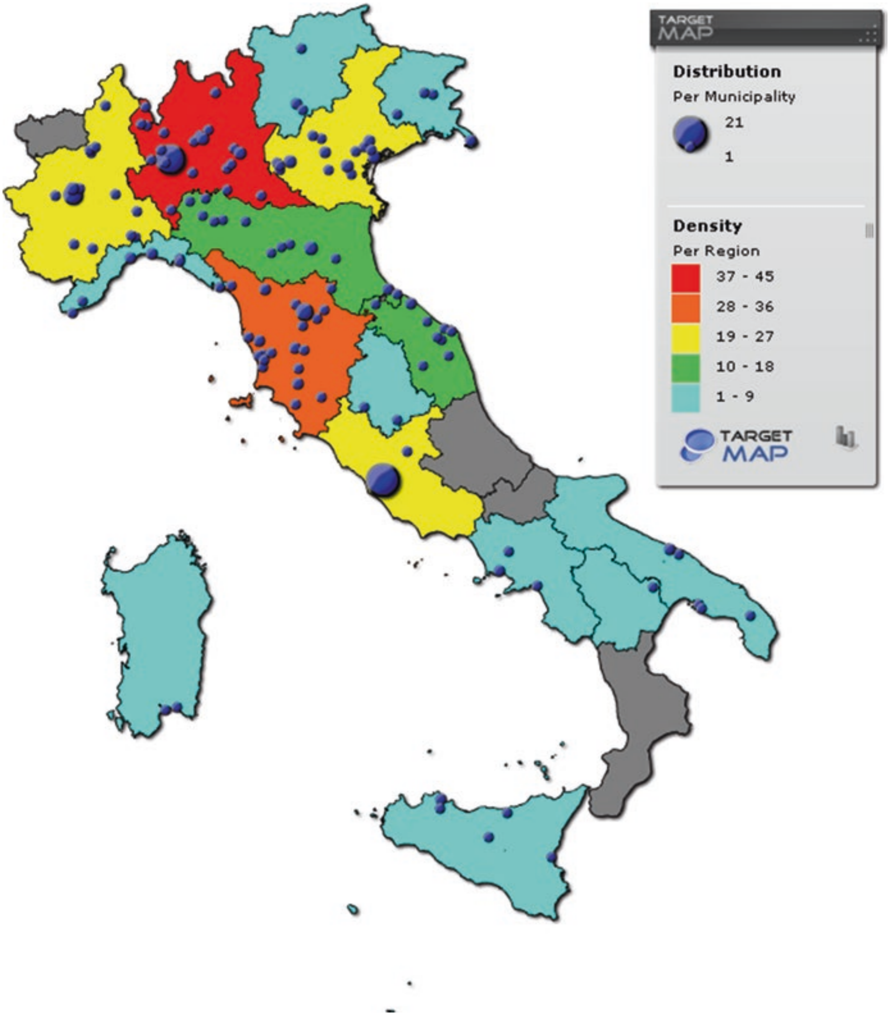
To complete the picture, it is worth looking at a few other maps, which reflect changes underway in Italian society that are not due to exogenous phenomena (such as the immigration of men and women from other countries). Here again, I have chosen two maps illustrating the growth in the last 10 years of the Jehovah's Witnesses and the various Pentecostal congregations (the most important of which are the Assemblies of God and the Federation of the Pentecostal Churches), both of which have been recruiting new members from among Italian people who were originally Catholics, but have opted to adhere to another form of Christianity.

The Jehovah's Witnesses first came on the scene in 1891; since then, they have grown constantly in number. Today, they are widespread all over Italy, with more than 3000 congregations, 1500 kingdom halls, 250,000 Evangelicals and a similar number of supporters. They also have a far from negligible number of new conversions drawn from among the Albanian, Romanian and Chinese immigrants, as well as from the French- and Portuguese-speaking Africans (Naso 2013).

The diffusion of the Pentecostal Churches is even more significant. Most of them come under the heading Assemblies of God, with 1181 communities dotted all over Italy, with a greater density in certain southern regions, areas that are generally believed to have strong Catholic traditions. The other group, the Federation of Pentecostal Churches, currently has 400 congregations and approximately 50,000 members.

If we combine the Pentecostal communities and Churches with a Protestant matrix with the African, Latin American and Chinese neo-Pentecostal Churches, and then add the Charismatic movement that has formed within the Catholic Church (which now includes approximately 250,000 people in Italy, with 1842 communities established in almost every region), we can see that the Church-religion model – that Catholicism has developed over the centuries, with its parish-based civilization – is being challenged by an alternative model where the experience (through community rites) of a charisma counts for more than a set of dogmas.

Above all, the organizational format of these alternative religions no longer preserves the traditional separation between clergy and layman. If the spirit blows where it will, as Pentecostalism (in all its various expressions) becomes more established in Italy's traditionally Catholic society, it could become an element of further differentiation in Italians' choices in the religious sphere.



Map 8.4 Buddhis and Neo-Buddhist Meditation Centers in Italy (2012 per Municipality). (Source: Pace 2013)

If the new type of Pentecostal Christianity challenges Catholicism, Eastern religions represent another alternative that extends the spiritual religious supply in a country of wide and long Catholic tradition.

Italian society had already encountered the new face of westernized Buddhism in the 1970s and 1980s, through the various spiritual movements from India and Japan respectively. The most famous were, among others, in the first case, the Hare Krishna movement and Osho Rajneesh, and in the second, Soka Gakkai. There is, therefore, a long-Italian Buddhism. Today it is recognized mainly in an association approved by the State, the Italian Buddhist Union (about 80,000 members). With the arrival of immigrants from Sri Lanka, India and China, a new layer of followers of various schools of Buddhism has formed. It is in fact an innovation that further pluralizes the presence of Buddhism in Italy (Squarcini 2012; Molle 2009, 2013; Macioti 1996, 2001). The distribution of the various meditation centers, documenting this process, is shown on Map 8.4.

8.4 Conclusion

Italy's socio-religious geography is changing – slowly, but constantly and irreversibly. The above maps and figures also faithfully record a demographic transition affecting all Italian society that has been going on for at least 50 years.

The Italian population is continuing to age (nowadays, 20% of the population is over 65 years old). Meanwhile, the size of Italy's population is not diminishing thanks to a higher birth rate per female (from 1.19 in 2002 to 1.25 in 2012), due to the greater propensity of immigrant families to have children, and more of them, in comparison with Italian couples. Set against this background, it is hardly surprising that the Catholic clergy is constantly ageing too: while there were 42,000 priests in Italy in 1972, this figure is expected to drop to 25,000 by 2023; 48% of Italian clergymen are now over 65 years old, and the mean age of the clergy as a group is 62. There is a paucity of vocations, and policies to recruit young Asian and African priests seem unable to fill the gap that is already apparent in the ranks of the Italian clergy (Castegnaro 2012). By comparison, the new patriarchs of the 355 Orthodox parishes are much younger: 60% of them are between 30 and 45 years old, and 6% are under 30; the mean age of the Muslim communities' 600 imams is under 35; and the 300 pastors of the African Pentecostal Churches are usually between 28 and 35 years old. For the Italian Catholic Church, the changes taking place on the religious scene are an absolute historical novelty. These challenge its quite understandable self-image as a well-organized salvation organization, having a capillary distribution throughout the country (with 28,000 parishes and a considerable number of monasteries, sanctuaries, centers for spiritual retreats, and so on) (Chilese and Russo 2013). Though it is still an authoritative actor on the public stage, the Catholic Church must cope with the changes underway.

For a good deal of the short history of Italy as a nation, right up to the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church had maintained something like civil disinterest in the country's religious diversity. Then it changed tack, during the years of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, becoming more open to exchanges with the Hebrew communities and the Churches of a Protestant matrix. It succeeded in considering the other religious presences established in Italy as potential parties to a dialogue between different faiths, promoted by the Catholic Church with a view to appearing tolerant and open-minded, while emphasizing that it was still the *dominant figure* on the *public stage* in the Italian religious sphere, the *primus inter pares* in regulating public communication on matters of religion.

Reframing this last sentence in a systems theory approach, it means that Catholicism as a socio-religious system in Italy has been coping with the new reconfiguration of the religious field, and not only in symbolic terms. The Catholic system introduces a new semantics (acceptance and mercy to migrants) that comes from its internal symbolic code, by which it might put into practice the Christian interpretation of hospitality, recognition and the social integration of migrants as individuals and as potential new citizens. A similar trend has been analyzed in Switzerland (see the chapter by Stolz and Monnot in this volume).

It seems to me that, in this way, a religious belief system mutes function and performance, while managing to retain its social centrality and obviously risking both internal rejection (especially by conservative Catholics on the issue of migration) and external conflict with other subsystems, primarily political. I do not think that the attitude of the Italian Catholic Church would be easily accepted today in Hungary or in *Catholic* Poland. Lampedusa, a small island in Sicily, where thousands of migrants land each night to escape from sinking vessels, has become a symbol of how the Catholic Church has been equal to the task of establishing itself as a welcoming church – not checking migrants' religious passport upon arrival –, allied with all the secular forces trying to cope with the phenomenon of migration, and openly in support of public policies of reception and against those who build walls and close their borders.

From the religious standpoint, the Italian case is a good example of how, and to what extent, a symbolically monopolistic system can be transformed exogenously. The unprecedented, unexpected religious diversity that has begun to emerge in Italy makes it necessary to update the maps of religiosity and secularization that the country's sociologists of religion study to interpret the changes taking place over the years. In the past, these changes often occurred within Catholicism itself (Cartocci 2011), often involving small percentage displacements in a picture of apparent substantial immobility in terms of the Italians' collective representation of themselves. They saw themselves as Catholic in more than 85% of cases, though they revealed marked differences (and diversified levels of secularization) in both their attitude to their belief and their behavior (from their religious practices to their moral choices, which were sometimes highly individualized and by no means consistent with the official doctrine of the Catholic Church).

Now, for the first time after years of research, the maps (some of which are illustrated here) show that we need to use a different compass to interpret a rapidly and radically changing social and religious scenario. With time, Catholicism will also experience some degree of internal change. In the debate on pluralism within the Catholic Church, it will no longer be enough to say "bring in the cavalry" to conceal the fact that 5% of Italy's immigrant population are Catholics, but they come from worlds that are moving away from the theology and the liturgy of the *Roman* Catholic Church. These African, Latin American, Philippine, Chinese and Korean Catholics will add their own point of view to what being Catholic means, which will not necessarily be consistent with Italian mainstream traditions (Naso and Salvarani 2012).

This will give rise to a new area of research that will require new intellectual energies to investigate the real religious experiences of so many people belonging to so many religions, going beyond the ethno-centrism (or Catholic-centrism that has inevitably characterized our research on our predominantly Catholic society). We must also reflect critically on the concepts and theoretical reference systems needed to deal with the unprecedented religious diversity that has been increasingly characterizing life in Italy.

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Part IV
Congregations and Change

Chapter 9
Religious Change and Continuity in a Danish Town: Results from a Mapping Project

Marie Vejrup Nielsen

Abstract Local changes and global patterns – mapping congregations in the city of Aarhus.

This article will present the results of a mapping project from 2012 of religious groups in Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark. The mapping project followed up on a similar project from 2002, and was therefore able to document how religion changes in a specific area in relation to over-all trends of religious transformation. Data concerning the religious groups was collected through interviews and participant observation and analyzed both through a comparison with the previous study and in relation to theoretical questions concerning the transformation of religion, e.g. globalization and growing religious diversity. This article will focus specifically on developments within Christian congregations and the question of local transformations in relation to regional and global patterns of religion. In Aarhus, as in Denmark generally, the primary numerical divide is between the majority church (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark) and the minority groups. Among the minority groups a key tendency is how globalization affects the religious landscape both in the form of changes in older congregations, e.g. through global Christian networks, and in the form of new congregations arriving in the city. Among the new arrivals, the two primary tendencies are a growth in Orthodox and Pentecostal congregations.

Keywords Mapping projects · Methods · Religious diversity · Minority religion · Christianity

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_9

One of the strengths of mapping projects concerning religion is the contribution that empirical reference points can make to general theoretical discussions concerning contemporary religion. Projects such as the Religion in Aarhus Project (RAP), which is presented in this article, therefore not only provide necessary information about specific religious groups within a given context (Ahlin et al. 2013). They also provide empirical examples and raise critical questions in relation to the identification of the underlying dynamics of transformations of the religious landscape today. The presentation of the general results of the study is followed by a more detailed analysis of developments within Christian congregations in Aarhus. In this article, the RAP will be presented, including an overview of the findings concerning religious groups in Aarhus. The theoretical framework for the study focuses on the question of increased religious diversity and/or pluralism and the distinction between these two concepts. The conclusion of the article addresses both the results of the study and the general question of mapping contemporary religion.

9.1 Method

The area mapped in the RAP was the city of Aarhus, the second-largest city in Denmark, which at the time of the project had 319,094 inhabitants.[1] Aarhus has an inner-city area, as well as large suburban neighborhoods. The municipality of Aarhus also includes rural areas. Aarhus is a university city with a large proportion of young people in the city center. In addition, Aarhus has areas with a high proportion of immigrants and descendants of immigrants (primarily with a Muslim background) concentrated in specific parts of the city. All this makes Aarhus an interesting case for mapping religious transformation, as there are obvious signs of religious diversity in the area and the area is of a manageable size, making it possible not only to identify religious groups, but also to carry out a detailed investigation of each group. The RAP identified religious groups in the Aarhus area through various approaches. The RAP was a follow-up study in relation to a previous mapping of religion in Aarhus, which was part of a national research project (The Danish Pluralism project) from 2002. The list provided by the previous study was a starting point for the identification of the relevant groups and this was supplemented by information from other sources such as the official state list of approved religious groups, information searches online, information from related research projects and information provided by the religious organizations themselves. In Denmark, there is no census data available concerning religious affiliation, except regarding the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD). The project mapped all religious organizations in the Aarhus area, and contains data on all identified groups, except those who explicitly opted out of participation.

The study was a key informant study with a topic guide, supplemented with field observation. The data collection was carried out by the research team in collaboration

[1] The largest city in Denmark is the capital, Copenhagen.

with 50 students. The guide for interviews was developed on the basis of the guide used in the first project in 2002, with additional questions concerning the use of new media (internet, social media) and how the representatives of the group had experienced changes in their group in the 10-year interval since the previous study. The guide included the following nine categories of questions, and each of these categories had a series of sub-questions: (1). Presentation and name, (2). The local history of the group, (3). Organization, (4). Members, (5). Economic conditions, (6). Religious/spiritual practice, (7). External relations, (8). Internet and social media, and (9). Open questions. Following the interviews, the students filed a report on each group, and these reports were then evaluated by the relevant member of the research team before being included in the material used for analysis. The students wrote a short text concerning each group, which was included in the online publication of the results of the mapping project.

The project focused primarily on religious organizations, and a key criterion for being included in the project concerned the level of organization. The congregation had to have a permanent meeting place in Aarhus and a minimum of organization in the form of specific meetings and activities. The RAP focused on a praxis-oriented perspective (e.g. the regular meetings of a group for religious activities). The mapping of religious groups raised methodological questions concerning the inclusion of some groups, because the boundaries between organized and non-organized religion and between what counts as religion and what does not, are not easily defined. The approach of this study was to contact all groups, defined as within religion in Aarhus by the research team, and to engage the question of their status as religion in the interviews. The definition of religion used to identify the groups was primarily based on their connection to one of the major religious traditions: Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism as well as the category "new religious movements". To capture developments within the more fluid category of alternative practices and New Age, the study included a field study of the Body, Mind and Spirit Fair, which is held annually in Aarhus and includes a broad variety of groups and individuals offering services inspired by New Age and new spiritualities.[2]

Another key challenge in the study was the identification of groups that only use specific rooms infrequently or have a high degree of mobility. This means that short-term phenomena, such as the visit by a Christian mission group using a public library or meeting halls for an event or the use of a public school for a Hindu event, fall outside this study. The study therefore almost exclusively looks at religious organization in its more permanent forms, and this raises the question of how this approach cannot catch the more fluid, "pop-up", dimensions of religious organization today.

A final methodological challenge was the inclusion of the ELCD in the study. The individual congregations of the ELCD in the Aarhus area were not included on full scale in the RAP, meaning that no interviews or field observations were carried out. Instead the study included previous research on the general patterns of the

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[2] See article by Lars Ahlin in this volume.

development of the ELCD, supplemented with new data collected primarily through websites. This presents some challenges in the attempt to map changes in the ELCD alongside the minority religious groups, since the data on the ELCD mixed the national level with the local, congregational level. In future RAPs, the research design should include either a full-scale study of the ELCD congregations or as a minimum a relevant sampling. This would allow for more in-depth analysis and comparison across the majority/minority congregations, as well as a more detailed analysis of the internal diversity within the ELCD congregations in the area.

