CHAPTER II

THE SECULARIZATION PARADIGM OF STEVE BRUCE

In the previous chapter, I have discussed the concept of secularization and argued how this concept is different from being irreligious, and why laicization should not be used as a substitute for the term. In this chapter, I will explore the secularization paradigm of Steve Bruce, which is based on classical secularization theory and remains one of the most controversial paradigms in social science.

According to Bruce’s paradigm, modernization is the main reason behind the aggressive secularization process now pervading Western Europe and its offshoots. There are two main issues of discussion among sociologists and theologians in this regard. First, there is an ongoing debate on the meaning or scope of classical secularization theory, in which scholars have yet to reach consensus regarding the answers to the questions “What does the theory assert?” and “What does it not assert?” The second discussion, which cannot be considered separate from the first, is whether the theory is able to put forward a clear explanation for the bumpy relationship between religion and society in the European context and in other parts of the world. Therefore, in this chapter, I will attempt to provide some answers to the questions mentioned above. Firstly, I will try to shed some light on what Bruce’s secularization paradigm does
assert. Then, I will explain why Bruce’s paradigm, rather than other secularization theories was chosen as the starting point.

A PARADIGM THAT BELONGS TO PROTESTANTISM

It is true that to understand the underlying causes of the secularization process in a certain region, the internal dynamics of that region should be studied. Although the central claim of the secularization paradigm of Bruce – a direct correlation between modernization and secularization - is related to West European countries and their offshoots at least as a general statement, the fact that modern societies in and outside Europe have very different levels of secularization suggests that there is more at stake.

For example, is it really possible for anyone to examine the history of secularization regarding French society without taking into account the French Revolution? For any discussion on the secularization of French society, the elimination and removal of religious symbols from the public sphere by the revolutionary leaders as well as the closely connected relations between high clergy and the former regime (the monarchy before the revolution), should be on the table. In parallel, when it comes to the countries of the former Warsaw Pact,\(^\text{20}\) a different dynamics beyond the modernization process is needed to explain the very harsh and rigorous secularization.

Likewise, it would not be wise to suggest that the lack of secularization of Irish society compared to other West European societies is directly linked to the modernization process alone. The war of independence waged by Irish Catholics against English Protestants in the years 1919-1921 rendered Catholicism more than just a matter of faith for the Irish. Similarly, the armed struggle carried out by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) between 1969 and 2005 for a reunit-

\(^{20}\) People’s Republic of Bulgaria, German Democratic Republic, Hungarian People’s Republic, Romanian People’s Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, People’s Republic of Albania, Polish People’s Republic, Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.
ed Ireland rendered mainly Protestant Northern Ireland more sensitive to its religious identity and symbols. If the secularization histories of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are studied, it is obvious that such histories cannot be regarded independently from those bloody struggles.

To give another example, “Czechs are some of the least religious people in Eastern Europe, (...) [but] their close neighbours and one-time compatriots, the Slovaks, are vastly more religious. (...) the religious differences between Czechs and Slovaks are rooted in the historical relationship between religion and nationalism in both regions” (Froese, 2005: 269), but not in their different modernization levels. A third example can be found in the Polish religious involvement. It is not a coincidence that Polish society, which has struggled for independence from Soviet Russia for years and received support from the Roman Catholic Church and its clergy, is more religious than most other European societies (Arnold, 2012: 228).

The feelings among the Polish people towards religious rituals, symbols and clergy who placed themselves at the forefront of the battle against Soviet Russia for 40 years after World War II, or the feelings within French society towards religion and the French religious class who had supported the old regime until 1789, cannot be dissociated from their own histories. Although years have passed since both cases, it is likely that social consciousness was deeply influenced by each nation’s unique course of history.

In fact, it should be stated that not only do different modern or modernizing countries tend to have various degrees of secularization; different regions within the same country may also have different degrees of secularization due to various distinctive factors. For example, the Eastern and Western parts of Turkey show different secularization levels. In particular, a form of feudal culture is still being experienced as part of social life in some regions of Central, East and Southeast Anatolia. Religion still has the capacity and power to
penetrate society in these regions with its rules, bans and sanctions. On the other hand, a secular lifestyle, akin to that in West European countries, can be easily observed in some cities of the Western regions of Turkey. Another solid example at this point would be Germany. The secularization level in East Germany, as shown in Table A3 (Pollack & Pickel, 2007: 613), is much higher than that in West Germany, and to understand this striking difference, we need a more detailed explanation than the dynamics of a universal theory.

**Table A3.** Increase and decrease of belief in God, Western and Eastern Germany, 1991 and 1998 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief in God</th>
<th>West Germany</th>
<th>East Germany</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have never believed in God</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have previously believed in God but do not do so now</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have not believed in God previously but do so now</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always believed in God</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** ISSP 1991 (West n = 1346; East n = 1486) and 1998 (West n = 1000; East n = 1006); statements are summing up to 100 per cent.