9.2 Theoretical Framework

In this article, the primary theoretical frameworks, which have played a significant role for the RAP, will be presented as a background for the discussion of the empirical data concerning religious groups in Aarhus. The dynamics of globalization and the impacts on religion in a specific context was part of the framework of RAP with a specific focus on the question of increased religious diversity and pluralism. In relation to the question of diversity, the Danish Pluralism project had applied the typology presented by James Beckford (2003): (1) diversity of religious organizations, (2) diversity among individuals associating with a religious organization, (3) diversity in faith traditions, (4) diversity in the form of individuals combining different religious traditions and practices, and (5) internal differentiation within a religious tradition (Beckford 2003, 74–5). In the analysis of the data from the RAP presented in this article, the primary focus will be on (1), (3) and (5), as the emphasis is on religious congregations. This article will apply the typology of diversity to the material presented here as a background for the discussion of increased diversity and/or pluralism based on a distinction between these two concepts as it was developed by The Danish Pluralism study (Fibiger 2004)[3]:

> [W]ith religious diversity defined as the existence of different religions within a society, and religious pluralism as a situation where patterns of engagement, interaction and relationship between religious groups emerge. (Ahlin et al. 2012, 405)

In order to capture these two distinct forms of transformation, The Danish Pluralism project had posed two primary research questions: (1) “to what degree can the religious landscape in Denmark be considered increasingly diverse?” and (2) “to what degree can the religious landscape in Denmark be considered pluralistic?”.[4] As the RAP is a follow-up study on the study from 2002, making it

[3] The study in 2002 led to further developments in relation to the issue of religious diversity, primarily in the form of the CARD network led by Lene Kühle and Jørn Borup, which continued to explore the question of definitions and provided better tools for empirical examinations of religious diversity and pluralism (http://cardnetwork.au.dk/).

[4] For further information about the Danish Pluralism project at Aarhus University from 2002, see Ahlin 2013 or contact Center for Contemporary Religion at Aarhus University, director Marie Vejrup Nielsen.

possible to carry out a detailed analysis of patterns of transformation and focus specifically on the two distinct questions: did we find increased diversity and did we find increased pluralism? This article therefore provides an identification of whether there has been an increase in diversity and in what forms, as well as whether there are signs of pluralism, e.g. a high degree of collaboration and co-organization between religious groups, especially in relation to the formation of interfaith councils or other institutions meant to represent religious groups across confessional divides and active in the general, public sphere.

At the outset of RAP, a further research question was formulated concerning Christian congregations in relation to perspectives of diversity and pluralism: would we find examples of global Pentecostalism in this specific local context? This question was formulated based on the previous study from 2002, where such an influence was not visible to any greater extent, but at the same time some developments nationally were pointing to a possible new development here. The research team in 2002 raised the question of whether the following decade would bring a stronger presence of this phenomenon to Aarhus. The hypothesis was that the developments identified within Christianity on a global scale would be present in a Danish context to an increasing degree.

This question is linked to the major shift in global Christianity recognized by researchers in the post-colonial age in the form of a 'charismatic upsurge' with Pentecostal roots (Woodhead 2004, 394; Jenkins 2002). In his book, *Pentecostalism – The World – Their Parish* (Martin 2002), David Martin presents a strong argument for paying attention to this development on a global level and the impacts it has in local contexts. At the same time, Martin found that the development seen in African and Latin-American contexts seems to have a relatively limited impact in Northern Europe. Martin utilizes the term 'historical filters' to argue for how countries and regions differ from each other, and sees the historical development of Western Europe in general as a key factor in the low and slow impact of such developments in this region:

> "[…] the whole tenor of this analysis suggests that classical Pentecostalism is unlikely to be a major power in the developed world because it represents the mobilization of a minority of the people at the varied margins of large masses […]". (Martin 2002, 67)

And if such groups appear in the local context, it is primarily in the form of house churches or as developments within already established groups, and very rarely in independent mega-churches, which are a part of the development in North and South America, as well as Asian and African contexts (Martin 2002, 68). This raises a question of whether the specific local data from Aarhus confirms or challenges this pattern in a contemporary context.

The RAP thereby offers a series of empirical reference points for the discussion of how global trends are reflected locally and contribute to the transformation of the general religious landscape.

Based on this theoretical perspective, the research questions formulated in relation to the theoretical framework are: what changes and continuities can be observed in the congregational landscape of Aarhus between 2002 and 2012? How do these changes fit within the theoretical hypotheses drawn from theories concerning diversity and pluralism?

9.3 Historical Context

The legal framework for religion in Denmark rests primarily on two articles in the Danish constitution from 1849, which is the foundation of the modern Danish parliamentary democracy. In the constitution, some key articles govern religion: (1) article 4: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD) is the Danish Church[5] and is supported as such by the state"; and (2) article 67 ensuring freedom of religion (Nielsen and Kühle 2011). This general framework provides the background for a model of religion that features religious freedom, but not religious equality, because the ELCD holds a special position in relation to the state and has several privileges. Religious groups outside ELCD cannot receive financial support from the state, although it is possible to achieve state recognition as a religious group, thereby gaining access to privileges such as tax reductions for membership fees and visas for visiting religious leaders.

The 1849 constitution is the starting point for increased religious diversity in Denmark through the establishment of religious freedom. This immediately led to an increased diversity within Christian groups, with the Roman Catholic Church as well as new Protestant groups such as the Methodists starting to establish churches in Denmark. A broader religious diversity only began to any significant degree from the 1960s and onward, with labor migration and inspiration from Eastern religions starting to change the religious landscape, followed by an increase of migrants with Muslim backgrounds in the 1980s and 1990s. The Danish pattern today, therefore, is one of increased diversity in the form of a greater variety of religious groups; but these groups are still relatively small, and only start to assume significant proportions when they are combined in general categories, such as Islam. Still, the overall majority belongs to ELCD (78% of the population in 2012). Following this brief presentation of the historical and national framework for the development of religion in Denmark, the results of the RAP will be presented.

9.4 Religion in Aarhus: The Data

The following is a presentation of the empirical results found through the mapping of religion in Aarhus 2012–2013.

[5] The ELCD is a specific version of a state church, which has strong ties to the state as well as a high degree of local autonomy. The church does not have an independent, national church council. On the national level, it is led by the government through the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs (Nielsen and Pedersen 2012).

	2002	2012
Congregations within the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD)	57	58
Other Christian congregations	26	29
Islam	11	14
Buddhism and Buddhism-inspired groups	6	6
Hinduism and Hinduism-inspired groups	8	9
New spiritual/religious groups	18	18
Total	126	134

Fig. 9.1 Number of religous groups in Aarhus 2002 and 2012

	2002	2012
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark	230,291	233,603
Other Christian congregations	7,400	7,400
Islam	1,100	2,100*
Buddhism and Buddhism-inspired groups	500	600
Hinduism and Hinduism-inspired groups	1,400	1,400**
New spiritual/religious groups	900	600

Fig. 9.2 Membership/affiliation of religious groups in Aarhus 2002 and 2012 (*In the Muslim congregations, a family counts as one member. **The number of Hinduism-inspired groups includes recurring users of yoga in the Scandinavian Yoga and Meditation School. If these are not included, the total number is approximately 200)

The project identified 134 congregations in total, where the congregations of the ELCD accounted for 58. This means that there were 76 religious groups other than the ELCD in the Aarhus area. The previous study included 126 congregations in total, with 57 from the ELCD. This means that there was a small increase in the number of religious groups in total, from 126 to 134. This increase itself, however, does not describe the most interesting patterns of transformation, as new groups have arrived and old ones have merged or disappeared altogether in the decade between the two studies. The following tables show the overall numbers found through the mapping project (Figs. 9.1 and 9.2).

These overviews show that the increase in the number of religious groups was primarily found within Christian and Muslim groups.

Regarding the development within Muslim groups in Aarhus, there was an increase both in the number of members and in the number of groups. The RAP found 14 Muslim groups, 11 of which were of the Sunni-Muslim tradition. One key development was the establishment in 2006–2007 of the umbrella organization the United Muslim Organizations (Forbundet af Islamiske Foreninger), which has the building of a designated mosque in the Aarhus area as one of its common goals. In relation to the project, we were also interested in the question of how many Muslim citizens lived in Aarhus at the time, and how to assess how many of these were members of a Muslim religious organization. These questions offered some methodological challenges as there are no official statistics concerning religious affiliation except regarding membership numbers of the ELCD. Therefore, the general number of Muslims in Aarhus was assessed through data concerning ethnicity, resulting in an estimated 23,200 citizens with a Muslim background amounting to 7.4% of the population of Aarhus. The question of how many of these were affiliated with a Muslim religious organization could only be answered through further estimations, especially regarding the membership system of many of the groups (a whole family count as one member). Estimations based on statistics regarding the size of households allow a qualified estimate of the membership figure of 2100 representing approximately 6000 individuals, thereby bringing the overall membership percentage within the category of Muslim groups to approximately 25%. The development primarily reflects an increase in citizens with a Muslim background in 2002–2012 due to increased immigration, as well as reflecting an increased diversity within the Muslim communities as new groups become established in the Aarhus area, such as the Afghan and Somali mosques (Jacobsen 2013).

Regarding the question of Jewish groups in Aarhus, the project did not find any organized Jewish groups and there was no synagogue in Aarhus. This does not mean that there were no citizens in Aarhus who identify themselves as Jews, but their religious activities were either private or related to the synagogue in Copenhagen.

Regarding Hindu groups in Aarhus, all nine groups within the category were groups with ethnic Danes as members, such as yoga groups (Fibiger 2013). Hindus with a non-Danish cultural background living in Aarhus did not have a specific religious space that they used throughout the year (such as a temple, etc.). Instead, they practiced their religion in private homes and borrowed public areas (such as schools) for major events such as Diwali. If they wished to attend rituals and activities related to a temple, they used the temples elsewhere in Denmark.

As for the Buddhist groups, there were six Buddhist groups both in 2002 and in 2012, displaying a continued division between ethnic Danes and migrants, with some groups only catering to ethnic Danes and others primarily to specific ethnic groups. The Vietnamese Buddhists in Aarhus had a temple in one of the suburbs of Aarhus (Borup 2013).

The patterns found within new religious and spiritual groups will be further addressed by Lars Ahlin in another chapter in this book. After this brief presentation of the overall patterns found through the mapping project, a more detailed presentation of the Christian groups will provide a background for a discussion of diversity and pluralism as well as the specific question of Pentecostalism in Aarhus.

9.5 Christian Congregations in Aarhus

The imbalance between the majority church and the other Christian groups in Aarhus reflects the national pattern. Membership of the majority church in Aarhus in 2012 was at 75% of the inhabitants, whereas it was 80% in 2002. This is in line with the general development in Denmark of a slow, but stable, decline in membership, and at the same time a very high membership level compared with other established European churches. The pattern resembles that of other Scandinavian countries. There is a significant diversity in the membership percentages of the 58 parishes, ranging from the highest of 92% to the lowest of 25%. The parish with the lowest membership percentage is Gellerup, one of the areas of Aarhus with the highest number of inhabitants with an immigrant background. The ELCD has only very recently and in moderate forms begun to be affected by larger economic transformations. However, one relevant question for the future is whether (and how) adaptations can be made to cope with these relatively new patterns of very low membership percentages in specific parishes in Denmark's major cities, as well as the much larger challenge of depopulation in rural areas.

The other 29 Christian groups in Aarhus have a total membership of 7400, and only two have more than 1000 members: the Roman Catholic Church (3272) and the Jehovah's Witnesses (1100). The Chaldean Church came in third with 800 members. This meant that there was a high diversity in membership numbers in the Christian groups, ranging from low tens to a couple of hundred members. In general, these groups borrowed rooms (mostly premises belonging to ELCD). The Roman Catholic Church also provided rooms for some groups. Others, including the historical free churches, such as the Salvation Army, the Baptist Church, the Methodists as well as the Evangelical-Lutheran Free churches, own their own church buildings. There was no interfaith council or official organizational co-operation across confessional divides, beyond the occasional joint services or other activities.

Three groups had disappeared since the previous study: the Catholic Apostolic Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, and the Living Word Bible Church. And a further group was very close to disappearing (the Quakers). When examining the reasons for religious groups disappearing in a specific local context, we found a variety of factors. Firstly, groups disappear because the leadership moves to another area, or because a significant number of members moved out of the area (Armenians and Quakers). The case of the Catholic Apostolic Church indicates that internal, theological dimensions may also be a factor. The key theological message of this church was that Jesus Christ would return very soon, and therefore a final group of 12 apostles were ordained by the founder, Edward Irwing (1792–1839), and only these 12 could ordain new pastors. Although the prophecy was not fulfilled and the final service held by an ordained pastor in Aarhus was in the 1960s, the group in Aarhus continued for a while, and in the 2002 study had 15–20 participants, but eventually the congregation was dissolved and the church room now houses the Chaldean church.

One key pattern was the stability among the Christian congregations established in Aarhus at the beginning of the twentieth century. The great majority were still active and continued at a very stable level in relation to both activities and membership, although all expressed concerns regarding an ageing membership profile. The study identified 13 new Christian congregations, in the form of both new arrivals and mergers. Two primary developments were identified: new developments within congregations, which can be identified as broadly within a Pentecostal-charismatic tradition, and an increase in Orthodox congregations. These two developments will be analyzed further here as examples of internal diversification within traditions.

9.6 Pentecostal Christianity in Aarhus: Newcomers and New Mergers

Data collected in the annual Danish mapping project had indicated that global developments of Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity were starting to spread to Denmark on a more visible level, primarily in the form of new congregations being established by migrants, and with connections to global, Christian networks (*Religion in Denmark* 2014). This provided a background for the examination of whether (and how) this pattern was recognizable in Aarhus in the RAP.

The RAP identified eight groups as being within a broad category of what was described by Linda Woodhead as “charismatic upsurge” with Pentecostal roots (Woodhead 2004, 394). Some of the congregations fall clearly within this category, such as Eurolife Church and the City Church, with historical connections to the Danish Pentecostal Church, and International Christian Harvest Center, with its connection to global Pentecostal-charismatic congregations, whereas others such as Saralyst primarily displayed a broader inspiration from new trends in Christianity worldwide in their activities and networks and had no historical connection to the Pentecostal church. The study found, however, that Saralyst had some collaboration with the City Church in its new form. The definition of congregations as within the broad spectrum of Pentecostal-charismatic was based on their theological profile, religious practices and organizational form. This is in line with the global trends described by David Martin and Linda Woodhead, and seeks to capture a development across formal, confessional and historical ties. This allows for an identification of these patterns also within the historical, Danish free churches.

Of the eight congregations within this broad spectrum, three were primarily migrant congregations (Church of Love; Fountain of Life and International Christian Harvest Center), three were mixed migrants and ethnic Danes (Eurolife and Kongens Folk), and two had primarily ethnic Danish members (the City Church and Saralyst).[6]

[6] Initially a ninth group (Living Stones Bible Church) was also identified as within this category, but since it had appeared and disappeared in the decade between the two studies, and has its primary center in another city, Randers, it will not be included in this article.

In the following, the primary trends within these congregations will be presented, with a focus on the mergers behind the City Church and Saralyst, as well as the developments behind Church of Love and Fountain of Life. The other congregations, however, also include interesting developments in the local area, and will be briefly addressed here.

Kongens Folk (the King's People) was a congregation with a strong focus on the charismatic gifts, such as speaking in tongues, healings and exorcisms. The congregation consisted of a very ethnically mixed user group. The congregation worked in the downtown area and was active in its outreach on the streets of Aarhus, especially through their evening and night outreach programs.

International Christian Harvest Center was the only congregation in Aarhus, which had been established based clearly on a missionary vision of bringing vibrant Christianity from an African context to a European context, thereby being an example of the developments pointed out by Martin and others. The members were primarily non-ethnic Danes and relative newcomers to Denmark. The congregation was part of a larger global network, and locally collaborated with the two congregations with a historical, Pentecostal background (Eurolife and the City Church) in relation to various church activities. They used meeting rooms at the Baptist Church or met in the private home of the pastor.

Eurolife Church was a congregation, which has its background in the Pentecostal Church in Aarhus and became an independent congregation in 2005. Eurolife had a Pentecostal profile and focused strongly on music in its activities; the participants are both ethnic Danes and migrants.

The City Church and Saralyst are both the result of new mergers and will be described in more detail below. Following this, the Fountain of Life and the Church of Love, will be described.

The City Church is a merger of the Pentecostal Church, the Apostolic Church and the Free Church at Runddelen. And Saralyst Church is a merger of Højbjerg Frikirke and Saron Church. Both mergers included congregations that were also present in Aarhus prior to 2002 and were part of a category of traditional Danish free churches emerging in the Aarhus area during the nineteenth century.

Two of the congregations merging as the City Church had a long history in the local area, since the Pentecostal Church was established in Aarhus in 1928 and the Apostolic Church in 1925. The third part of the merger, The Free Church at Runddelen was established in 1994. All three congregations primarily had ethnic Danes as their members. The merger also provided an economic boost, through the sales of buildings and the relocation to joint facilities at the church buildings previously belonging to one of the congregations.

The merger behind Saralyst was also based on two older Danish free churches in the area. The Saron Church (which has a background in the Danish Missionsforbund and Church of God), was established in 1933, whereas Højbjerg Frikirke is from 1967. The merger resulted in the construction of a new church building.

In examining the two newly formed congregations, we found a strong focus on being a church for the local community. This was also reflected in the names chosen – the City Church focusing on the city of Aarhus, and Saralyst Church taking its name from the local, suburban area in which a new church was built following the merger. This tendency is also visible in the activities of the congregations, in that Saralyst Church offered a range of activities that are directed toward the local area, such as music, dance classes, and social help in the form of shopping and aid for the elderly. Both Saralyst Church and the City Church offered a theological message that is very different from the beliefs and attitudes of most of the population and of the ELCD. Both are theologically conservative in relation to questions of belief and Christian morality – in line with the general trends in global, Pentecostal-charismatic forms of Christianity, and with activities recognizable from these trends broadly speaking. At the same time, especially Saralyst is still very much a classic Danish free church, with a primarily ethnic Danish member base. Interestingly, the two newly merged congregations also, to some extent, collaborate in relation to joint services and activities, which indicate that there are connections among the older, Danish free churches in the area, although no formal, joint structures have been established locally.[7]

The Sub-Saharan African congregation, International Harvest Christian Center, fits clearly within the general trends of Pentecostal developments globally, but the presence of two congregations with a Middle Eastern profile was a more surprising find for the research team. Church of Love and Fountain of Life are both congregations in which the members are primarily Middle Eastern migrants, but they had no distinct profiles. The Church of Love consisted of converts to Christianity from Islam, and the leader himself was a convert from Islam. This group had also experienced a unique development in Denmark, with the leader completing a theological and practical training and becoming an official pastor in ELCD. This has led to some controversy in relation to the boundaries between the majority church and free churches.

The Fountain of Life on the other hand consisted primarily of members whose ethno-religious background was within the Christian Assyrian Church, but who have had a personal conversion experience leading them to join the Fountain of Life. This group was led by a pastor who had followed this path and used Arabic as its primary language, but they were considering how to include others by using English and Danish. The Fountain of Life was organizationally connected to the City Church, but existed as a separate entity, pointing to how there are several connections crisscrossing the field of charismatic, Pentecostal congregations in Aarhus.

9.7 New Orthodox Congregations in Aarhus

Another trend in the material was the increase in Orthodox congregations. In total, three new Orthodox congregations were established between 2002 and 2012 in Aarhus. In addition, a Russian Orthodox congregation had been established in 1998.

[7] There are national level networks of free churches, such as the Free Church Network (*frikirkenet*), which the City Church is part of (Saralyst is not part of the Free Church Network).

Of the three new arrivals, two are Romanian Orthodox, and a third Danish Orthodox, which is a new development in Orthodox Christianity. When examining the two Romanian Orthodox congregations, a primary question was why two groups within the same church had appeared within the same area.

The first Romanian Orthodox congregation was established in 2002, just after the closing of the first project. It consisted of a small group of Romanians (approximately 15 members). They borrowed a room in a parish church of ELCD in the city center. The priest traveled from Malmö, Sweden, and the group paid for his traveling expenses and accommodation. He did not receive a salary from them, nor from the Romanian Orthodox Church in Romania. The congregation did not seem to be officially recognized by the mother church. The other group was established in 2008 and had 250 members. They borrowed rooms at the Roman Catholic Church in Aarhus, and the priest was paid by the Romanian Church in Romania and had close connections to the mother church.

The differences between the two Romanian Orthodox groups in Aarhus reflect both changes in international politics and the active strategy by the Romanian Orthodox mother church of establishing new religious communities in Europe. International politics is a key factor, through the inclusion of Romania in the European Union from 1 January 2007. This meant an increase in the number of Romanian workers and students in other EU countries including Denmark. This became the starting point for the Romanian Orthodox Church to become established in northwestern Europe, as can be seen through the official establishment of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese for Northern Europe in 2010 (Stockholm). The first Romanian Orthodox congregation therefore consisted of people who arrived as part of relatively few Romanians in Denmark, whereas the latest Romanian Orthodox congregation was formed to meet the demands of new arrivals, who often had a more temporary connection to Aarhus, as workers or students.

The third new Orthodox congregation is also an interesting case of the transformation of Orthodox Christianity today. This group is the only Orthodox congregation that has Danish as its liturgical language. The congregation, led by a Danish-speaking pastor, has chosen a different path and presented itself as a congregation committed to Danish Orthodoxy and thereby to offering a context for engaging with ethnic Danes, who are otherwise not familiar with Orthodox Christianity. The fieldwork focused on how this emphasis on being Danish could be detected in the activities of the congregation. At the specific service that I attended, the participants reflected the focus on Danish as a liturgical language, with some mixed couples, (Danish and other nationalities), as well as some Danish converts to Orthodox Christianity. But there were also a couple of participants who stood out in relation to the expectations of the researcher, namely participants who did not understand or speak Danish. Among these was a young couple with two different Orthodox backgrounds. In the informal talk after the service, they were asked why they had come to this specific service, when there were options to go to Orthodox services in their own language in Aarhus. Their answer was that they attended this congregation because it gave them something they were looking for, namely, an Orthodox service without the elements that they were most critical of in their own traditions. They viewed traditional Romanian Orthodox churches as very patriarchal, emphasizing a hierarchy of older men over both young people in general and women specifically. In the Danish Orthodox Church, they had found a way of continuing the elements of their faith that were important to them. This small congregation, representing a new development within Orthodoxy, was therefore an example of how diversity can come from various sources within religious communities themselves. An initiative primarily intended to attract ethnic Danes interested in Orthodox Christianity can also become a meaningful context for young transnationals, who want to balance religious tradition and modern life.

In summary, the analysis of the material in general, and the Christian material in more detail, did show an increased diversity. Following the categories presented by Beckford, an increase was found in the form of diversity of religious organizations, diversity in faith traditions, and internal differentiation within a religious tradition (Beckford 2003, 74–5). These patterns of increase were numerically small in relation to membership, but distinctive. It is therefore possible to conclude that diversity had increased in the decade between the two mapping projects in a variety of ways.

As for the more complex issue of pluralism understood as a growing interaction between groups, or active engagement with society in general concerning the position of religious groups, the study did not find a significant development. And to some extent, there was a growing cooperation within the broad spectrum of charismatic, Pentecostal congregations, although this was primarily in the form of joint services on special occasions. Many groups shared rooms, had some connections, and would occasionally co-organize events, but in 2012 none had formed interfaith groups or groups directed towards securing rights or space for religious groups. The only development in this direction was found in the Muslim material, where an umbrella organization had been established with the purpose of building a mosque.

This means that, although more and more diverse religious communities exist side by side in Aarhus today, also displaying a diversification within religious traditions, such as within Islam and Christianity, this increase has not led to an increased collaborative presence in the public sphere. The general image is of quiet co-existence, non-interference and some collaboration. This image is confirmed when walking the streets of Aarhus today, where only the trained eye will be able to identify the religious diversity. The research team behind the RAP provides yearly city walks for the public. This issue is often commented on by the participants who, although they pass by the buildings every day, had not previously had any knowledge of the many religious groups present around the city.

9.8 Conclusion

The analysis of the material showed an increased diversity. Alongside the majority church, which is still very much the dominant religious organization in the area, many small congregations exist, and here diversity is growing. At the same time, the study found no strong tendencies towards pluralism. The primary changes happen in the constant reshaping of the religious landscape, as new groups appear and old groups disappear or merge into new forms. The study found some local expressions of the trends found in global Christianity, in the form of new Pentecostal-charismatic groups. Here, the changes were both in the form of new arrivals and in the form of mergers. One of the cases from the RAP, which pointed to a distinct new development, was how the global form of Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity was now also expressed through groups with a primarily Middle Eastern-migrant membership, which is a new phenomenon in the Danish context pointing to how diversity appears in new forms today. The appearance in Europe of Pentecostal congregations of newly converted Christians from Islam and new developments within Assyrian communities present interesting new empirical reference points for the discussion of the identification of global patterns in terms of the transformation of religion. In general, the pattern among these congregations shows a great variance and flexibility even in a relatively small local context.

There are no mega-churches in the Aarhus area, and many groups consist either entirely or partly of migrants. The developments within the older, Danish free-churches, which should be seen in some cases as being in line with a broader Pentecostal congregational type, reflect how global inspiration is expressed through local congregations, as when phenomena such as small groups are incorporated. This seems to support the pattern found by Martin in the development of Pentecostal, charismatic churches, at least in this specific local context. There was an increase in these groups, but the development primarily took place within the already established free-churches, as part of new organizational structures and identities, as a negotiation of global inspiration and the local congregations' own history and life.

On a general level, the article also points to the strengths of mapping projects focusing on the organizational level of congregations and groups and calls for further collaboration among researchers. Firstly, local mapping projects can identify cases that are 'too small' to be caught by larger surveys as well as detect shifts in the religious landscape that might not be numerically significant, but nevertheless present relevant data for studies of contemporary religion. Secondly, what seem to be minor developments in one local, regional or national context might be identified as part of larger trends if they are compared with the results of other mapping projects, thereby contributing strong, empirical grounds for the identification of general trends. This can add great detail to our knowledge of transformations in contemporary religion, as well as indicate how general trends develop in actual local contexts on the level of religious organizations as they change, not only by being molded passively by societal trends, but also by active changes in their organizational form, through mergers, new congregations and inspiration from global networks.

This local material is of course limited and the few examples can only be used to a small degree to argue for major shifts in the larger religious landscape. But detailed studies of the congregational landscape do provide a case for how transformations of the religious landscape happen not only through new arrivals, but also through the transformation of traditional structures. Changes happen through the constant appearance, disappearance and restructuring of religious organizations. This article could only touch on some key themes raised by the RAP and has primarily aimed at presenting the empirical findings and discussing a few selected theoretical questions, which were instrumental in the analysis of the results of the mapping project. There are many details in the specific congregations that have not been addressed here. Also, the study of the ELCD congregations in the RAP were carried out in a form that did not allow for strong analysis of trends across the minority-majority divide, and in the next RAP, the research design must be developed to allow for comparisons across this divide.

The aim of local and regional mapping projects should be not only to see how global patterns are expressed in local contexts, but also to argue for how examinations of the local and regional provide insight into the dynamics that make up the larger pictures – the way a new group settles in a specific area, and the interaction between local levels and global networks. To ensure the full impact of mapping projects, be they local, regional or national, it is vital that connections are made between the various research environments involved in such projects, as well as ensuring that the data collected is available in accessible forms in relation to language, identification of methods and approaches, etc. This volume helps to ensure both elements. A key methodological challenge in the alignment of mapping projects from different contexts is not only differences in how specific projects are carried out, but also differences in the available material in specific local, regional and national contexts. The RAP found an increase in diversity on many different levels, but this increase had not caused a development of pluralism in the form of a more visibly organized collaboration between congregations either as interfaith councils or as joint causes in relation to the political or public sphere.

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Online Resources

Including approaches to the studies, overview of results and data material etc., concerning the Danish Pluralism project (2002) and the Religion in Aarhus project (2012), as well as the national annual survey Religion in Denmark: www.samtidsreligion.au.dk

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Chapter 10
The Evolution of Religious Diversity: Mapping Religious Minorities in Barcelona

Julia Martínez-Ariño

Abstract Spain can no longer be considered a religiously homogeneous country. Despite the still strong preeminence of (nominal) Catholics, the number of those declaring no religious affiliation and those belonging to religious minorities has increased steadily in the last years. Census data on religious affiliation is not available in Spain due to constitutional ban, but survey data and information about the number of places of worship of religious minorities can be used as a proxy to the transformations occurred in the religious field.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a general overview on the religious diversification of Spanish society, paying particular attention to the changes that local congregations have undergone in the last 15 years. Focusing on the city of Barcelona and drawing on quantitative and qualitative data, the chapter will highlight the major trends that characterise the evolution of religious minorities' congregations. In particular, the chapter will look at the increase in the number and diversification of the places of worship of the religious minorities, their spatial spread across the territory, and the transformations in the doctrinal orientation of the different faiths. It will also provide insights on the impact of particular institutional settings (i.e. laws and funding schemes) on the institutionalisation of these congregations.

Keywords Places of worship · Religious minorities · Diversification · Visibility · Barcelona · Catalan Religious Map · Spain

10.1 Religious Diversity in European Urban Contexts

Global cities, and specifically major European cities, "are still sites of secularization but at the same time of religious innovation and diversification" (Henkel 2014, 11). Scholars studying the presence of religion in urban spaces are revisiting the causal

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_10

relation established between urbanization and secularization by secularization theorists. The rapid and intense processes of secularization of many cities in the European context have not necessarily implied the disappearance of religion from those urban contexts or its seclusion to the private sphere. Rather, its contours have changed (Burchardt and Becci 2013; Garbin 2012).

In most European countries, cities are becoming more and more religiously diverse. Such transformations are intimately linked to processes of globalization and the movements of people that the latter imply (Burchardt and Becci 2013). Spain and its major cities are not an exception in this sense. The passing of Spain from an emigration to an immigration country at the end of the twentieth century has especially changed the religious physiognomy of big cities. Moreover, and despite the still strong preeminence of (nominal) Catholicism among Spaniards, the increase in the number of those without affiliation and those converting to the religious minorities and adhering to non-traditional spirituality has increased steadily in recent decades (Griera and Urgell 2002; Pérez-Agote 2010).

Barcelona has experienced remarkable transformations in its religious cityscape over the last decades. Like many other European cities (Henkel 2014), Barcelona is host to a high number of immigrants coming from multiple and very different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. In 2015, 22% of the city inhabitants were born outside of Spain and 10% had non-European nationality (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2015). Yet, religious diversity is not only the result of external factors. As we have shown elsewhere (Martínez-Ariño et al. 2011), the presence of religious minorities in the city predates the turning of Spain into a country of immigration.

But what exactly does it mean that Spain, and specifically the city of Barcelona, have become religiously diverse? To explore the main transformations of the last 14 years, I draw on Beckford's (2003) conception of religious diversity as a complex and non-neutral term. In particular, I focus on his five-item list of factors characterizing religious diversity (Beckford 1999): (a) the increase in the number of different religious groups present in a territory; (b) the increase in the number of non-Christian religions; (c) the proliferation of practices and beliefs of what could be called "spirituality" that do not correspond to the so-called "world religions"; (d) the internal diversification of previously unitary groups; and (e) the de-monopolization of those countries where one religion dominated the religious field.

Drawing on data produced by the "Catalan Religious Map" research project,[1] in this chapter I look at the changes that local congregations in Barcelona have undergone in the 14 years between 2001 and 2014. More specifically, my aim is to examine the diversification of religious traditions that are represented in the urban context and, more importantly, the internal changes that congregations have undergone in terms of the national composition of their membership, the languages used in the

[1] I would like to thank Mar Griera and the Directorate General of Religious Affairs of the Government of Catalonia for providing me with the last update of the data of the "Catalan Religious Map" for 2014. I would also like to thank Maria Forteza, Gloria García-Romeral, and Mar Griera for their comments on a previous version of this chapter and Norbert Winnige for the technical support.

religious services and doctrinal orientation. Moreover, I analyze the spatial distribution of the congregations in the geography of the city as well as identify the legal and institutional factors that have affected these developments.

10.2 Researching "Congregations"? The "Catalan Religious Map" Project

The "Catalan Religious Map" is a 14-year research project conducted by a team of sociologists of religion led by Dr. Joan Estruch and Dr. Mar Griera at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The lack of official registration of religious affiliation in Spain due to the constitutional ban and the increasing presence and visibility of religious minorities (de Velasco and Francisco 2010) called for an exploration of the religious landscape. Since 2001, the General Direction of Religious Affairs of the Catalan Government has commissioned a study aiming to map the presence of religious minorities in the region of Catalonia. The direct antecedent of such a project was the research commissioned by the Barcelona Office of Religious Affairs (OAR) in 1999, the aim of which was to map the religious minorities present in the city. Other studies exploring the configuration of the religious field at a moment of significant evolution in Spain also stand as antecedents (Estruch 1968; Garreta 2001; Moreras 1999).