At the same time there are differences in terms of religious life even between the Catholics and Protestants living in the same region. As seen in the Table A4 (Pollack & Pickel, 2007: 615), there are significant differences in terms of frequenting church services between the Catholics and Protestants in Western Germany.
**Table A4.** Regular church attendance among Catholics and Protestants in Western Germany, 1952-1999 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholics as a whole</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics in the age of:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-29</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-59</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and older</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants as a whole</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants in the age of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-59</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and older</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach 1978ff., in general n:1000

In addition, native Germans across the country have by and large adopted a more secular lifestyle, while religion has become very important for those who migrated to Germany – particularly first and second generation of migrants from Muslim countries. Hence, immigration itself might well be a reason for being more attached to religion, during especially the first years of settlement in a new country. Being broken off from their ancestral roots and having to live in a culture of uncertainty and unfamiliarity may partly explain the very central role these immigrants attribute to religion (Casanova, 2007: 66). A similar social difference with respect to immigration is also observable in France. Michèle Tribalat (cited in

---

21 For example, one in every ten people living in the United States was born outside the United States, and most of this immigration came from non-modern countries. I think this reality may offer us some insight in respect to the very different secularization levels now seen in European countries and the USA.
Fetzer and Soper, 2005: 77) argues that “French Muslims as a whole appear more likely to practice their religion than are French Catholics, the nominal religious majority.” Besides, it would not be wrong to claim that one of the main reasons that the Southern Länder are less secular today than the Northern ones is because Germans have experienced two different forms of Christianity since Martin Luther: Protestantism and Catholicism. The Catholic majority in the Southern states is, by the very nature of their religion, more sensitive to religious rituals and symbols and resists secularization in comparison to its counterpart (Greenberg, 2014).

Against this background, it seems to become more and more difficult to defend secularization theory, when almost all districts or regions of the world have different levels of secularization. As we have seen above, each country, and even different regions within a country, due to its peculiar history and circumstances, deserves a separate study. However, notwithstanding this, I think we are still able to make some generalizations even if some particular social changes come into focus due to reasons already outlined. When it comes to secularization, certain time-frames as well as geography should be considered, while keeping in mind that various factors at different times can change the relationship between religion and society. In 2002, Bruce outlined his secularization paradigm in God is Dead. Nine years later, he published a book entitled Secularization (2011a: VI), partly to clarify some misinformation relating to his secularization paradigm among young scholars “who have read no further back than the work of their supervisors, who caricature the secularization paradigm as predicting the rapid eradication of all religious sentiment, who present a small case study as rebuttal of a story about large-scale social change”. In this book, Bruce used the same figure which he had used nine years ago to explain the secularization paradigm as “an attempt to explain a historically and geographically specific cluster of changes” (Bruce, 1999a: 265). This historical period begins with the Protestant Reformation and encompasses the history of modern Europe. Geographically, the paradigm also mentions Western Europe and its offshoots:
Instead, I take the secularization story, like Weber’s Protestant Ethic thesis, to be an attempt to explain a historically and geographically specific cluster of changes. It is an explanation of what has happened to religion in Western Europe (and its North American and Australian offshoots) since the Reformation (Bruce, 1999a: 265).

But why is the Protestant Reformation so pivotal in Bruce’s paradigm? According to Bruce, the secularization of Europe is the result of the European modernization process, and historically he sees the Protestant Reformation as the starting point of this drastic transformation. Referring to Weber, Bruce (2011a) claims that the Reformation drastically and unintentionally changed the work ethic, and brought about the accumulation of capital. Before the Reformation, “other-worldly” asceticism and being cut off from “this world” had been seen as the very attitudes that could gain the mercy of God. Martin Luther focused his attack precisely on this form of piety and eradicated the division between religious and ordinary people by claiming that to be blessed there is no need to withdraw from “this” world. God would already be glorified if all – legitimate - work is done in a diligent manner. According to Luther, human beings had already been divided into the saved and unsaved, and worldly success was accepted as the sign of being chosen: a good person does good works (McKim, 2001: 113-14; Allen, 2010: 75-77). Weber (1930/2005: 19) uses Benjamin Franklin’s autobiography to bolster this idea: “Benjamin Franklin (…) answers in his autobiography with a quotation from the Bible, which his strict Calvinistic father drummed into him again and again in his youth: ‘Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings.’” Anthony Giddens (Weber, 1930/2005: XV) summarizes Weber by saying that “the Calvinist ethic introduced an activism into the believer’s approach to worldly affairs, a drive to mastery in a quest for virtue in the eyes of God (…)”. With all the other reforms, i.e. arguing against the Catholic way of confession, devotion, atonement, absolution, and affirming work in a religious manner, the Reformers created a new ethics and transformed other-worldly asceticism into one of this-world.
Figure A1. Bruce’s Secularization Paradigm

Monotheism

The Protestant Reform

Individualism

Propensity to Schism

Protestant Ethic

Industrial Capitalism

Rationality

Economic Growth

Science

Social Differentiation

Technology

Structural Differentiation

Schism and Sects

Social and Cultural Diversity

Egalitarianism

Technological Consciousness

Literacy and Voluntary Association

Religious Diversity

Secular States and Liberal Democracy

Sects and Churches Moderate

Relativism

Compartmentalization and Privatization
In addition, according to Bruce (2002: 10), the Protestant Reformation was one of the main reasons behind the rise of individualism, a crucial element in the secularization process. Unlike Catholicism, the religious culture that came with the Protestant Reformation was extremely open to fragmentation since the Church was no longer seen as the primary authority between the celestial and terrestrial world. Since Christ’s authority was institutionalized in the office of the Pope for Catholics, the papacy could thus claim that it had full control of the means of salvation, and it could decide all controversies in the name of God’s will. However, after the Reformation, many different perceptions and religious organizations, claiming different ways of attaining salvation, came onto the scene. Unlike Catholic countries, the social differentiation in Protestant ones did not take the shape of a drastic split between religious and non-religious elements, but of many different sects from the main tradition. Maybe reformers could not be called democrats, or men who were sensitive towards freedom of religion or freedom of conscience, but individuals who were relatively free to choose their own church, unlike in Catholic countries. Having rejected the privileged status of the clergy, they then claimed that they (individuals) were all equal in the eyes of God. Equality in the eyes of God then laid the foundation for equality in the eyes of fellow humans and before the law. Equal obligations eventually became equal rights.