Discussions about the meaning of religious diversity (Ahlin et al. 2012; Beckford 1999) and the ways to research it have already been ongoing for many years. Conceptual concerns regarding the term used to refer to the institutionalized local religious groups are present in the sociology of religion. One of the most commonly used terms is that of "religious communities", which has replaced other more concrete concepts, such as "religious organizations". Beckford (2015) strongly criticizes the uncontested and wide adoption of the term "religious communities". He states that its use has spread not only as a "category of practice" among, for example, policy makers, but also as a "category of analysis" (Brubaker 2013) among sociologists of religion. Moreover, he argues that the term "religious communities" is a much vaguer and normative category than that of "religious organizations" and contends that this discursive shift has implications and risks.

The term "community" has strongly informed European scholarship, whereas the congregational model refers more clearly to the American landscape (Knott 2014). Chaves (2004, 1–2) defines congregation as *"(…) a social institution in which individuals who are not all religious specialists gather in physical proximity to one another, frequently and at regularly scheduled intervals, for activities and events with explicitly religious content and purpose, and in which there is continuity over time in the individuals who gather, the location of the gathering, and the nature of the activities and events at each gathering"*. While the term is not commonly used in the Spanish context, the actual conceptualization by Chaves strongly resembles the one used in the "Catalan Religious Map" research.

The “Catalan Religious Map”[2] project combines quantitative data with qualitative information gathered and updated on a regular basis between 2001 and 2014. The unit of analysis selected as a proxy to analyze local congregations is the place of worship. Thus, for the sake of clarity, in this chapter I will use the terms “places of worship” and “congregations” interchangeably. For methodological reasons the research was conducted with institutionalized religious groups. The faith traditions included in the data set are those who define themselves as religious and are officially registered. For-profit organizations are excluded. Not clearly defined groups were interviewed, but not all became part of the official data published by the Catalan government.[3]

The project set out to create a comprehensive database of the religious minorities’ congregations of Catalonia. For this purpose, and due to lack of official data, apart from incomplete official records,[4] the research team conducted incremental fieldwork. It consisted of combing the streets of cities and villages to locate the myriad – sometimes large, often tiny – places of worship of the religious minorities.[5] Structured interviews with the spokesmen of the different congregations were conducted to collect basic information about the contact details, location of the place of worship, foundation year and reasons for its creation, organizational structure, doctrinal affiliation, membership profile, religions and non-religious activities organized, relationships with other religious entities, legal status of the congregation, relationship with the public administration and the neighbors, and management of religious affairs in different fields, i.e. religious care in public institutions, religious festivals and funeral and burial rituals. Interviews with the Catalan federations of the different religious groups, i.e. Islamic and Protestant Councils of Catalonia, along with participant observations in religious services were also conducted to complement the information. Additionally, verifications to complement the database and ascertain the correctness of the data were made with the municipalities and regional governments as well as with the Spanish Register of Religious Entities.

The first round of results of the “Catalan Religious Map” was published in Catalan in 2004 (Estruch et al. 2004) and in Spanish in 2007 (Estruch et al. 2007). The map has since been continuously updated and data are now available for the

[2] For more detailed information on the methodology of the project, see Fons et al. (2013) and the project website http://www.mapareligios.cat/

[3] The success and relevance of such a project led to its subsequent reproduction in the other Spanish regions by different research teams. The latter studies were funded by the Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia, a publicly funded foundation of the Spanish Ministry of Justice.

[4] Some of these congregations are registered at the Register of Religious Entities of the Spanish Ministry of Justice and the Register of Associations of the Catalan government.

[5] The Catholic Church keeps track of its congregations and places of worship. These data are not included in our study.

years 2004, 2007, 2010, 2012 and 2014.[6] These updates allow keeping track of the transformations –such as new openings and closings– to provide an accurate account of the changing religious landscape. Moreover, to overcome some of the rigidities of such an institutional approach, individual case studies have been conducted. In-depth analysis of specific religious groups in Catalonia, such as Protestants (Griera 2006), Muslims (García-Romeral 2013) and Jews (Martínez-Ariño 2016), and expressions of the new spirituality (Griera and Urgell 2002), have complemented the portrayal.

10.3 A Changing Cityscape: Religious Minorities' Congregations in Barcelona

Spain, like many other European countries, has witnessed rapid processes of social change in the last two decades. Secularization and the diminishing salience of Catholicism in social life, on the one hand, and the globalization and the related influx of immigrants from all over the world, on the other hand, have produced new religious landscapes (Griera et al. 2014). Catholicism remains the major religion in Spain, but its importance in people's lives has dropped substantially over the years. Survey data (CIS 2001, 2015) show the significant decline of Catholic self-identification (83% in 2001, 72% in 2015) and practice (in 2015, 59% said they almost never participated in religious services compared to 43% in 2001) among Spaniards. Data in Catalonia are even more telling: only 52% declare themselves Catholics and more than 65% admit never taking part in regular religious services in 2014, a figure that increases substantially when looking at the younger generations (Direcció General d'Afers Religiosos 2014). Simultaneously, the presence and, more importantly, public visibility of religious minorities has broken the traditional dominant position and religious monopoly that Catholicism enjoyed for centuries in Spain (Olivera and de Busser 2005). Catholicism, then, is no longer the only option available out there for religious people. In Spain, in 2017, there were 6954 places of worship of the religious minorities (Observatorio del Pluralismo Religioso en España 2017) and in 2016, 1364 in Catalonia (Direcció General d'Afers Religiosos 2017), with Protestants, Muslims and Jehovah's Witnesses being those with the most significant presence.

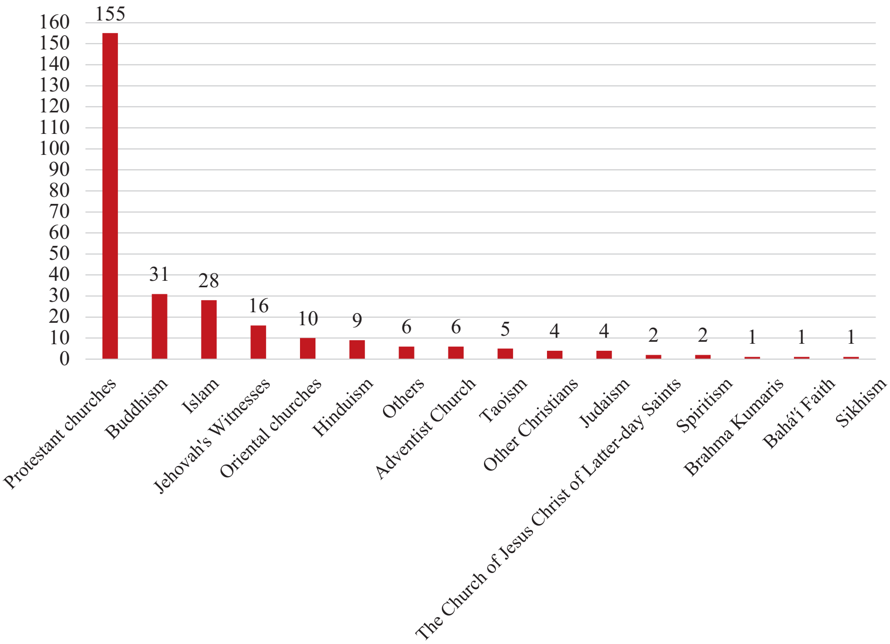
Yet, looking beyond these general trends at the national and regional levels and paying special attention to the transformation of local religious geographies proves more fruitful because it allows getting deeper insights on the specific dynamics of change. As the results will show, I look not only at the increasing variety of religious groups present in a specific urban context, but also at the internal transformations that local congregations go through as a consequence of processes of secularization, globalization and immigration, thereby accounting for the multi-faceted character of religious diversity (Beckford 1999).

[6] http://governacio.gencat.cat/ca/pgov_ambits_d_actuacio/pgov_afers-religiosos/pgov_serveis/pgov_mapa_religions/

10.3.1 The Great Current Religious Diversity

Religious minorities –understood in the Spanish context as the non-Catholic groups– are increasingly visible at the local level. In Barcelona, there are congregations from a variety of Christian and non-Christian faiths that are not restricted to the so-called "World Religions". The "Catalan Religious Map" project classified them in 16 different groups: Adventist Churches, Baha'i Faith, Brahma Kumaris, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jehovah's Witnesses, Judaism, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Oriental Churches, Protestant Churches, Sikhism, Spiritism, Taoism, other Christians, and Others[7] (see Graph 10.1).

The most salient fact with regards to the diversification of minority faiths in the city is the outstanding presence of Protestant churches, which represent more than 55% of the 281 minority congregations, followed by Buddhist and Islamic congregations. The proliferation of Protestant, and particularly Pentecostal, churches is not surprising but rather consistent with the context of its global expansion (Lewis 2004). The propagation of these churches, often completely independent and not linked to any higher organizational structure, is partly the result of the arrival of



Graph 10.1 Congregations of religious minorities in Barcelona (2014)

[7] All the graphs in this chapter, except Graph 10.2, contain only the data for the places of worship that remained open in 2014. In other words, "dead" congregations have been erased from the dataset.

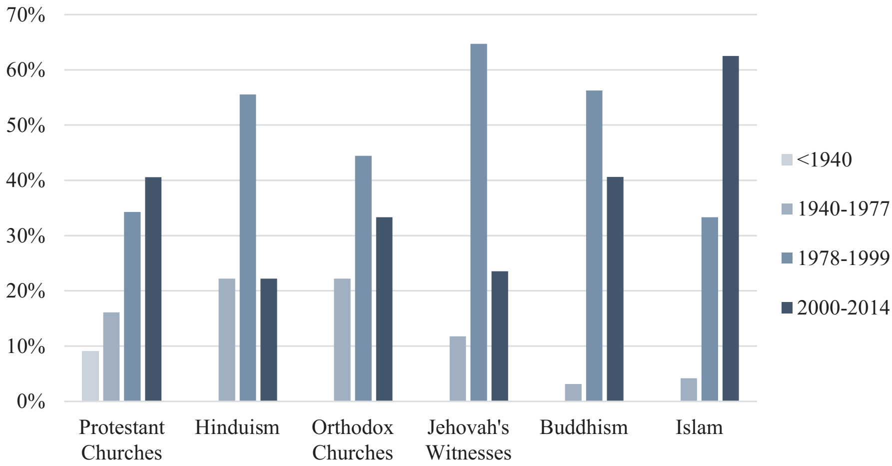
what some have called "pastorpreneurs", a new mode of religious leadership whose legitimacy does not depend upon denominational traditions (Klaver 2015). Originally mostly from Latin American and African countries, these pastors act "on the basis of personal calling and an endowment with special gifts from the Holy Spirit" (Klaver 2015, 150). Interestingly, despite this unprecedented growth of the Protestant churches in Spain, they have remained for the most part out of public scrutiny. This invisibility enjoyed by some religious minorities, such as the Protestant churches, which provides them with the opportunity of being perceived as unproblematic, contrasts with the "supra-visibility" of others, such as Islam, which places them at the center of social and political control (Griera and Clot 2014). This points to the centrality of issues related to visibility and invisibility (Knott 2014) and how they play out in the (de-)legitimation and portrayal of some religious groups as "foreign religions".

Many of these minority religions can be considered "religious 'newcomers'" (Henkel 2014, 136) since they were almost absent from the territory until very recently. They basically arrived with the different waves of immigration to Spain. This is specially the case of Islam, Sikhism and most of the Pentecostal/Charismatic and Oriental churches. Most of their places of worship in Barcelona opened their doors after the 1990s. Yet, religious diversity is not a new phenomenon. In the case of Barcelona, there are some religious minorities that have had a longer presence in the city. For example, some Protestant churches, founded in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and some Jewish, Hinduist, Buddhist and Jehovah's Witnesses' congregations, among others, originated before the turning of Spain into a country of immigration in the late twentieth century (Martínez-Ariño et al. 2011).

Data on the languages used in religious services and the geographical regions of origin of most of the congregations' membership also shows the great diversity of the religious landscape in Barcelona. I classify the congregations in three groups. First, there are some religions, such as Islam, Sikhism and the Oriental Churches (Orthodoxy) that can be called "immigrant religions" (Levitt 2003, 855). Their congregations are mostly formed by people born outside of Spain and the majoritarian languages of religious services are other than Spanish/Catalan, namely Arabic, Hausa, Wolof, Urdu, Punjabi, Greek, Romanian, and Ukrainian. Second, other faiths in Barcelona, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Taoism, Hinduism and Buddhism, can be considered "imported religions", since their congregations are mainly (but not exclusively) formed by Spaniards and the languages used are mainly Spanish and Catalan. Finally, there are other minority religions whose urban congregations gather much more diverse populations. This is the case of the Protestant churches, with approximately one third of the congregations formed chiefly by people originally from South America, another one third attended mostly by Spaniards and the rest by people from different regions like Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and other European countries. In addition, the languages used in the Protestant churches are multiple: while Spanish is majoritarian, other languages such as Catalan, English, German, Korean, Romanian, Russian, Chinese, and Tagalog are represented.

10.3.2 *Not Just Diversity, But Diversification: An Ongoing Process*

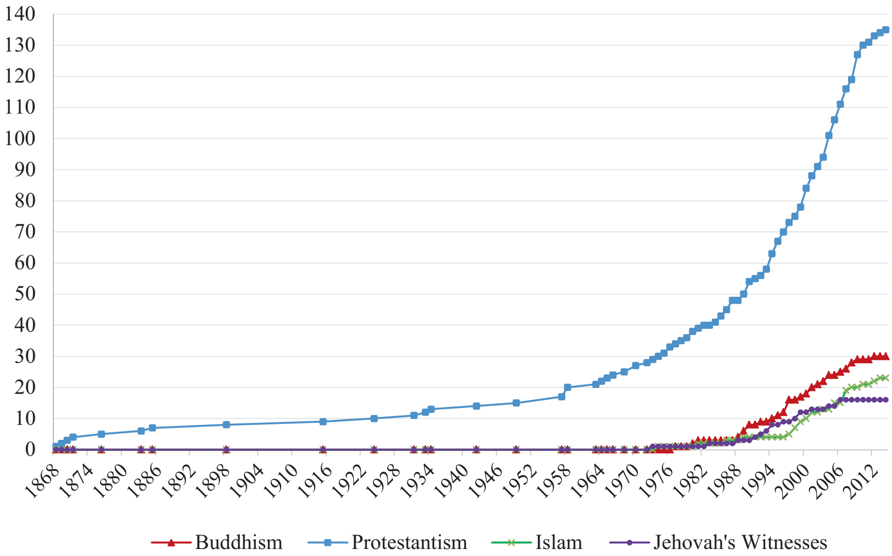
The data presented so far have shown the current picture of the minorities' congregations in Barcelona. Diversity becomes evident not only in the number of different faiths represented, but also in the variety of languages used for worshiping and the countries of origin of the members of these congregations. Yet, since the religious field is in constant change, it is interesting to not only look at the fixed picture but also trace the temporal evolution. Graph 10.2 shows the distribution of the congregations of six selected traditions –Protestantism, Hinduism, Orthodox Churches, Jehovah's Witnesses, Buddhism, and Islam– according to the year in which they were founded. It becomes evident that most of them have opened their doors since the democratization of the country, and especially since the late nineties, following migration flows arriving to Barcelona from different regions of the world. It is interesting to note that in all six cases, more than 70% of the congregations were founded in the period between 1978 and 2014, and in the case of Islam over 60% between 2000 and 2014. The graph shows clearly that most congregations of the religious minorities are young organizations, corresponding with the opening of Spain as an immigration country. However, the data also demonstrate that religious diversity is not entirely linked to recent arrivals. Congregations from various religious minorities, and particularly of the Protestant churches, were already present in the city long before.



Graph 10.2 Congregations according to year of foundation and religious tradition in Barcelona (1868–2014)[8]

[8] It is important to note that, in this graph, the figures vary slightly from those shown in Graph 10.1. This is so because this second graph excludes congregations whose foundation year is unknown to us, but includes those that had already closed in 2014.

Yet, despite this historical presence, it is evident that the growth in the number of minority congregations has taken place mostly in recent years. It is in the last two decades that we witness an explosion of the number of new places of worship, particularly those of the Protestant churches. Graph 10.3 shows the growth of the total number of congregations, in this case of four selected traditions: Protestantism, Buddhism, Islam and Jehovah's Witnesses. While all of them grow fast from the late nineties, the most salient fact is the exponential expansion of the Protestant congregations that double their presence in the last two decades. More than half of the Protestant churches were founded in the last 25 years, and one third of them since the year 2000. Often, the latter are formed by people from countries in Latin America and South-Saharan Africa. It remains open whether this trend towards the opening of minority congregations will remain unchanged in the future or the figures for the number of places of worship will tend to stagnate, following the return of migrants to their home countries because of the economic crisis (Parella and Petroff 2013).



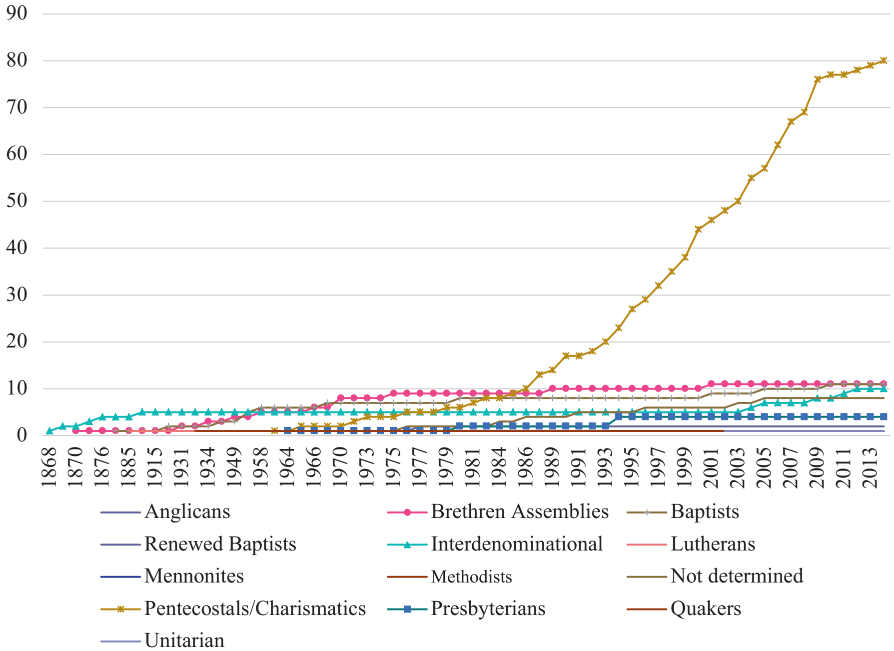
Graph 10.3 Evolution in the number of selected religious minorities' congregations in Barcelona (1868–2014)[9]

[9] It is important to note that in Graph 10.3, the figures vary slightly from those in Graph 10.1, because Graph 10.3 excludes 26 congregations whose foundation date is unknown to us.

10.3.3 *Internal Diversification of Well-Established Traditions*

Another aspect that Beckford mentions as characteristic of religious diversity is the internal diversification of previously quite uniform faiths. In other words, religious diversification implies not only the increase in the number of different faiths present in a specific territory, but also the internal transformation of already existing groups, be it doctrinally, organizationally or otherwise. In Barcelona, the internal changes have gone hand in hand with the arrival of immigrants. This is clearly the case for the Protestant churches. Not only have new congregations proliferated enormously in the last two decades but their profiles have diversified significantly. Graph 10.4 shows the evolution of the total number of places of worship of the Protestant churches in Barcelona according to their doctrinal profile.

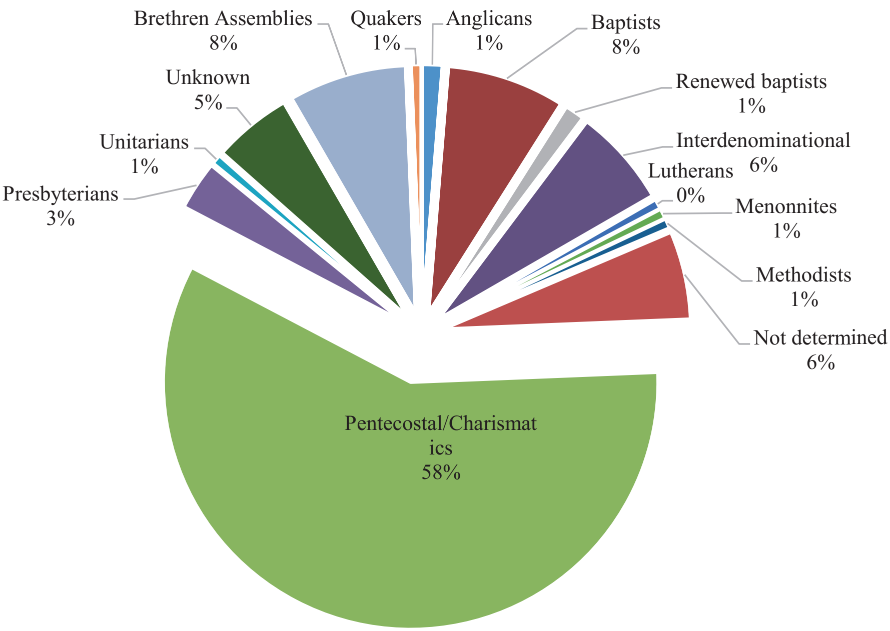
The chart shows the radical transformation of the doctrinal profile of Protestantism in the city of Barcelona, particularly since the beginning of the 1990s. While in the last years of the nineteenth century, the existing churches were basically traditional European and North American Protestant denominations, such as Anglican, Brethren Assemblies, Lutherans, Interdenominational, Methodists and Baptists, from the late 1980s onward Pentecostal/Charismatic churches gained prominence. Such exponential growth has only happened among Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, showing the trend observed worldwide of the growth of Pentecostalism (Cox 2001;



Graph 10.4 Evolution of the total number of places of worship of the Protestant churches in Barcelona according to their doctrinal profile (1868–2014)

Martin 2002). As Graph 10.5 shows, 58% of the Evangelical/Protestant congregations in the city of Barcelona in 2014 were Pentecostal/Charismatic, far from the next more numerous groups, the Brethren Assemblies and Baptists, each of which represents only 8%. Burchardt and Becci (2013, 7) refer to this as the consequence of "reverse missions", in which pastors from the Global South attempt to "re-Christianize disenchanted European cities". In the case of Barcelona, more than 50% of the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches are mainly attended by people coming from regions in the "Global South", namely Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. Another 12% of all the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches gathers people from many nationalities, many of which also come from the abovementioned regions. Moreover, we know through our observations in the congregations that many of the Pentecostal pastors also come from those regions, thus attesting to this missionary trend.

In her detailed analysis of the transformations of Protestantism in Barcelona, Griera (2013) points to three elements explaining the boost in Pentecostalism. First, Catalan Gypsies have since the 1960s undergone a process of "pentecostalization" that has contributed to the proliferation of Pentecostal churches in the city (in 2014, 14 Pentecostal churches in Barcelona were *Filadelfia* Evangelical Churches). Second, the spread of Pentecostal churches is also linked to the arrival of migrants from the south who have developed a missionary task creating new independent churches or opening churches belonging to transnational branches. Finally, tradi-



Graph 10.5 Distribution of the Protestant Churches in Barcelona according to their doctrinal profile (2014)

tional Pentecostal churches led by Spanish/Catalan pastors have re-structured to adapt to the arrival of newcomers.

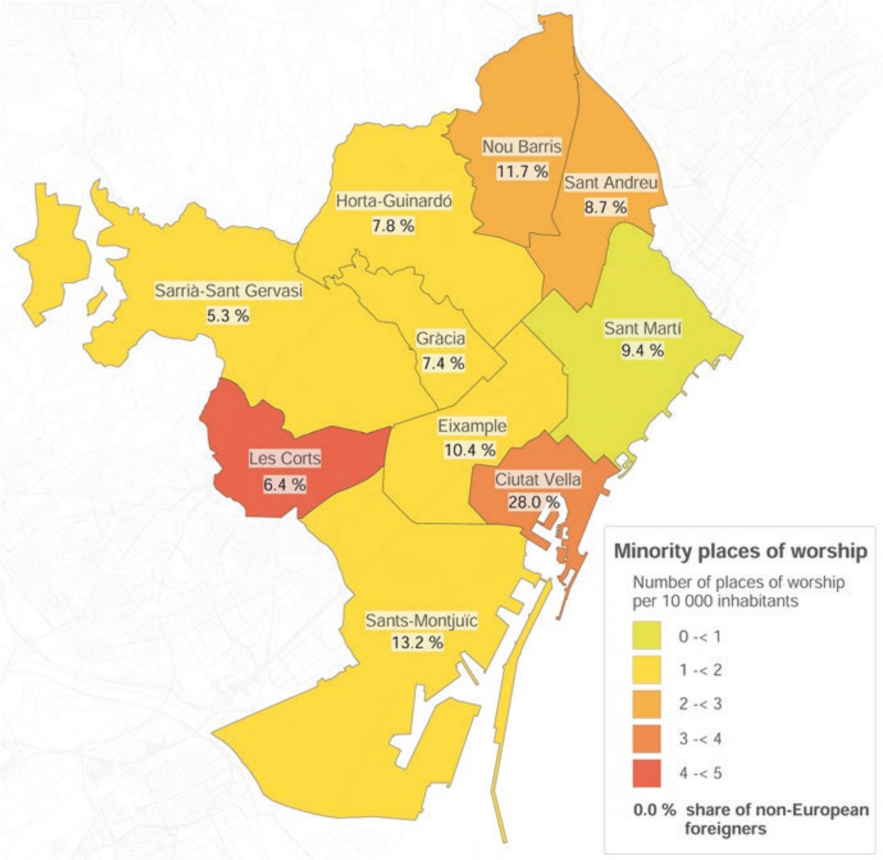
This internal diversification has also taken place, but to a lesser extent, among other religious minorities. In the case of Islam, the growth in the migration flows from various regions (such as Pakistan and Sub-Saharan Africa) has resulted in a diversification of congregations. Beyond the classic doctrinal differences between Sunnis and Shia Muslims, some Sufi congregations, Islamic transnational organizations and schools of thought have emerged (García-Romeral 2013). Judaism has also gone through an internal diversification of the doctrinal profile. The ideological differences between different groups of Jewish families, mainly those with a Moroccan background and the more recent immigrants from Argentina and Uruguay, derived into the creation of new congregations. These institutional developments resulted from the incapacity to conjugate in one community all the different forms of observing and living Judaism. While until the early nineties only traditional/orthodox Judaism was present institutionally in Barcelona, nowadays there are also two Reform Jewish communities and one Chabad Lubavitch congregation (Martínez-Ariño 2012). While discrepancies remain a constant among them, they increasingly organize joint secular activities.

10.3.4 The Different Urban Religious Geographies

The spatial regimes of urban religions are attracting growing scholarly attention in the last years (Becci et al. 2013; Vásquez and Knott 2014), in line with what Knott (2010, 29) calls "the spatial turn in the study of religion". In this section, I focus on the spatial distribution of religious minorities in Barcelona.

Unlike traditional churches, whose spatial presence in European cities is remarkable, newly arrived religious groups must carve out their own places of worship in the urban fabric. Data on the density of places of worship and the proportion of non-European foreigners across the city's districts displayed on the map below allow us to examine these new religious geographies (Map 10.1).

The places of worship of the religious minorities are spread across all districts of the city of Barcelona. The Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses are the most "transversal" groups, with congregations in every single district. However, the location of religious congregations in Barcelona is not random and even if it does not reflect a clear-cut stratification, it does mirror to some extent the spatial distribution of immigrants. As the map shows, the district of Ciutat Vella, the most diverse part of the city with 28% of foreign inhabitants, has the second highest density of minority places of worship. It is home to 6,2% of the total population of the city, but hosts 11,4% of the minority congregations. Thirty-five percent of the Muslim congregations and the sole *Gurdwara* are placed in this district, where 34% of the Pakistanis and 21% of the Moroccans of the city live (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2014). Often these are congregations placed in basements and small commercial spaces. Other districts where both the presence of Islamic congregations and the proportion of



Map 10.1 Density of minorities' places of worship and proportion of non-European foreigners (Barcelona districts, 2014)

immigrants are significant, such as Sant Martí, Sant Andreu and Nou Barris, reinforce the idea of the existence of "immigrant religions". Moreover, even if Protestant churches are diverse and widely spread, their presence in those working-class districts with a higher proportion of people originally from South America, such as Nou Barris, Sants-Monjuïc, Sant Martí and Horta-Guinardó, points in the same direction. For example, 70% of the places of worship in the district of Nou Barris are Protestant churches attended in high proportions by people from Ecuador, Bolivia, Honduras, Colombia, Argentina and Peru who live in this part of the city.

As we have seen, religious geographies in Barcelona overlap to an extent with migration/ethnic geographies. There is a "spatial interaction between migration and religion" (Vásquez and Knott 2014, 325), in the sense that migration shapes the religious geographies of the city. However, religious diversity is not just the result of migration, which is the case of what I have called "imported religions". In Barcelona, religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Baha'i Faith are remarkably present in the upper-middle class district of Les Corts, where immigration rates are low. This is evidence that not only immigration but also socioeconomic factors account for the spatial distribution of religious minorities' congregations.

10.4 The Impact of the Institutional and Legal Frameworks

The socio-demographic transformations that the population of Barcelona has undergone in the last two decades have had profound consequences for the religious diversification of the city. However, institutional and legal factors have also played a crucial role in the diversification of the city's institutional religious field. Two main institutional arrangements have influenced the current configuration of the religious landscape in Barcelona: the creation of the *Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia* and the passing of the Catalan law on places of worship.

First, in 2004 the General Direction of Religious Affairs of the Spanish Ministry of Justice founded the *Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia*, a publicly funded foundation the aims of which are to promote religious freedom via cooperating with religious minorities, and to promote research and debate and to implement public policies concerning religious freedom and freedom of conscience. In 2005, the foundation set out two new yearly funding schemes for the three religious minorities with a cooperation agreement with the Spanish state, namely the Protestant, Jewish and Islamic groups. The aim of the first funding scheme was to support the national federations of these three minorities. The second line of credit was launched to fund cultural, educational and social inclusion projects run by Protestant, Jewish and Islamic local congregations as well as the costs of improving and maintaining their infrastructures and equipment. The provision of funding for the congregations of these three religious minorities was dependent upon official registration. This requirement had a clear impact on the institutionalization of already existing congregations. Since 2005, 58 minority congregations in the city of Barcelona have registered in the Spanish Register of Religious Entities. Of those, 65% were founded before 2004 and some in the 1960s and 1970s, but without being registered. This shows the repercussion that such a policy had in the decision to formalize the status of a considerable number of local congregations. Although the financial crisis dramatically reduced the total amount granted to local congregations from 2.7 million EUR in 2008 to 211,205 EUR in 2016 (Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia 2016), congregations have since been allowed to apply for a more generous allocation of resources at first and rather modest amounts more recently. This has ultimately provided many of them with the means to renovate their facilities and expand the range of activities and services they can offer to their members.

Second, the regulations and practices of issuing building permits as well as the security and hygiene standards influence the opening and closing of new places of worship. To regulate and standardize the spatial regimes of religion and the material conditions of the places of worship, Catalonia passed a law on places of worship in 2009. The law regulates the provision of soil for the construction of places of worship, the issuing of permits and the minimal security, hygiene and technical conditions that those places must fulfil. Even if systematic data of its immediate impact are not available, informal conversations with city officials already point to the potentially far-reaching consequences of such a law for the religious cartographies of the city. On the one hand, local congregations that do not fulfil the legal standards can lose their permission to operate if they do not adapt to the regulations. On the other hand, the law makes it more difficult for new congregations to establish new places of worship because it requires greater initial financial investments to adjust the premises to the new security and hygiene requirements. These elements – together with the pressure in the prices of the real estate market, and despite the funds provided by the city administration for the rebuilding works– put small and rather humble congregations under pressure to disappear or band together with others, while older and better-off congregations gain in security and become more established. Although the long-term effects of such regulation in the religious landscape of the city are yet to come, one may expect that this will slow down the rhythm of the expansion of new congregations experienced in previous years.

10.5 Conclusions

Barcelona, like other European cities, has undergone substantial transformations that have made the presence and visibility of religious minorities more evident. Coming back to Beckford's operationalization of religious diversity, I can conclude that the religious field in the city of Barcelona has gone through an intensive process of diversification. As the figures shown in this chapter have demonstrated, there has been a significant increase in the number of different religious groups, both Christian and non-Christian. Broadly but not exclusively, this is the result of the arrival of immigrants from all over the world. Congregations belonging to faiths other than the "World Religions", and often so-called "spirituality", have also proliferated rapidly. Furthermore, detailed information on the minority congregations in Barcelona reveals the extreme internal diversification that some faiths have gone through in terms of doctrinal profile, countries of origin and languages used, particularly the Protestant churches. Finally, all these developments are evidence of the process of de-monopolization that characterizes the religious situation in Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain more generally. Religious minorities are here to stay.

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Chapter 11
Mainline Congregations in West Germany: Quantitative and Qualitative Forms of Decline

Jens Schlamelcher

Abstract Since the 1970s, mainline congregations face a steady loss of membership in Western Germany, which in the long run lead to a financial crisis forcing the churches on the regional and local levels to austerity programs. One of the measures is a wave of fusions of local congregations, including the give-up and the disposition of church and community buildings. This article will in a first part highlight these developments in its quantitative dimensions. In the main part, the thesis will be expanded that mainline congregations do not only face a process of decline, but also one of qualitative transformations. Describing the social 'Gestalt' of former congregations as a hybrid of 'community' and 'organization', the later changes show a clear balance shift towards the latter. Less members – less money – less community – more organization seems to be the chain of effects.