Bruce claims that another dynamic that indirectly emerged out of the Protestant Reformation is the cultural diversity which presents itself in three phenomena. First of all, people carried along their languages, faiths and social characteristics to the places they moved to. Secondly, parallel to the emergence and spread of nation-states, new groups of people began to live under the roof of these states. Thirdly, the modernization in the economic field that came into the picture especially in the Protestant dwelling units led to the emergence of groups that entered into competition with each other. He believes that some Protestant sects removed the social support for
any particular culture or religion. “Especially in Protestant societies” says Bruce (1999b: 19), “nation states were having to come to terms with increasing religious diversity. A society that was becoming increasingly egalitarian and democratic and more culturally diverse had to place social harmony before the endorsement of religious orthodoxy.”

For Bruce, religious diversity has serious social-psychological consequences for the secularization process. In a particular society where there is only one religion in which the overwhelming majority believes, and the rituals of which are adhered to by almost every member of society, it would not be wrong to assume that the position of such a religion would be seen as most vital. In religiously authoritarian and hierarchical societies, religious minorities would be disregarded, kept under control or, at best, tolerated. Nonconformist minorities are not allowed to exist, and are most likely to be expelled or oppressed. However, if that society becomes more egalitarian, and starts to enjoy religious diversity, then it is likely to see social harmony instead of religious orthodoxy. In addition, diversity challenges the truthfulness of religion to which believers commit themselves. As Bruce (1999b: 20) asserts, ideas are most persuasive if they are unanimously shared. Universal or social acceptance of a belief system makes it “an accurate account of how things are.” Therefore, any alternative to this universally acknowledged truth could be seen as a startling objection.

This does not mean that adherents to the dominant religion will fall on hard times simply because alternatives have come into being. But clashes over diverse views on beliefs bring about very serious secularizing effects. People who had been absolutely sure of the truth of their faith now start wondering whether it might not be different after all, precisely, hence Augsburg, 1555.\footnote{With the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, different belief doctrines become official in various princedoms. The establishment of principle \textit{cuius regio eius religio} gave to ruling people, be it king, prince, bishop or whoever, the right to create...} One authority...
with force is always seen as more prestigious, convincing and pow-
erful than two authorities claiming the same thing(s), but without
force.

In addition, different sects and churches did more than merely
break the hold and power of the dominant belief system; they were
also left with no choice but to moderate themselves, thereby losing
their radical character in the course of time:

(...) that diversity weakens religious commitments by removing the
social support for any one religion and by encouraging people to
confine their religious beliefs to specific compartments (...) and to
remove the specific and contested elements from their beliefs. The
sect, by proliferating competing alternatives (...), is thus its own
grave-digger (Bruce, 2002: 22).

For example, although the Quaker movement in England was
first set up as a marginal sect whose founders were punished for in-
fraction of the traditions of the established Church of England, not
long after, the movement moderated its own condemnations due to
requests from its own members (Bruce, 2002). This kind of trans-
formation was observed among Methodists as well. Bruce, using
Reinhold Niebuhr’s argument, has astutely depicted the dynamics
behind this transformation:

Commitment is inevitably reduced because increasingly large parts
of generations subsequent to that of the founders inherited rather
than chose their faith. The first generation (and subsequent adult
joiners) elected to be sectarians and did so in the full knowledge
of the penalties that their dissent would incur. Hence they began
with very high levels of commitment and, to the extent that they
were victimized, their subsequent experiences of suffering for their
God strengthened that commitment. Those who were born into the

uniformity of faith within their own territories. That is to say, differently from
the practices until then, secular leaders in Europe were given the right to de-
terminate the religious doctrine his/her people would believe in. The Peace of
Augsburg, says William Monter (2002: 10), created the legal recognition of
confessionalism, and made the confessional states dominant theme in Euro-
pean culture.
movement might be strenuously socialized into the tenets of the sect but they had not chosen it (2002: 23).

In addition to this, Bruce sets forth that industrial capitalism and economic development, which are both phenomena caused by the Protestant Reformation\textsuperscript{23}, paved the way for a functional differentiation as well as a differentiation in the social domain. The duties that were previously assumed by solely one institution began to be taken over, parallel to the structural differentiation, by individual persons or institutions specialized in their respective activity fields. Secular experts began to fulfil the social functions that were previously only under the monopoly of the Church (Bruce, 2002: 8). Structural differentiation in Europe may be summarized, as Philip Gorski (2003: 111) did, as follows: “(...) the establishment and expansion of secular institutions in the fields of social provision, education, moral counseling and other fields of activity once dominated by the Church, a development which would be characterized as a loss of social functions.”

Bruce (2003) thinks that social differentiation came into the picture when the new social classes accelerated the dissolving of traditional religious community. Industrial revolution moved home-based economic activities out of the household. Such a separation

\textsuperscript{23} At this point, Bruce provides an interpretation by taking Weber’s well known work *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism* as the basis. Weber (1930/2005: 39-50) claimed that the emergence of the Industrial Revolution and modern capitalism primarily in Protestant countries in Western Europe was not a coincidence. According to him, the legal arrangements, technological development, and organizational development did exist in other civilizations but these were not enough for the emergence of modern capitalism. He thinks that the Protestant ethic such as working with care and patience, being in a better position financially and making prudent investments became accelerators of modern capitalism. The reason for work and accumulating capital in Protestantism is not just to meet material needs or enjoy worldly pleasures even more, but on the contrary because it is a moral duty and has intrinsic value. According to Weber, working very hard with care and self-discipline, entrepreneurship, pursuing economic profit to acknowledge being one of the chosen, individual initiative, accumulating capital according to Protestantism has provided opportunities for market economy and private enterprise.
also made it necessary to establish more rational, instrumental and pragmatic perspectives. He argues that the economic growth caused by industrialization gave rise to new classes and class conflict. In feudal societies, where individuals were aware of their place (status or class), they were also expected to know that there was only one single moral universe. Having stated that social differentiation follows structural differentiation, Bruce says that:

(...) as the functions of society become increasingly differentiated, so the people also become divided and separated from each other. (...) With the proliferation of new social roles and increasing social mobility, traditional integrated organic or communal conceptions of the moral and supernatural order began to fragment. When the community broke into competing social groups, the religiously sanctified vision of that community, united under its God, also broke up. As classes and social fragments became more distinctive, so they generated metaphysical and salvational systems along lines more suited to their interests (2002: 9)

In his scheme, Bruce theorized that the Protestant Reformation indirectly paved the way for mass literacy and the consequent emergence of voluntary associations which, in turn, accelerated the secularization process. Bruce is of the opinion that Reformation prepared the ground for a new way of thinking: answering to God individually. For this reason, people not belonging to the clergy needed new resources to fulfil this new responsibility. The Holy Bible was translated into vernacular languages so that people could answer to God individually. Thus new developments were set in motion in the art of printing in an accelerated manner, the literacy rate rose and non-formal education was introduced. As Bruce put it, the rivalry and the competition between the sects to win more and more people for their belief enabled the acceleration of these developments.

Bruce further argues that the Protestant sects also contributed to the development of secular liberal democracy through the new model of social organization:
Reformed religion was individualistic but it was not lonely. It encouraged individuals to band together for encouragement, edification, evangelism, and social control. As an alternative to the organic community in which position was inherited and ascribed, the sectarians established the voluntary association of like-minded individuals coming together to pursue common goals. (2011a: 35)

My case that the Reformation played a major part in laying the foundations for liberal democracy rest on the mechanism of unintended consequences. What were initially religious arguments inadvertently encouraged individualism, egalitarianism, and diversity, which in turn combined with growing social and structural differentiation to shift governments in the direction of secular liberal democracy. (2011a: 39)

Bruce argues that the structural and social differentiations, socialization and pluralism that emerged as a result of the Protestant Reformation caused religion to become isolated in a specific area. While different world views continued to exist in their own area with their own values and logic, this process “removes much of the social support that is vital to reinforcing beliefs, makes the maintenance of distinct lifestyles very difficult, weakens the impetus to evangelize and encourages de facto relativism that is fatal to shared beliefs” (2002: 20).

This is Bruce’s secularization paradigm based on the Protestant Reformation. I think that it works very well for West European secularization process (it took place much later in the South) and ample quantitative data indeed support his views. However, although Bruce historically starts with the Protestant Reformation, I think we should not underestimate the role played by the Renaissance in European secularization. It would not be an exaggeration to claim that modernity began in Florence and other city-states in 14th century Italy. After Italy, it spread to other European countries such as England, Germany, Spain and France during the 15th and 16th centuries. It was “the period when man rediscovered the world and his own creative capacities for what they really were and fashioned a new civilization with nature as its basis and humanity as its source,
centre, and end” (Coates, White & Schapiro, 1966: 3). The new outlook that came with the Renaissance meant a transitional period for Europeans and laid the foundation for modern times. Particular components of the medieval times attracted less and less attention, while classic cultural forms were being revived.

The Renaissance was the period in which an intellectual revolution, known as the Revival of Learning (i.e. new thoughts about religion, new methods for science, new outlook on the nature of human beings, and a new architectural style) came into being. It was a phase of exploration and a period of political and social transition. Ancient Greece and Rome came to prominence as the main sources of inspiration, and their classic works became part of the educational and cultural curriculum. Gradually, Antiquity became a reference point for a lively and productive life at the expense of religious doctrines (Schevill, 1930; Mann, 1996). For example, the Platonists of the Renaissance period read Plato from a Christian perspective and they held that finding truths concerning God-created nature is equivalent to searching information on God. Universities in Italy advocated using mathematics and music as tools to reach the invisible world of ideas and forms put forward by Plato as the subjects of reality. Reducing nature to mathematics caused an excitement in how to measure and experience it. The gravitation of the Renaissance art toward nature and specifically to the human anatomy, especially as the ideal form, is a product of this perspective (Perry, Chase, Jacob, Jacob & Von Lauhe, 1989: 374).

Another point I would like to stress is that, although what Bruce claims about Western Europe and its secularization process does make sense -rendering it somewhat tricky to refute his assertions-this does not mean that these same dynamics will lead to similar outcomes in other modern or modernizing parts of the world. For example, very intolerant religious cultures have emerged in many Muslim countries due to the struggles between different denominations. Each year, thousands of people lose their lives due to some
very bloody sectarian clashes in societies with different religions. Even in Turkey, relatively a very modern country with a huge Sunni Muslim majority, just at the end of the 20th century, 33 Alevi were burned to death in Anatolia because of their religious identity (The New York Times, 1993, July 3).

In contrast with Bruce’s claims, the existence of different sects has not led to a more moderate religious outcome in all countries. On the contrary, such sectarian groups are often the main reason behind religious persecutions and intolerance. These kinds of struggles render religious belief systems or identities more powerful, while religion places itself more at the centre of society with each passing day. What is surprising at this point is that, the features common to these societies, wherein religious conflicts, identities, rituals, and struggles play vital roles in public life, include the fact that they are yet to be confronted with industrial capitalism, scientific advances or urban life. Among others, Syria, Afghanistan, Ivory Coast, Iraq, Kashmir, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, Uganda, etc. are countries where religion-based conflicts are the part of daily life. That does not mean that countries with more modern systems are not beset by problems arising from religion. However, it seems nowadays, not to be possible to consider it a coincidence that civil unrests allegedly arising from religion come about more infrequently in modern societies.