Keywords Parish · Social Gestalt · Social form · Organization · Community · Secularization

In recent decades, the development of mainline congregations in western Germany shows a clear pattern of decline – in membership, in the number of priests and pastors, and in the number of local congregations. As this chapter will argue, the fact that parishes are shrinking, disappearing, merging and/or consolidating is not the whole story of what has been occurring. My own qualitative analysis (Schlamelcher 2013a, 2018) of mainline congregations located in the Ruhr area shows that these quantitative changes are accompanied by a silent process of qualitative transformation affecting their *social Gestalt*. This qualitative change will be the focus of this chapter. The first part will briefly present some numbers on established Protestant regional churches ('*Landeskirchen*') and Catholic dioceses in the west German federal state of North-Rhine Westphalia. Second, the theoretical concept of social forms/social *Gestalt* will be introduced to grasp the observed qualitative changes in

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_11

their local parishes. These will then be addressed in part three.[1] In the conclusion, I will reflect on the correspondences and the mutual interdependencies between quantitative and qualitative changes. This paper will thus contribute to the empirical study of secularization in central Europe. Unlike most studies, which address either the macro-level (by showing the emancipation of other social realms from religion) or the micro-level on society (by focusing on the individualization of religiosity), this paper addresses secularization on the meso-level of society and thus investigates the quantitative and qualitative transformations on the level of congregations.

11.1 West German Mainline Churches in the Process of Decline

Looking at some statistical numbers, the Catholic and Protestant Church in Germany are exposed to a *longue durée* of steady decline, fitting neatly into the European metanarrative of 'secularization'.[2] This is most clearly demonstrated by their membership base. While in around 1900, approximately 98% of the population in west Germany was either Protestant or Catholic, this only holds true for less than 70% of the west German population in the twenty-first century. This change is partly due to immigration and the establishment of Islam in Germany but is mostly due to losses in membership in the German mainline churches.

Since the late 1960s, the numbers of people who formally resigned their church membership far out-weighed those who entered or re-entered the church. This also led to a great increase in the percentage of people without any religious affiliation (Table 11.1).

Table 11.1 Religious affiliation in Germany

Year	Proportion of Catholic members in the west German population (in %, rounded)	Proportion of protestant members in the west German population	Proportion of people without religious affiliation
1950	46	52	
1960	46	48	
1970	45	48	4
1980	43	42	
1990	35	37	22
2000	32	32	ca.30
2010	30	29	34

Data extracted from Fowid 2012. Religionszugehörigkeit, Deutschland Bevölkerung 1970–2011. http://fowid.de/fileadmin/datenarchiv/Religionszugehoerigkeit/Religionszugehoerigkeit_Bevoelkerung_1970_2011.pdf

[1] Aspects of parts two and three of this chapter consist of a revision of ideas I already published in another article. See Schlamelcher (2013b, mainly pp. 56–61).

[2] See for an overall overview on secularization in Germany, Pollack (2009).

Table 11.2 Worship attendance in ratio to formal church membership

Year	Worship attendance Catholic Church, west Germany, in ratio to membership[a]	Worship attendance Protestant Church, west Germany, in ratio to membership[b]
1950	50.41	
1960	46.12	
1970	37.36	
1980	29.08	4.4
1990	21.91	4.1
2000	16.49	4.0
2010	13.04	3.7

[a]Data from Fowid (2010, 3)
[b]Data were provided by the Statistische Amt der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland. See also Schlamelcher (2015, 246–249)

Both formal membership and participation rates have decreased (Table 11.2).

The numbers on worship attendance are even more impressive when considering that the membership base has since continued to decrease. This means that the absolute number of worship attendance has declined even more dramatically.

In contrast to this trend of declining membership and participation that originated in the late 1960s, the decline in the number of mainline congregations is a more recent phenomenon. Western Germany experienced a long period of growth in the number of parishes starting from the 1870s. After World War TWO, church planting was intensified. It is said (but not proven) that more churches were built between 1945 and 1965 than in the previous thousand years. In the following decades, the number of parishes remained stable until the end of the century. From about the year 2000, this began to change, more dramatically in some dioceses and state churches than in others. For example, whereas the Protestant Church in Westphalia (3.6 million members in 1973; 2.4 million members in 2015) included 655 congregations in the year 2000, it declined to 514 in 2014, a loss of 22% in only 15 years (see EKvW 2015). The diocesan administration of Essen decided on a major process of reform in which the former 270 parishes were combined into only 43 great parishes; many of the formerly existing parishes exist today as 'filial churches', but 96 churches – and thus former congregations (more than 30%) – were closed.[3] Our own research on religious congregations in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (17.4 million inhabitants, the federal state with the largest population in Germany) shows this pattern of decline. In the year 2005, we found a total number of 2031 Roman Catholic and 1166 mainline Protestant congregations (see Hero et al. 2008). In a small re-study in 2015, we found that about 8% of the former Catholic congregations had closed, while 32% merged into larger congregations. The number of mainline Protestant congregations was 11% less than 10 years earlier. Additionally, 11% of the mainline Protestant congregations merged during that period.

[3] See https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bistum_Essen#Zentrale_Neuausrichtung_des_Bistums_Essen

The quantitative decline of mainline congregations could be viewed as the result of secularization. However, the relation between the loss of membership and the reduction of congregations is mediated by economic factors. To understand what is happening within the mainline churches and their single congregations, it is important to take their financial situation into account. Their funding is mainly based on the church tax system (*Kirchensteuer*); church members pay an amount that is equivalent to nine per cent of their income tax to the church. This church tax system, established shortly after the Second World War, has ensured the comparable wealth of the Protestant as well as the Catholic Church in Germany compared with other countries. It ensured a growing income during the so-called 'golden years of capitalism', occurring in Germany well into the 1980s. However, this financial structure is also the reason for the present crisis in the two mainline churches. Since the early 1990s, it is now in a state of steady decline. All the dioceses, Protestant state churches and local church authorities that we interviewed concur that the most serious problem facing the churches and congregations is financial austerity. This is caused by various factors such as demographic changes, tax reforms by the German government, and of course the long-term effects of members exiting. Hence, the purchasing power of the churches has declined by about one third in the last 20 years, meaning that, if in 1995 a parish could spend 100 EUR, today it can spend no more than 67 EUR. The loss of purchasing power is likely to increase in the years and decades to come. Conservative estimates are that the Protestant Church in Germany will lose about one third of its current membership by the year 2030 and lose about one half of its purchasing power measured against the year 2005 (EKD 2006). Thus, the reduction of congregations seems to be a process that is very likely to continue in future decades.

11.2 Theoretical Considerations: Social Forms and Social *Gestalt*

The decline in numbers is not the only story to tell about Catholic and Protestant congregations in west Germany. It is accompanied by a change of their social constitution or what I will call their "social *Gestalt*". Before presenting further empirical insights, I will briefly outline this concept that has been developed by several authors addressing the meso-level of society (see, for example, Wiesenthal 2005; Krech et al. 2013) and clarified by my own analytical distinction between social form and social Gestalt (Schlamelcher, 2018).

Earlier investigations addressing the social constitution of religion have mostly drawn on the distinction of church and sect as introduced by Max Weber (1986) and Ernst Troeltsch (1969, 1994). Another possibility that has been applied more recently is to consider not only the analytical distinction of different social forms such as community, market relations and organization, but also events or social movement.[4] These social forms structure social interaction and thus mediate

[4] See Krech et al. (2013) for a deeper elaboration into social forms.

between the micro-level (interactions) and the macro-level of society. Social interactions look very different for example in either:

– a market-like customer-client relationship;
– an organization based on hierarchical and impersonal social relations;
– or within communities with longstanding personal ties between members.

Each of these may be conceived as a specific *social form* that together constitute what we may refer to as the *meso-level* of society. Let me briefly describe these three social forms (leaving open the question of how many more social forms are analytically distinguishable),[5] because they are especially important for the empirical investigation of the social change within German mainline congregations[6]:

- The *Community* is the oldest social form and seems to operate even without language. It also exists among animals and can include children in a prelingual age. Drawing on the Weberian distinction between personal and impersonal relationships, communities integrate individuals as persons. However, they can only include a limited number of individuals and distinguish clearly between members and non-members.[7] They demand high degrees of commitment, and they tend to place constraints on individual decision-making. The main principle of exchange is general reciprocity; that means the giving and taking also serves to uphold personal relationships. In contrast to other social forms, communities seem to be more admirable and are thus subject to socially romantic accounts on the degeneration of society due to the increase of impersonal social relations,[8] but let us bear in mind that integration or dis-integration into a community can be the source of both individual and social suffering.
- In contrast, *market relations* are impersonal in that they establish short-term interactions aiming to achieve an exchange between individuals. While communities are based on the principle of value, market relations are dominated by the value of utility. Individuals will establish this social interaction only if they are convinced that the good obtained in the exchange will serve their individual interests.[9] Market relations do not necessarily include, but are facilitated by, the use of the general communication medium of money.
- Organizations are a modern development in the history of social forms. In the late eighteenth century, they replaced the premodern social form of patrimonial relations (between liege lord and vassal, master craftsman and journeyman and so on). Organizations are social units that integrate individuals – as do markets –

[5] Other authors have included further social forms, such as networks (Powell 1990), movements (Rucht and Neidhardt 2007), or events (Gebhardt et al. 2000).

[6] For a further analytical distinction between community and organization, see Tyrell (1983). Wiesenthal (2005) includes market relations as a different social form.

[7] This leaves open the aspect of so-called ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson 1983). But even these imagined communities do not seem to be all-inclusive; they tend to be constructed against an alienated ‘other’.

[8] The sociological reflection starts with Ferdinant Tönnies ([1887] 2005).

[9] For a further elaboration of market relations as a distinctive form of exchange, see Sahlins (1974).

> in an impersonal way. They do this by abstracting and extracting one aspect of the individual – his manpower – which presupposes an analytical distinction between both, a phenomenon that is very peculiar to modernity. Furthermore, organizations are constructed upon the principle of instrumental reason. They virtually buy labor power to pursue certain rational goals (such as the maximization of profit). This results in the heavy dependency of organizations on money. It is money that keeps the operations of the organizations, based on labor power, going. However, the exclusion of the 'person' (labor power in, person out), is only achievable by the distinction person/labor power. This, however, is only an analytical distinction, while in real life the two cannot be separated. Thus, organizations are populated by what they exclude – namely persons, who inhabit organizations as 'parasites'. This explains why many observers, mainly in neo-institutionalism (Meyer and Rowan 1977) speak of 'organizational myths'. As guided by instrumental reason, organizations are comparable to machines but are inhabited by parasites called 'persons', who seem also to use their positions within the organization for their very individual interests.

Let us bear mind that social forms are analytical abstractions. In contrast to these, I will refer to a concrete social unit by the term "social Gestalt." The social Gestalt of any social unit, be it a school, a company, or a local religious congregation, is most likely a mixture of these social forms – which, however, remain empirically distinguishable. An investigation can then show how the distinctive functional logic of each social form embedded in the Gestalt constrains its structure and dynamics.

11.3 The Social Gestalt of German Mainline Congregations in Modern Times

In the recent discussion about the social form of congregations, some observers tended to describe them as organizations (see, for example, Chaves 1993; Demerath et al. 1998). This, however, makes it impossible to see the unique traits of an organization against other social forms and their complex involvement in what I refer to as a concrete social Gestalt. In contrast, others have applied the concept of community (e.g. Ammerman 1997). Drawing on the theoretical conception outlined above, my own empirical data seem to suggest that German mainline congregations include – analytically distinguishable – aspects of both community and organization. Their social Gestalt may best be understood as a hybrid of these two distinctive social forms. The historical roots of the current social form[10] of German mainline parishes go back to the late nineteenth century, when a process of bureaucratization took place that has continued well into our time (Ebertz 1987; Damberg and Hellemans 2010). At the same time, however, Protestant Church boards, now mod-

[10] For an elaboration of the social Gestalt of the ancient and medieval church, see Schlamelcher (2013a, 63–98).

ernized bureaucracies, declared ‘community’ to be the core achievement of their organizational program to counter trends of secularization and the weakening social and political influence. The *Gemeindereformbewegung* (parish reform movement), originating in the late 1890s and copied by the Catholic Church by the late 1960s and 1970s, claimed that parishes should be transformed into ‘animated communities’ (Reeken 1999). Many efforts were made to put this community program into practice. First, the average size of the parishes was reduced by establishing new ones to ensure that the priest and all the members of the parish would know each other personally. Second, parish councils were established, based on a democratic procedure that gave every member of the parish the opportunity to take part in decision-making. Third, community halls were built in which the various functional assemblies of the church members could take place. Fourth, many volunteering groups were organized within the congregations, such as women’s health groups, handicraft groups, etc. The kindergarten and confirmation groups of the congregation would guarantee that the children and youth grew up within its community.

The success of this organizational program was partial at best. Indeed, clusters of local communities have evolved, but only a few people from each locality have become involved (Daiber 2008, 57–51). Instead of reaching all official members, the overall effect was to widen the gap between those who were part of the core community within the congregation and those who were not. The program inevitably resulted in a logical paradox: Communities, as outlined above, are closed social systems which include only a limited number of members; furthermore, they construct a boundary between those who are in and those who are out. Thus, the success of the parish reform movement was also the reason for its failure, when measured against its claim to re-establish a people’s church. Unintentionally, it widened the gap between the core members and the distant, formal members of a congregation.

Furthermore, the strengthening of communal traits was accompanied by the establishment of organizational traits. Bureaucratization not only enforced increasing administrative demands, but also expanded because of democratic principles requiring formal offices (full-time and/or volunteer) and more board meetings. In addition, more full-time personnel were employed in the local congregations. Mainly from the 1960s to the late 1980s, when the process of membership decline had already begun, the churches, including their local congregations, increased their members of staff.[11] This was possible due to increasing financial income in the ‘golden age of capitalism’. The full-time employment of staff was also an idea to counter institutional decay. Church employees should serve as belief and commitment multipliers to motivate their fellows.[12] Thus, despite the communalization program, since the 1960s the balance between the communal and organizational traits of the parishes has shifted toward the latter.

[11] For statistical numbers up to the year 2004, see Lührs (2006).

[12] See Bätz (1999) for an analysis of the failure of this strategy.

11.4 The Silent Transformation of the Social Gestalt of German Mainline Congregations Since the 1990s

Since the early 1990s, the congregations have been struck by a loss of income, as outlined above. Thus, the organizational upgrade and thus the formation of the social Gestalt of mainline congregations in Germany as community-organizational hybrids has come to a halt. Congregations have now been forced into long-term austerity programs, which include reduced staff and less construction, thus leading to the trend to fuse congregations. But the changes go deeper. As will be shown, it is this long-term change in the availability of money (as the fuel of any organization) that initiates a dynamic affecting their social Gestalt.

How precisely does financial austerity affect the social form of the parish? At first glance, of course, the organizational traits of the congregation are affected. It is the quantity of money that determines the quantity of an organization. My research results based on fieldwork and interviews in both Catholic and Protestant congregations[13] show, however, that the congregations have managed to sustain their organizational functionality by economizing and downsizing. Counterintuitively, it is the parish-as-community that is heavily affected by the eroding impact of these organizational adaptations. This is because the organization tends to withdraw many of the resources it formerly provided to establish and sustain the parish community. Thus, the surprising effect is that even the organizational cutback tends to strengthen the congregation-as-organization and to weaken the congregation-as-community.

This process entails an aspect that may best be articulated in the vocabulary of milieu and lifestyle studies.[14] Most of these studies argue that the church suffers from milieu constriction; the church would only attract some of the elderly milieus and partly reach the conservative portions of the middle class. Thus, they tend to conclude that the church should make efforts to ‘reach’ other milieus, as well. However, my data show that what is happening is a distancing of the church-and-parish-as-organization from its own nucleus milieus, which populate the parishes-as-community: a virtual marginalization of the core members of the parish communities.

This trend, the weakening of the parish-as-community and the marginalization of the ‘faithful’ of the church, is caused by the relatively few changes happening in organizations to adapt to shrinking financial means. Look at the following adaptive measures and how they affect the social Gestalt:

1. *Administration:* Administrative work within the congregations had formerly been conducted by the parish secretary in the parish office. These offices and

[13] In a student research project, we conducted interviews and fieldwork in six Catholic and six Protestant local congregations. The interpretations of the interviews and scrutinized documents are based on a sequence analysis according to the research method of objective hermeneutics (see Oevermann et al. 1979).

[14] Among others, see Medien-Dienstleistungs GmbH (2005), Schulz (2006), and Sellmann and Wolanski (2013).

their staff, however, also had a non-organizational function: they served as platforms for personal interaction. In the church parlance, they were often referred to as a 'coffee hangout'. In this way, the parish office had functioned as a hinge between the parish-as-organization and the parish-as-community. Now, most parishes have closed their offices; administrative work is now handed over to an autonomous organization that will also cover the basic administrative needs of other congregations. Individual parishes will pay for this service, and since in recent years many specialized organizations that provide administrative services have evolved, the parishes can now choose among suppliers who compete for the cheapest price. Thus, a process of internal marketization or a market-like customer-client relationship has taken place; this sustains the organizational functionality of the administration but results in abolishing the function of the parish office as a resource for interaction and community.

2. *Health and Social Care:* A similar process of marketization, or market-like relationship, has taken place in the healthcare services of the parish. Healthcare had formerly been conducted by the district nurse together with volunteers. The nurse, salaried by the congregation, had a great deal of autonomy in her work and would also use her working time for interaction with people in need who would otherwise be suffering from loneliness. In recent years, the position of the district nurse has been displaced and healthcare services have been outsourced to the local arm of the Protestant diaconal service (*Diakonisches Werk)* or the Catholic social work of *Caritas*. These organizations are financed by the German nursing insurance system. Hence, they receive a fixed amount of money for every patient that they meet and treat as a 'customer'. Additional time for interaction is thus not rewarded; to keep a balanced budget, the highest number of customers or 'cases' must be treated in the fewest number of working hours. Furthermore, the district nurse was often supported by parish volunteers. However, since the *Diakonische Werk* took over the care of people in need, these volunteers have disappeared.
3. *Mergers:* Many congregations tend to merge or strengthen their collaboration with neighboring parishes. This process most often entails abandoning some of their buildings, such as churches or community halls. These buildings were formerly the focal point of personal interactions, meetings and joint activities of the community. Many of the mostly elderly members of the core communities were deeply identified with these buildings and with 'their' congregations. Most often, the abandonment of these buildings leads to splits in the core communities. The unintentional effect of merging two or more congregations is the production of winners and losers. The winners are the parish communities whose buildings will be maintained. Often, money is invested to renovate the sustained buildings. The losers are ripped away from 'their' church and community hall; often, they do not feel 'at home' in the buildings they attribute to the 'other' congregation. The integration of communities in the context of mergers is likely to fail, which leads to diminishing degrees of participation among the losers. By merging, the congregations are thus likely to lose some of their most committed members.

4. *Congregational Decision-making:* Fusions of congregations also include another aspect: Parish decisions are enacted by the authority of the Parochial Church Council, a democratic instrument consisting of the priest and often other parish employees but predominantly volunteers called 'presbyters'. Any adult parish member may be voted onto this committee. Thus, the fusion of two or more parishes also leads to a fusion of their Parochial Church Councils. The newly established committee, however, most often has the same number of presbyters as each former one. This decreases the ratio of presbyters to parish members; thus, fewer people than previously can take an active part in parish decision-making.
5. *Communion/Confirmation:* Parishes now tend to fuse their confirmation classes or run them cooperatively. This is often celebrated as a best-practice cooperation project among congregations. However, the unintended effect is that young people are no longer socialized into 'their' congregation. Earlier, when the parishes conducted their confirmation classes individually, this institution would also serve as an instrument of socialization, not only for the doctrines of Protestant Christianity, but also for socialization into the parish community. The confirmands would also learn to be part of 'their' congregation. However, this constellation is now removed. That means that confirmands no longer learn to recognize their parish as a relevant place. Confirmation classes have thus been transformed into an inter-parochially organized service of religious socialization, which will make it harder to propagate the parishes-as-community.
6. *Priestly Occupations:* Another observation concerns the shift in the occupation of priests. Their general responsibilities consist of official ceremonies (including sermons, baptisms, funerals and so on), pastoral care (mainly resulting from personal interactions) and management duties (some call their congregation a 'little company'). My research results show an important shift in the balance of these responsibilities. Over the last 10 years, parishes have been reducing their numbers of priests. These priests are now faced with a situation in which they must care for ever more people, since the rate of reduction of priest positions is much faster than that of parish members. At the same time, this smaller number of priests must still carry the load of management duties. The priests we interviewed showed a tendency toward reducing the professional aspects of their work, mainly the pastoral care in which they would be personally communicating with their parishioners, to a bare minimum. Home visits, which were routine in the past, have now become a rare pastoral activity. This feeds the trend of a de-professionalization and managerialization of the role of the priest: less pastoral interaction and more management duties.
7. A last key term in the church within the last years is target-group or customer orientation. The church and many parishes try to attract people who are not part of the nucleus community. Thus, they conduct special family sermons to attract families, sermons mainly for childless middle-aged individuals and so on. These target-group specific activities occur under conditions of shrinking resources. Thus, in some parishes, 'normal' activities and 'normal' sermons become the exception. However, this strategy of including outsiders by target-group activi-

ties does have the unintentional effect of excluding those who may not share the features of the target group addressed. As a group, the excluded also contain the nucleus milieu of the parish communities, who are rarely addressed as a relevant target group since they are already included. This has a double effect: these outsiders tend to participate, if at all, in these activities very likely as customers – with limited interests in becoming part of the parish community: they go to the special sermons or feasts, and then depart. But quite often, the same effect of 'customerization' happens among the members of the nucleus communities: some of them with no interest in target-specific sermons, tend to visit the 'normal' sermons of other parishes. However, since they are not included in the community of this 'foreign' parish, the social relations then take on the form of a supplier-customer relationship.

11.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the process of the quantitative decline of the Catholic and Protestant churches in Germany – which is well known among sociologists of religion and church officials – is accompanied by a qualitative process of transformation of the social Gestalt of the local congregations. Emerging in the 1990s, the latter process followed the former and to date has received very little attention – either by church officials or by sociologists of religion. The classical social Gestalt of the congregations, driven by the organizational program of '*Vergemeinschaftung*' ('communalization') and resulting both in the formation of clusters of local communities within the congregations and in their organizational bureaucratization, is slowly being dissolved. This leads to a shift in balance from the congregation understood as a 'community' to the congregation understood as an 'organization'. This occurs despite the quantitative downsizing of the organization by reducing staff and outsourcing functions such as administration and social care. The reason is that congregations and their organizational functionalities survive by withdrawing resources that they formerly provided for community building and maintenance.

Both quantitative and qualitative processes are interdependent, since the first process reduces the financial power of the churches, making 'unpleasant adaptations' in the local congregations necessary. Furthermore, both processes are at least likely to reinforce each other. First, a formal organization allows for more distanced social relationships than a community – which makes greater alienation between the churches and their members more likely. Second, the change of the social Gestalt mainly affects the highly-committed members of the church – who most often feel left alone by 'their church'. Being disappointed, many core members decrease their level of commitment. Thus, the churches seem to lose people in two directions. They are less able to attract distanced individuals, but by the dissolution of their communities, they also repel their highly-committed members.

While there are only few research projects on the current transformations of German mainline congregations, most have observed that one of their most important agendas is to deal with the challenge of weakening income.[15] My own contribution was to analyze how the social constitution, the social Gestalt of mainline congregations, is affected by financial austerity. Studies from Switzerland (Stolz and Ballif 2010) show comparable patterns of the social transformation of local congregations. However, further research is required to measure if this is more than just a national trend.

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[15] See Geller et al. (2002), Ahrens and Wegner (2012), and Meyns (2013).

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Chapter 12
Congregations in Europe and the United States: Surprising Similarities and Common Priorities for Future Research

Mark Chaves

Abstract Every country is unique in its own way, and every country has its own religious particularities. But a main lesson that I take from these chapters is that there also are striking similarities across countries in their current religious situations. Perhaps it is not surprising to see religious similarities across European countries. But I am struck by similarities even between the European realities described in these chapters and the contemporary religious scene in the United States. I will highlight three points of similarity: decline, immigration as a source of religious diversity, and the suspicion that much religion now occurs outside religious organizations in general and outside congregations in particular. And I will conclude by suggesting several priorities for future research.

Keywords Congregations · Churches · Religious diversity · Cross-national comparisons

Every country is unique in its own way, and every country has its own religious particularities. But a main lesson that I take from these chapters is that there also are striking similarities across countries in their current religious situations. Perhaps it is not surprising to see religious similarities across European countries. But I am struck by similarities even between the European realities described in these chapters and the contemporary religious scene in the United States. I want to highlight three points of similarity: decline, immigration as a source of religious diversity, and the suspicion that much religion now occurs outside religious organizations in general and outside congregations in particular. This suspicion might lead some to wonder whether congregations remain the most important collective expression of religion in the West. To put this another way, some might

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C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_12

wonder how central a role congregations would play in a volume about *religion* (rather than just congregations) in Europe. As Lars Ahlin vividly put it in his chapter, borrowing a term from Ulrich Beck: some might suspect that "organized religion" and, by implication, "congregation" are "zombie categories," – social forms that exist and give the impression of vitality, but are essentially lifeless. I do not think congregation is a zombie category, but other observers may disagree, and this issue should be confronted.

12.1 Decline

Turning first to the issue of decline, it is unsurprising, but still should be noted, that religious decline is an important aspect of the religious context in the five countries represented in this volume. Marie Nielsen reports that membership in the majority church in Aarhus, Denmark, declined from 80% to 75% of inhabitants just in the decade from 2002 to 2012, a development "in line with the general development in Denmark of a slow, but stable decline in membership." Hilke Rebenstorf notes that, "in Germany, like in the other states in Northern Europe, churches are in decline." There is variation among German congregations, of course, but 42% of the Parochial Church Councils Rebenstorf surveyed reported either decline or pessimism about the future or both. Jens Schlamelcher makes the same observation about West Germany, pointing out that, in addition to declining membership and participation, the number of clergy and the number of local congregations also has declined in recent decades.

The picture is the same in Switzerland, where Jörg Stolz and Christophe Monnot report that official membership in the Reformed and Roman Catholic Churches dropped from 95.8% in 1970 to 66.6% in 2010, the proportion with no religious affiliation has risen from 1.1% to 20.1%, and twice as many Reformed and Catholic congregations reported shrinking attendance over the last 10 years than report increased attendance. And the predominantly Catholic countries of Spain and Italy are not different. In Spain, Julia Martinez-Arino reports that both Catholic self-identification and participation have declined, and Enzo Pace reports that the number of Catholic priests in Italy, which was 42,000 in 1972, is expected to drop to 25,000 by 2023.

Several authors emphasize another common aspect of the overall picture of decline: the aging of the religiously active population and the clergy. Pace reports that 48% of Italian clergymen are over 65 years old, with an average age of 62. Martinez-Arino emphasizes the much lower level of religious attendance among the youngest cohorts, and Stolz and Monnot emphasize the very high average age of attendees of Reform and Roman Catholic congregations in Switzerland, with 58% being over 60 years old. And Marie Nielsen notes that many congregations in Aarhus, Denmark, even the ones that were active and stable, expressed concern about their aging membership.

In all of these countries there are pockets of religious growth, often produced by immigration, and it may be that decline is concentrated in the traditional, established churches. But in none of these countries are the instances and areas of religious growth large enough to compensate for the decline of the traditional groups or change the general picture of decline and an aging religious population, both consequences of the fact that younger generations are less religiously active than older generations. Perhaps surprisingly, the same is true in the United States.

Compared to religiosity levels in the five European countries represented in this volume, Americans remain remarkably religious in both belief and practice. But these high levels of American religiosity have made it easy to miss the decline that is occurring. Religious affiliation, participation, and belief all have been declining in the United States, just as in Europe. These declines have been slow (except for the disaffiliation trend), but they have been happening for decades, a fact that is not widely appreciated and therefore worth emphasizing here.[1]

Starting with affiliation, the proportion of Americans who say that they have no religious affiliation has increased. This is a long-term trend, but the pace of change quickened substantially in the 1990s. In 1957, 3% of Americans said they had no religious affiliation (Bureau of the Census 1958). By 2014, the figure had increased to 21%, according to the General Social Survey (Smith et al. 2015). This increase in the religious "nones" in the United States is not about formally disaffiliating or removing oneself from the membership rolls of a religious group, as it is in most European countries. Based on surveys rather than on official church statistics or census reports, in the United States this increase reflects a growing willingness among the least religious people to *say* that they have no religion, as well as a decline in meaningful attachments to religious traditions. The cultural change is significant in either case.

Attendance at services began declining at least 15 or 20 years before the first GSS in 1972, at least among Catholics (Fischer and Hout 2006, pp. 203–205). Time-use studies also register a decline in the decades before 1990, from approximately 40% in 1965 to about 27% in 1993 (Presser and Stinson 1998). Average weekly attendance continued to fall slowly since 1990, and more extensive forms of involvement also have declined. The GSS occasionally asks people how often they participate in a religious congregation's activities beyond attending services. Seventeen percent of Americans said that they did so nearly every week or more in the 1990s, declining to 11% in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The trend is the same for people who attend regularly. At the same time, the number of people who *never* attend religious services has doubled in two and a half decades, going from 13% in 1990 to 26% in 2014.

Turning to belief, Tom W. Smith (2009) combined various surveys to show that while in the 1950s 99% of Americans said they believed in God, that number dropped, slowly but steadily, to stand at 92% in 2008. It is 91.2% in the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS), a figure that includes the responses "I don't believe in a personal God, but I do believe in a Higher Power of some kind" and "I find myself believing in God some of the time, but not at others." This decline is stretched

[1] The following paragraphs about decline are drawn from Voas and Chaves (2016). See that article for more details about the cohort differences that are behind this decline and see Chaves (2017) for more details about religious trends in the United States.

out over five decades, but change has occurred. There is also a long-term, slow but discernible, decline in belief in an inerrant Bible. Over the last 30 years, the percentage of people who say they believe that the Bible should be taken literally declined from approximately 40% to just over 30%.

As in Europe, these declines in traditional religiosity are not offset by increasing vitality elsewhere. It is true that the "spiritual but not religious" phenomenon has expanded in recent years. In 1998, 9% of GSS respondents described themselves as at least moderately spiritual but not more than slightly religious. That number rose to 17% in 2014. This increase occurred because nonreligious people are more likely to say that they are spiritual. This diffuse spirituality may provide a growing market for certain kinds of religious products, such as self-help books with spiritual themes, but it is not offsetting religious decline, re-energizing existing religious institutions, or providing a foundation for new kinds of religious institutions or new forms of religious collective action.

Relatedly, there is an increase in the number of people who say that they believe in life after death, but that increase has occurred especially among Jews and people who say that they have no religion (Chaves 2017, p. 37). This is best understood as an increase in a generic and diffuse spirituality rather than in traditional religious belief because the largest increases in belief in life after death are among the least religious Americans and among subgroups that have not traditionally emphasized an afterlife. There may be more diffuse spirituality now than previously, but it should not be mistaken for an increase in traditional religiosity. On the contrary, it is probably a consequence of the waning of traditional religiosity, every indicator of which is either stable or declining.

Beyond the sheer fact of religious decline, the dynamics of decline in the United States are similar in an important way to the dynamics found throughout the West: decline is driven by generational differences in religiosity, and two byproducts are an aging religious population and an aging clergy. Older people long have been over-represented in American congregations, but this over-representation has been exacerbated lately. In the GSS data, frequent church attendees were about 3 years older, on average, than the general population in the 1970s; today they are about 5 years older. The average churchgoing adult in the United States is now 51 years old. According to the National Congregations Study (Chaves et al. 2014), the solo or senior leader in the average congregation was 49 years old in 1998, 53 years old in 2006, and 55 years old in 2012. The percent of people in congregations led by someone age 50 or younger declined from 48% in 1998 to 35% in 2012—a remarkable change in only 14 years.

The evidence for a decades-long decline in American religiosity is now incontrovertible. Like the evidence for global warming, it comes from multiple sources, shows up in several dimensions, and paints a consistent factual picture. The American decline may be slower than in much of the West, and it might have started later than in some other places, but it is moving the society in a similar direction. Notwithstanding the still higher levels of American religiosity, then, American religion is similar to European religion in the fact of decline, the generational differences behind that decline, and the consequent aging of the clergy and the religiously active portion of the population.

12.2 Immigration and Diversity

By far the most prominent point of similarity across these chapters is the increasing religious diversity evident in each of these countries, caused mainly by immigration. There is increasing diversity both in the sense of more diversity of religious traditions and also in the sense of more diversity *within* major religious traditions. Each country has its own unique pattern of immigration and diversity, and Christianity remains by far the predominant religion in each place, but these chapters make clear that these countries also share a common story of recent immigration producing more religious diversity. Indeed, several of these research projects were created for the express purpose of documenting and studying contemporary religious diversity. Moreover, if there is an energetic, growing religious edge in these societies, it seems mainly to involve immigrant religion. This is especially evident when looking at congregations.