Therefore, it should again be emphasized that although Bruce’s paradigm has been very well-established for the secularization process in Europe and its offshoots, this approach inevitably excludes other societies from the secularization process that have not had the Protestant Reformation as part of their history. Bruce’s paradigm works well and seems valid for modern European countries, Canada, the USA, and Australia (Bruce, 1999a; 2002). But I suggest that, if slightly revised, the scope of his paradigm might be extended and be made applicable to other societies that do not have the Protestant Reformation in their history or that are not predominantly Chris-
tian. In order to make the paradigm more general I propose to tone down some parts that are strictly related only to Christianity, and enhance other parts which can be observable in almost all societies.

The key difference between Bruce’s paradigm and my own extended version, which will be explored in more detailed in Chapter III, lies herein: In the extended version, Christian history or culture does not play a role in the secularization process. From the perspective of this extended paradigm, Western Europe is one case among many. However, Bruce starts with a historical event that is unique to Christianity, and he puts it above all else as the basis of every other dynamic. He focuses extensively on the impact of the Protestant Reformation on the expansion of capitalism, the urbanization process, and scientific developments in the history of Europe. Contrary to this, I think there is no clear-cut connection between these three historical dynamics and the Protestant Reformation for other regions of the world. A social innovation may have an attractive quality in its own right. Therefore, even non-Protestant societies could introduce or apply the same system without the original social events experienced by those pioneering societies.

Such an extended secularization paradigm is not something new. On the contrary, it is largely based on what Bruce and Wilson have explained about secularization until now. The claims and explanations of Bruce’s paradigm regarding the secularization history of modern European countries and their offshoots are fairly consistent and also supported by empirical data. For that reason, it is necessary to repeat that the extended secularization paradigm here proposed is almost entirely based on Bruce’s own paradigm and not in contradiction with it.

Why, the reader may ask, has this extended secularization paradigm been elaborated on the basis of Bruce’s paradigm, rather than on the basis of other outstanding theories? Before explaining the details of the extended secularization paradigm and its application to Alevi communities in Turkey, it is necessary to articulate why not
other theories, i.e. the Religious Market Model (RMM) advanced by Stark *et al.*, the Secure Secularization Theory (SST) of Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart and the Religious Individualization Theory (RIT) first proposed by Thomas Luckmann and later advanced by Grace Davie, but Bruce’s paradigm was chosen as the starting point.

**WHY NOT OTHER THEORIES, BUT BRUCE’S PARADIGM**

Even though the theories below constitute the cornerstones of the secularization discussion, it has to be said that there are some differences between the definitions of secularization and measurement methods of these theories on the one hand, and this thesis’ definition and measurement methods on the other. Church attendance rates and changes in the number of individual faithful have been used as the most important indicator, and at times the only criteria of secularization in the theories below. Of course, all parameters thought to provide information concerning secularization should be taken into consideration. However, reducing secularization to only the frequency of worship or being a believer or not may not provide sufficient information on the bigger picture in some societies. For example, societal expectations of Islam as experienced in 21st century Turkey and societal expectations of Christianity as experienced in 21st century Netherlands may be different. While the rate of church attendance may be accepted as a sufficient criteria for piousness in West European countries, not merely performing the Friday prayer but what someone has done throughout the whole week will provide important clues on piousness in Turkey.

What is to be expressed subsequently is not that church attendance rate should not be taken into consideration or that it is of lesser importance. Rather, in societies where religion’s societal visibility is reduced to frequency of church attendance, it cannot be denied that it would be one of the fundamental parameters in the secularization discussion. However, both religious culture and so-
Society’s own distinct dynamics should be taken into consideration when measuring secularization. In particular, unlike West European societies, it may not be an accurate method to understand the secularization process happening in non-Christian societies only by measuring the frequency with which people pray. For example, taking into account only the change in frequency of praying or increase/decrease in the number of non-believers in Turkey where the majority is Muslim may not be a sufficient basis for secularization debates. 21st century Islam, unlike Christianity, aims to touch every aspect of human life, from clothing, catering, wedding, friendship, sexuality to family relations, etc. Therefore, although changes in frequency of praying and number of believers are important issues and deserve to be analyzed, the issue that should be particularly examined is the degree in which the metaphysical realm is reflected in daily social life. However, as the theories below are evaluated, it has to be emphasized that this discussion is done using their own secularization measurement methods.

**Religious Market Model (RMM)**

The Religious Market Model is based on two fundamental assumptions. The first assumption is that a fruitful religious life is suppressed by a religious monopoly (Stark and Bainbridge, 1985). Advocates of RMM explain the secularization process via the lack of a free market in religious goods as well as a lack of competition among religious suppliers (Iannaccone, 1991). Finke and Stark (1988) consider competition between religious providers a motivation for religious growth, as various religions and religious sects/denominations are seen as the main players in religious economies. They claim that competition between suppliers in an open religious economy rejuvenates religious mobilization and this “forces each religious body to appeal successfully to some segment of the religious market, or to slide into oblivion” (Finke & Stark, 1988: 47). Therefore, secular-
ORIZATION OF SOCIETIES SEEMS TO BE A CONSEQUENCE OF RELIGIOUS MARKET REGULATION BY THE STATE.

THE SECOND ASSUMPTION OF THIS THEORY IS THAT THE DEMAND FOR RELIGIOUS PRODUCTS IS CONSTANT, I.E. RELIGIOUS NEED IS INNATE TO HUMAN NATURE. THEREFORE, IF THERE ARE ENOUGH SUPPLIERS (TO SATISFY DIFFERENT CONSUMERS) IN RELIGIOUS GOODS, THEN IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE A HIGH DEGREE OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY. INDIVIDUALS ARE ASSUMED, FOR SURE, TO CHOOSE CONVENIENT RELIGIOUS GOODS FOR THEMSELVES AS LONG AS REASONABLE RELIGIOUS SUPPLIERS ARE NOT Hindered BY THE STATE. THESE TWO ASSUMPTIONS TAKEN TOGETHER CAN BE RENDERED AS FOLLOWS: “(...) RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY WILL BE LIKELY TO INCREASE WHERE THERE IS ABUNDANT SUPPLY OF RELIGIOUS CHOICES, OFFERED BY A WIDE RANGE OF ‘FIRMS’ (RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS OF VARIOUS KINDS.); IT WILL BE LIKELY TO DIMINISH WHERE SUCH SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED” (BERGER, DAVIE & FOKAS, 2008: 35).

IN COMPARISON TO CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN OTHER MODERN COUNTRIES, THE HIGH CHURCH ATTENDANCE RATE IN THE USA IS USED BY ADVOCATES TO SUBSTANTIATE RMM. THEY ARGUE THAT AMERICANS ARE LESS SECULAR THAN OTHER MODERN NATIONS, NOT BECAUSE OF A LOW LEVEL OF MODERNIZATION, BUT BECAUSE CHURCHES IN THE USA ARE SUBJECTED TO THE UNPREDICTABLE NATURE OF MARKET FORCES AND HAVE TO COMPETE TO SELL THEIR GOODS TO THE CONSUMER, I.E. THEY HAVE TO BECOME ATTRACTION. BY CONTRAST, EUROPEAN CHURCHES, THEY BELIEVE, ARE NOT SUBJECTED TO MARKET FORCES. IT MEANS THAT THOSE CHURCHES DO NOT HAVE TO ATTRACT “CONSUMERS” SINCE THEY ARE ALREADY SUBSIDIZED BY THE STATE THOUGH THIS SUBSIDY DIFFERS VERY MUCH FROM ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER. FOR STARK AND FINKE, A SOCIALIZED RELIGIOUS ECONOMY DOMINATED MOST OF EUROPE, AND THAT IS THE REASON FOR THE AGGRESSIVE SECULARIZATION PROCESS IN THOSE SOCIETIES:

The RMM advocates the belief that having a secure income and certain privileges play a decisive role in the tendency towards laziness and slack among the clergy. Therefore, if it is necessary to accuse someone/something of the low level of religious activity in Europe, while assuming human beings are born de facto with religious need, then the men of religion have to blame themselves for not being able to attract people to their churches (Stark & Finke, 2000).

Although at first glance RMM seems to supply a plausible answer for the different secularization levels of societies with similar levels of modernization, I still have some doubts about the validity of the theory. Of course, a diverse range of churches and a free market religious economy might lead to an increase in the tendency among consumers to embrace a relatively more fruitful religious life in some parts of the world. However, this theory, as indicated, has two basic important assumptions even though there have not been sufficient attempts to prove whether those assumptions are indeed true. The first assumption is that a religious monopoly decreases religious activity, while the second is that the demand for religious products is innate to human nature and therefore constant.

For the first assumption, it might be asserted that examples within Europe (Bruce, 1995; 2000; 2001) and the rest of the world do not confirm RMM’s main doctrines. As Gorski (2000) rightly argues, the lack of religious market has not played a role in the decline of traditional religious beliefs and involvement in institutionalized religion throughout European history. If the basic tenets of RMM would be true, then we would be entitled to expect that religious monopoly in European countries would have been the main reason behind the aggressive secularization process that started back in the late nineteenth century and which accelerated after the 1950s. However, as Gorski (2000) stresses, it was not religious monopolization, but religious deregulation that increased during that period. Besides, modern day European societies do not support the basic tenets of RMM either. For example, although Poland and Ireland
do have a religious monopoly, they, contrary to what Stark and Finke claim, have been enjoying a high level of religiosity compared to other European societies. It seems that the examples of Poland and Ireland, where church attendance is high in comparison to other more pluralist countries like Netherlands or the UK, and where there is a solid religious monopoly, create problems for the RMM.

In addition, church attendance is higher in monopolistic Catholic countries than in the Lutheran countries (Davie, 2002). Not only Europe, but many other countries across the world do not conform to the RMM. The interesting thing is that, although the USA at first glance seems to fit RMM, and proponents of the theory put the USA forward all the time to prove their theory, there is no hard evidence to support that increasing liberalization and state deregulation work against persistent rates of religious decline even in the USA. By contrast, academic studies indicate that a steady secularization process has already been experienced in the USA as well (Bruce, 1993; Norris & Inglehart, 2007).

I think that we can make some critical evaluations of the secularization process in the USA at this point. First of all, contrary to popular myth, the rate of church attendance has steadily been dropping in the USA for decades (Barna, 2001, December 17), and the percentage of people who do not believe has increased from 2% in the 1950s to 14% at the beginning of the 21st century (Bruce, 2002). If this rate is much higher in other modern countries, this does not mean that the USA has become less secular. Secondly, it should be noted that even deeply religious people in the USA prefer to use very secular language (discourse which is not based on religion) to impress public opinion on the subjects of many controversial topics like abortion, gay marriage, etc. Instead of reading passages from the Bible, they choose to emphasize the right to life or wholesome society (Bruce, 2002).