Monnot and Stolz, for example, show that congregations that are neither Christian nor Jewish now make up 16% of all Swiss congregations. And Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and other groups that are neither Christian nor Jewish are much younger, with most founded since the late 1980s or early 1990s, compared to a median founding date of 1690 (!) for Catholic and Reformed congregations. In Denmark, Marie Nielsen documents the increasing number of Muslims and Muslim congregations in Aarhus, and also the increasing number of Pentecostal congregations, most of which are immigrant congregations, including the surprising presence of Middle Eastern Pentecostal churches. Nielsen also points out the direct connection between the 2007 inclusion of Romania in the European Union and the increased presence of Romanian Orthodox churches in Denmark and elsewhere in Europe. Religious diversity clearly increased in Denmark even just in the decade between the two Aarhus mapping projects.

Giuseppe Giordan and Marco Guglielmi connect the increasing Orthodox presence in Italy to migration flows caused by major events such as the fall of the Soviet Union, the fall of the Romanian communist leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu, and, again, Romania's entry to the European Union. Enzo Pace reinforces the picture of increasing religious diversity in Italy by emphasizing the "diversity within the diversity." As he puts it: "Not only Islam, but Muslims with all the differences; not only Orthodox Christians, but Romanians, Ukrainians, Serbs, Moldovans, Greek, Russian Orthodox each with its own specific religious characteristics; not only people coming from Asia, but Sikh, Buddhist, Hindu, Christian Tamil and so on; not only Pentecostals, but African, Latin-American and Chinese Pentecostals with belonging to a plurality of different denominations." In short, there is more religious diversity, and more national and ethnic diversity within religions.

In Hamburg, Germany, Anna Körs reports that congregations from more than 100 different religious communities were present in Hamburg by the 1990s. And, in line with what Stolz and Monnot found in Switzerland, the majority of Muslim and Buddhist congregations in Hamburg, and a near majority of other non-Christian congregations, were founded since 1990. She also offers the telling observation that, while the majority Protestant congregations draw the most people on holidays, minority congregations draw more regular attenders on run-of-the-mill weekends. Religious energy lies mainly in the immigrant congregations.

Julia Martinez-Arino documents the same basic pattern in Barcelona: more immigrants have made for more religious diversity. In predominantly Catholic Spain, religious diversity takes the form of more Protestant churches as well as more Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and other types of congregations, but even the Protestant churches are mainly filled with immigrants from Latin America, Sub-Sahara Africa, and Southeast Asia. In Barcelona, as elsewhere, the minority congregations are largely newcomers, with the majority founded since the late 1990s. In Barcelona, as elsewhere, we also see ethnic diversification within religious groups, such as Muslims from Pakistan and Sub-Saharan Africa and Jews from Morocco, Argentina, and Uruguay.

The details are different in different countries, some religious diversity is long-standing in each place, and not all of the increased religious diversity among congregations is caused by immigration. But the general picture of increased religious diversity driven largely by immigration is strikingly similar in each of these settings.

The situation in the United States represents another variation on this same theme. Recent decades have seen an increasing number of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and others who are neither Christian nor Jewish. These groups still represent only a small minority of people in the United States, but the increase is dramatic, with the number of people claiming a religion other than Christian or Jewish tripling from about 1% in the 1970s to about 3% today. And, just as in Europe, recent immigration drives this increase. According to the 2014 American Community Survey, approximately one in eight people in the United States is foreign-born. This trend continues a long-term pattern by which American religious diversity reflects American immigration history.

Similar to Europe, recent immigration also creates a new kind of religious diversity. Immigrants to the United States before 1965 mainly were from Europe. These earlier waves of immigration increased religious diversity by bringing more Catholics and more Jews to this country. Recent immigrants, by contrast, are more likely to be from Central and South America, Asia, and Africa. Immigrants from Central and South America are overwhelmingly Christian, but immigration from Asia and Africa increases religious diversity by bringing more Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists to the United States.

Despite increasing numbers of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others who are neither Christian nor Jewish, the percentage of these religious “others” remains surprisingly small. How can the percentage of people who are neither Christian nor Jewish still be so small, even after a huge wave of new immigrants? The answer is simple, and perhaps represents an important difference between immigration to the United States and immigration to European countries: recent immigrants to the United States are less likely to be Christian than they used to be, but our proximity to Mexico and other Latin American countries means that the majority of recent immigrants to the United States still come from predominantly Christian countries.

Even if we limit attention only to legal immigrants, two-thirds are Christian. Most recent immigrants are from Latin America and are overwhelmingly Catholic. More broadly, the presence of many Christians among recent immigrants means that, in addition to more religious diversity, we also now have more ethnic diversity *within* American Christianity than we once had, similar to what several authors in this volume have observed in their European settings. For example, according to the National Congregations Study, 8% of churchgoers attended predominantly Hispanic congregations in 2012, compared to only 1% in 1998.

Immigration also has produced more ethnic diversity *within* American congregations. The percentage of people attending congregations in which no ethnic group constitutes at least 80% of the regular attendees increased from 15% in 1998 to 20% in 2012. This is a steady and notable increase in the percent of congregations in which no one group has an overwhelming majority of the people. Moreover, as of 2012 only 57% of people attended predominantly white congregations, down from 72% in 1998. Perhaps most striking, only 11% of American churchgoers were in an all-white congregation in 2012, in contrast with nearly 20% in 1998. That means that only about half as many people were in all-white congregations in 2012 than were in such homogeneous congregations as recently as 1998.

Moreover, among congregations that are at least 90% white, 30% now have at least some Latinos (up from 24% in 1998), and 23% now have some Asians (up from 17%). This increased presence of ethnic minorities in predominantly white churches is not entirely produced by immigration. After all, 40% now have at least some African American attendees (up from 27% in 1998), but immigration is a big part of the story for the increased presence of Latinos and Asians. It's even part of the story for the increased black presence in white churches, since recent immigrants from Africa are part of that development as well. Overall, a *majority* of those who attend predominantly white congregations now attend congregations with at least some African Americans and Hispanics in the pews. Catholic churches are much more likely than Protestant churches to have some minority presence even when they are predominantly white. But the jump in minority presence has occurred in Protestant as well as in Catholic churches. Increasing diversity within congregations is not a major focus of the chapters in this volume, but I suspect that, in many places, European congregations also have become more internally diverse in recent years.

Just as in the Western European countries represented in this volume, recent immigration has shaped the religious landscape in the United States. Of course, there are important differences, such as the relatively larger presence of immigrants from Latin American in the United States compared to the relatively larger presence of immigrants from the Middle East, Africa, and Eastern Europe in these Western European countries. But, whatever differences may exist, it also is clear that, on both continents, recent immigration has produced more religious diversity in several senses: more presence of minority religious faiths, more ethnic strands within major religions, and more ethnic diversity within congregations.

12.3 Religion Outside Congregations

A third kind of similarity between the realities described in these chapters and American religion is more abstract than the shared facts of decline and increased diversity driven by immigration. On both sides of the ocean, there is a suspicion among some that much important religious action now occurs outside of religious organizations in general and outside congregations in particular. This issue is important because it connects directly to one of the most fundamental contemporary questions about religion in the West: Are we experiencing religious decline, or merely religious change? To put this another way, are we experiencing religious decline, or merely a shift of religious energy away from one kind of traditional religious expression to other kinds of religious expression? It is clear that, although some congregations, including some immigrant congregations, are growing and thriving in all of these countries, there is not enough growth in any kind of congregation-based religion to compensate for the losses experienced by established, traditional, mainline religious groups. So avoiding the conclusion that the situation is one of general religious decline requires finding religious energy outside of congregation-based religion. If substantial such energy exists, then it raises the possibility that "congregation," and perhaps even "religious organization" are, to quote Lars Ahlin again, "zombie categories," implying that research focused on congregations risks missing the most important religious developments in a society.

Observers inclined in this direction might wonder if the groups that fall outside the boundaries of the more or less common definition of congregation used by contributors to this volume are sites of substantial religious activity that fall outside the purview of research on congregations. Christophe Monnot and Jörg Stolz identify several such groups in their chapter on the boundaries of the "congregation" concept: the Buddhist monastery at which an ever changing set of people come to meditate; Wiccans who occasionally gather for a fair but whose main interaction with each other is via the internet; the collection (I hesitate to call it a "group") of people who read on-line sermons posted weekly; a center for new spirituality that houses a bookstore, publishing house, and meeting space where approximately ten seminars per month are held; yoga and mindfulness groups; and Christian meet-ups. None of these count as congregations, nor should they, but a key question is how much important religious activity takes place in settings like this, settings that our focus on congregations leads us to miss. As Marie Nielson notes, the congregation-centered approach "is not able to catch the more fluid, 'pop-up,' dimensions of religious organization." And Lars Ahlin touches on this theme from a different direction, noting that, with many people moving among several congregations and religious groups, the relationship between congregations and their people has become more fluid, raising difficulties for research using congregations as the units of analysis.

I do not have the space to discuss this theme in more depth. I will say, though, that, unless we define "religion" so broadly that virtually any activity that people find enjoyable and fulfilling counts, I do not think there is enough collective religious activity happening outside of congregations to warrant a reduced focus on congregations or to change a narrative of decline to a narrative of change. But this is an empirical question that we should continue to assess, and the conceptual issue of the relationship between congregations and the larger phenomenon of religious expression and activity is an important one that we should continue to ponder.

12.4 Concluding Reflections

There are of course many differences in the religious situations of these European countries, and there are of course many differences between these countries and the religious situation in the United States. Among other things, Americans remain much more religious than people in these European countries, the ways that congregations and religious organizations connect with the state are different, and the immigration flows are different in important ways. Still, at a time when analysts and observers often highlight these and other differences, it is worth emphasizing the similarities, as I have done here.

These similarities also suggest some common priorities for research on congregations across these settings. I will mention four.

Systematic Cross-National Comparisons It is striking, and reassuring, that "congregation" is a conceptual category that seems to have substantial cross-national validity. That is, a more or less common definition of "congregation" denotes a functionally similar set of groups and organizations in each of these countries, and I'm sure in others as well. This cross-national conceptual similarity suggests that we should be able to use congregational data gathered in various countries to pursue systematic comparative analyses. Using common measures in various congregation data gathering projects would further enhance the potential for fruitful comparative analysis, but in principle we should be able to use data on congregations in various societies to investigate questions about how cross-national social, political, and cultural variations connect to cross-national differences in congregations' characteristics and activities. It would be exciting to develop a literature on cross-national analyses of congregations on a par with the vibrant and growing literature on cross-national variations in individual religiosity.

Tracking Change These chapters make clear that we have developed great methodological sophistication in defining, identifying, surveying, and mapping congregations, and these chapters showcase the power and usefulness of these tools in a variety of settings. Once we have a solid baseline of data in a particular country or city, it should be a priority to gather additional waves of data in those same countries and cities so that, over the long term, we will build a solid base of knowledge about what is changing and what is stable. Several of these chapters report results from more than one wave of data collection in their settings, which I applaud. As these chapters show, the value of an initial wave of data collection, if done rigorously and with high standards of sampling, measurement, and data collection, increases with each successive wave of data collection because these additional waves provide the only way to systematically track certain kinds of change in a population of congregations.

Consequences of Decline As discussed above, many congregations in many locations are experiencing decline within a larger context of religious decline. In this situation, studying the consequences of decline for congregations is an important agenda. Several chapters in this volume do this. Hilke Rebenstorf notes the consequences of decline for congregations – less money, fewer clergy, fewer programs, less visibility – and for the social organization of religion more generally, such as when the national church body encourages parish mergers and new forms of religious community beyond the local parish. Jens Schlamelcher extensively explores the consequences of decline, pushing beyond the organizational and financial consequences to the social and cultural consequences that together result in congregations' diminished capacity to build and maintain communities that elicit engagement, attachment, and loyalty, producing a vicious spiral in which numerical decline weakens community building, which breeds more decline. Overall, studying the consequences of religious decline for congregations and communities should be a high priority.

Consequences of Increased Religious Diversity Last, but certainly not least, studying the consequences of increased religious diversity for congregations, communities, and societies should be a high priority for future research. One important question is how religious groups relate to each other when religious diversity increases. Several chapters investigate this question. Stolz and Monnot describe how congregations of Switzerland's established religions do not seem to be responding to religious diversity by hunkering down. On the contrary, they find that established congregations often seek ecumenical and interreligious contacts, such as joint worship services with newcomer groups, and they often support efforts to publicly recognize other religious groups and promote interreligious dialogue.

Meanwhile, Marie Nielsen finds that in Aarhus, Denmark, increased religious diversity has not led to more collaboration among congregations of different religious groups. There is some collaboration, she reports, but mainly there is quiet co-existence and non-interference. And Anna Körs finds variation among religious groups in their interactions with community organizations, with establishment Protestant, Catholic, and Muslim congregations interacting the most, while Buddhist groups and congregations from other Christian denominations interacting the least.

Other chapters emphasize other kinds of consequences of increased religious diversity. Giordan and Guglielmi point out that Orthodox Christian Churches in Italy are shifting in character from "diaspora churches" to "local churches." Pace notes that increased religious diversity in Italy has a political consequence: the Catholic Church is no longer the only religious partner of the state and no longer the only prominent religious player in Italy's civil society and political system.

Martinez-Arino makes a similar point about the consequences of increased religious diversity for Spanish Catholicism, and she also describes the creation in 2004 of a public foundation to support, among other things, the national federations of Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim groups, and to provide funding for local religious facilities so long as they officially register and meet certain building standards. These examples call attention to the general question of how governments attempt to manage increased religious diversity.

Although there is a widely shared experience of increased religious diversity, congregations, religious groups, governments, and other social and political actors respond to this increased diversity differently in different places. Documenting these responses is an important agenda. For those of us who study congregations, investigating whether congregations respond to increased diversity by encouraging greater social integration and interreligious cooperation or by shoring up ethnic and religious boundaries should perhaps be one of our highest priorities, not least so that we can contribute informatively to larger, pressing conversations about the social and political integration of recent immigrants, and the ways in which congregations facilitate or obstruct that integration.

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Erratum to: Be Fruitful and Multiply… Fast! The Spread of Orthodox Churches in Italy

Giuseppe Giordan and Marco Guglielmi

Erratum to:
Chapter 4 in: C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_4

A part of the text was inadvertently left out of the print version of chapter 4. The following text precedes the text on page 64.

4.4 Settlement and Adaptation in a Western Society: Toward a Local Orthodox Church in Italy?

The great change from a quantitative viewpoint opens the perspective of a short study that addresses the qualitative aspect of the Orthodox presence in Italy. Referring to what has been explained from a theoretical viewpoint by several authors (Hämmerli 2011, 2014; Hämmerli and Mayer 2014; Ihlamur-Öner 2014; Roudometof 2015), we hypothesize that the nature of the presence of Orthodox Christians in the host countries of Western Europe is changing. Bearing in mind the necessary specifications in applying the term "diaspora" to Orthodox Christianity (Hämmerli 2010), we propose that some jurisdictions, at least initially, are changing from their start as Churches supporting the immigrant community and as Churches for the diaspora, and are now becoming "local Churches," where the faithful are gradually, but steadily and consistently, entering the social and cultural framework of the host society.

The online version of the original chapter can be found at
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_4

C. Monnot, J. Stolz (eds.), *Congregations in Europe*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77261-5_13

For example, recent occurrences within the Romanian Orthodox Church in Italy seem unequivocally oriented in this direction. There are more than one million Romanians in the country, and their presence is stabilizing, both through their integration into the working world and through mixed marriages. They are raising children who attend the schools and the social activities of their Italian peers, and purchasing houses that often require starting multiannual mortgages.

The Romanian Church, as Bishop Siluan told us in a long interview on 10 December 2015, has realized that all these Romanians have no intention of returning to their country of origin, unless to spend their summer holidays. Using the language of Lichterman (2005) as summarized by Hämmerli (2011), we may say that a "reflective process" has been initiated in which the Orthodox Church is engaging a dialogue with the other religious, political, social, and cultural communities of the host country. Such a process has impact on several initiatives in Italian society. First is impact on the Italian language: an increasing number of activities are carried out bilingually, including diocesan and parochial websites, the liturgical calendar, catechisms for the young and liturgical texts. Romanian Orthodoxy in Italy, therefore, is clearly moving toward a situation of bilingualism.

Even regarding the cultural organization (Hämmerli 2011) of the Romanian parishes, we are witnessing a transformation directed towards building a "local Church." In Italy, the Orthodox parishes generally and the Romanian ones particularly are changing from a "contemplative style" to a "community builder" style. In the former case, more linked to the style of the Churches of origin in the mother country, parish life is centered on liturgy; in the latter case, the focus is shifted to the actual needs of people, implying social, cultural, and administrative issues.

The "community builder" style of the religious personnel of the Italian diocese of the Patriarchate of Romania relies on a labor force of 239 priests, almost all married, a third of whom are under the age of 35 and more than half under 40 (those over 55 are fewer than 10%). These priests, as a group, have engaged in building new churches for their communities, in addition to providing for the spiritual and