In line with this, trends in first premarital sexual intercourse and changing patterns of nonmarital childbearing do not support the
claim of a less secular society for Americans. Should the dominant religion be Christianity, so it is expected that the changes in these two dynamics evolve in the manner as desired within the traditional values of Christianity. However, data from the National Survey of Family Growth 2002 (7,643 women and 4,928 men were surveyed) indicate that by age 20, 75% had had premarital sex (Finer, 2007). Further, “births to unmarried women totaled 1,714,643 in 2007, 26% more than in 2002. Nearly four in ten U.S. births were to unmarried women in 2007” (Ventura, 2009 May). In addition, almost 50% of Christians in the USA is noted as tolerating couples living together without official marriage, and public support for same-sex marriage has also grown (Giddens, 2006: 432-447). All those transformations do not picture a less secular American society.

Furthermore, this theory does not work either in other English-speaking countries, which are relatively pluralistic. For example, religious pluralism has a negative effect on religiousness in Canada. As Alastair Hay (2014: 19) says “(...) religious pluralism was observed to have a negative effect on all three dependents (religiousity, frequency of religious attendance, belief in parental religion), suggesting that those forms of religious pluralism operating in Canada were more corrosive to belief than supportive of it.” When it comes to New Zealand, the claims of RRM are also not supported by the empirical evidence. According to Statistics New Zealand (2014, April 15), since 2001 the number of irreligious people has increased. The number of people reporting ‘no religion’ was 1,028,049 in 2001, a figure that increased to 1,635,345 in 2013 (more than two in five people or 41.9 percent). And as obsolete and unserviceable churches in Britain have been turned into carpet stores (Bruce, 2002), in Australia there is a marked decrease in church attendance from 30 percent to 13 percent within a 40-year period (1960-1998). At the same time, the number of Australians with no religion has increased from 4% in 1961 to 15.5% in 2001, while the total num-
ber of Christians in the country has also declined from 88% of the population in 1961 to 68% in 2001 (Mason, 2012).

Like the first assumption, the second assumption of RMM, viz. that the demand for religious products is relatively constant because of human nature, remains to be proven. If there would be such a reality in human nature, then RMM theorists should explain the lack of desire for different or alternative ways to salvation after Europeans have become more secular. Against the second assumption, Casanova (2003: 26) argues that “the culprit is not so much the monopolistic laziness of the churches protected by state regulation, but the lack of demand for alternative salvation religions among the unchurched, even in the face of new, enterprising generally unsuccessful, religious suppliers.”

To sum up, when it comes to the validity of RMM, it is not so easy to find hard evidence in support of its basic tenets across the world. As Norris and Inglehart (2008) put it, after studying a large scale of data pertaining to more than 80 countries throughout the world, there is no consequential connection between high religious activity or church attendance and state deregulation.

**Secure Secularization Theory (SST)**

Norris and Inglehart (2008: 4) think that the classical version of the secularization thesis claims that religion will cease to exist due to the modernization process. Therefore, since there are still people who believe in religion in today’s modern societies, they attempt to explain the secularization process by proposing what they call the “Secure Secularization Theory” which grounds itself on the conditions of existential security. They argue that social vulnerability, anxiety and risk lead people to have more recourse to religion. Uncertainties and continuous substantial risks push people towards religion or make them keenly participate in mystical-supranatural activities. If a society cannot escape the threat of natural disasters, poverty, or disease, then it would not be abnormal to expect to come
across people who are deeply religious, as in earlier centuries (Norris & Inglehart, 2008: 216).

Based on this, they expect that religion plays a crucial role in the daily activities of poor agrarian societies (which live under non-welfare states), while the rate of worship and prayer is supposed to be higher than those of industrial/post-industrial societies. On the other hand, they assert that a relatively egalitarian distribution of household incomes, relatively high living standards, an income that guards against the risk of absolute poverty and sense of security in a society would diminish the importance of religion or others with absolute power. That is to say, wealthy and secure nations can be expected to become more secular, i.e. if people experience higher levels of physical and social security, then religion or other absolute powers will be given a lower priority by the public (Norris & Inglehart, 2008: 28).

If the feeling of vulnerability is the basic driver for being religious, then it is possible to run into elevated religious activity due to economic inequality even in rich nations (Norris & Inglehart, 2007: 45). With this premise, Norris and Inglehart argue that the high levels of religious belief and engagement in the USA would be explained through the reality of the distress from losing jobs, inadequate medical insurance, high possibility of being subjected to violence, etc. In line with this, the inhabitants of the wealthy and secure post-industrial nations of Europe, who have less anxiety about almost each aspect of life, are statistically the most secular nations across the world (Berger, Davie & Fokas, 2008): “The secular Scandinavian and West European states remain some of the most egalitarian societies, with an expansive array of welfare services, including comprehensive health care, social services, and pensions” (Norris & Inglehart, 2008: 108). To sum up, SST asserts that since Europeans, unlike Americans, are living in egalitarian, secure and wealthy societies, they are much more secular than all other parts of the world.
Although, at first sight, SST seems to give a very coherent explanation for both Europe and the rest of the world, it is not easy to understand at which point the theory differs from what the classical version of secularization theory asserts. Of course, the levels of social security and wealth do play a crucial role in the secularization process. But, the mere fact that SST emphasizes one particular aspect of the modernization process does not make it another theory. Whatever they mention as the causes that lead to an increase in the secularization level, these are actually outcomes of the modernization process. SST and CST only differ from each other on the subject of secularization in the USA. Contrary to what Norris and Inglehart say about the USA, the American people are more secular now than in the past. Being less secular than other modern societies does not render Americans de facto less secular compared to their own past. When it comes to the secularization level of a society, that society has to be compared to its own past, not with other societies. Therefore, it seems that, apart from the USA, whatever SST claims seems right and is supported by hard evidence. The only problem is that SST, as such, seems to be extracted from the classical version of secularization theory.

**Religious Individualization Theory (RIT)**

The Religious Individualization Theory, which was developed mainly by Thomas Luckmann (*Invisible Religion*) and later by Grace Davie (*Believing without Belonging*), has attracted much attention particularly at the end of the 20th century. RIT assumes that the process of modernization has changed the social form of religion, but this does not mean that there is a decrease in the prestige and power of religion. It is true that, according to the advocates of RIT, there is a negative correlation between modernization and church attendance; however, the demise of traditional churches should not be confused with loss of religiosity of the individual. Actually, on the
contrary, the undisputable decline of traditional churches and the increase in individual religiosity correlate:

According to the individualization theory, traditional and institutionalized forms of religiosity will be increasingly replaced by more subjective ones detached from church, individually chosen, and syncretistic in character. (...) The individualization thesis utilizes a distinction between church and religion in order to distance itself from the secularization theory. In this view, individuals are increasingly freeing themselves from institutional guidelines in their religious ideas and behaviours, and thus increasingly making their own decisions about their religion. In consequence, ever more subjective forms of religion are purportedly replacing institutionalized ones (Pollack & Pickel, 2007: 603-604).

Luckmann (1967: 68) says that due to functional differentiation established religious institutions are not able to represent the entire holy universe anymore. But a decline in the power of traditional institutions does not have a positive correlation with the decline in individual faith. Maybe the metanarratives of traditional religious institutions cannot offer a personally meaningful system for individuals anymore, but individuals, in their private spheres, still believe “in a relatively autonomous fashion.”

The renowned phrase of “believing without belonging” has become a motto of this theory at the end of the 20th century. Not believing in the disappearance of the sacred, Davie (1990) argues that individual religious faith has been distanced from traditional religious belonging and Europeans do not want to put their belief into practice even though they still want to believe:

Why is it, for example, that the majority of British People - in common with many other Europeans - persist in believing (if only in an ordinary God), but see no need to participate with even minimal regularity in their religious institutions? Indeed most people in this country - whatever their denominational allegiance - express their religious sentiments by staying away from, rather than going to, their places of worship (Davie, 1994: 2).

In short, many Europeans have ceased to connect with their religious institutions in any active sense, but they have not abandoned,
so far, either their deep-seated religious aspirations or (in many cases) a latent sense of belonging (Davie, 2002: 8).

Like Luckmann and Davie, Danièle Hervieu-Leger (cited in Pollack and Pickel, 2007: 604) also emphasizes “an increasing loss of control of the established religious institutions over the belief systems and religious practices of individuals.” But she does not think that individualization in belief leads to an increase in secularization or that individual religiosity is damaged.

Although RIT is widely supported by many respected scholars, it is not easy to find hard evidence in support of this theory either. An empirical assessment of RIT by David Voas and Alasdair Crockett (2005) and by Pollack and Pickel (2007) indicates that neither the UK nor Germany support the claims of the advocates of RIT. After a statistical analysis of the data from both the British Household Panel Survey (conducted by the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex) and the British Social Attitudes Survey (conducted by the National Centre for Social Research), Voas and Alasdair arrived at the following conclusion:

(...) belief has in fact eroded in Britain at the same rate as two key aspects of belonging: religious affiliation and attendance. Levels of belief are lower than those of nominal belonging. The roles of period, cohort and age effects on religious change are considered; the conclusion is that decline is generational. In relation to the rates at which religion is transmitted from parents to children, the results suggest that only about half of parental religiosity is successfully transmitted, while absence of religion is almost always passed on. Transmission is just as weak for believing as for belonging (2005: 11).

Pollack and Pickel (2007: 603) also studied the empirical validity of RIT “on the basis of how religiosity and church affiliation have evolved in Germany over the past 50 years.” Here is their conclusion: “(...) the rise of individually determined non-church religiosity cannot compensate for the losses of institutionalized religiosity, since non-church religiosity remains rather marginal and is interwoven with traditional Christian religiosity.” In addition, some
scholars have come up with a new term in opposition to believing without belonging: *belonging without believing*. Brian Mountford, author of *Christian Atheist*, defines those in the category of “belonging without believing” in this way:

> [these are] people, who value the cultural heritage of Christianity - its language, art, music, moral compass, sense of transcendence - without actually believing in God; or, at least without believing in God in a way that would satisfy Christian orthodoxy, particularly in the metaphysics department (2011: 1).

Like Mountford, Esther McIntosh (2015) considers the popularity of “virtual” religious revival as a significant move towards belonging without believing.

By the end of the day, it should be noted that, although RRM and RIT are advanced and adhered to by some very respected scholars, neither of them are supported by hard evidence, nor do they, in comparison with classical theory, provide a better insight into secularization process of societies. SST is supported by hard evidence, but it is not easy to get at which point the SST differs from the classical version of secularization theory.

In the following chapter, in a clear departure from Bruce, I will argue that his paradigm is not only valid for European societies, but for every society at large. However, to extend the scope of the paradigm in its relevance, Bruce’s secularization paradigm needs to be revised. In attempting this, aspects of his paradigm that belong to the specific history of Europe and its offshoots will be downplayed while those with more universal relevance, i.e. science, capitalism and urbanization, will be highlighted.