Re-Thinking Religious Diversity: Diversities and Governance of Diversities in "Post-Societies"

Siniša Zrinščak

Introduction

It has become highly problematic to describe modern European societies in terms of religious diversity and religious pluralism. Europe has been religiously diverse for centuries but what we witness today is the acceleration of diversity – in terms of different types of both religious and non-religious and (or) spiritual belonging. However, the meanings and social consequences of this process are far from obvious. The social acceptance of diversity is quite ambiguous and public (state) management of diversity differs highly among countries and has become a topic of heated public debates. There are contradictory processes at play here. On the one hand, diversity is a visible public fact and modern societies describe and understand themselves in pluralistic terms. In the European Union this has been accompanied by anti-discrimination policies, which include the anti-discrimination provision on grounds of religion or belief (as well as racial and ethnic origin, which is relevant when religion is closely intertwined with ethnicity). Acceptance of diversity is also visible in the "disestablishment" process in the Church-state relations, as certain European countries have dissolved their strong ties with the state or national Churches, as well as in the emergence of what is known as the European model of Church and state, partly seen in the protection of religious freedom and rights and neutrality of the state in exclusively religious matters (Robers 2005; Torfs 2007). On the other hand, religious discrimination has been on the rise around the globe and though Western democracies (including Western European states) are still far more tolerant and pluralist in comparison to other world regions, there are also patterns of rising religious discrimination, rising religious regulation, and rising religious legislation (Fox 2007, 2010) in these countries as well. While controversies about Islam are part of this process, this should not be reduced to the question

S. Zrinščak (✉)
Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Trg m. Tita 3, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia
e-mail: sinisa.zrinscak@pravo.hr

of the Muslim presence in Europe and how different Islamic traditions are (or are not) in concordance with the European, mostly secular, public spaces, as many European countries continue to discriminate against (or try to highly regulate) non-traditional minority religions, including those which are known as new religious movements (Richardson and Lykes 2012). Fox argued also that "the most common increases in religious discrimination between 1990 and 2008 were new anti-sect laws or policies" in Western democracies (Fox 2012: 174).

Post-communist societies are usually seen as a particular case in regard to the issues of diversity and pluralism. Although there is a general appreciation of high diversity among them in terms of basic religious landscape, post-communist Europe is largely described as a region in which revitalization of religion has been manifested in the post-1989 period, and a region in which controversies about Church and state are particularly high. This is mainly a result of the attempts of traditional Churches to regain the public (and political) influence they had in the pre-communist times, attempts which contradict the position and rights of other (minority and new) religions and which clash with opposing views on the issues of secularity in modern Europe. Yet another, more complicated case concerns the countries with a recent history of violent conflicts (such as wars in post-Yugoslav countries) where religions, as important markers of separate ethnic identities, played a significant social role.

However, the argument here is that a comparative view on the issues of public acceptance of religious diversity and the Church-state relations in Western and Eastern European countries shows that the line of difference does not run between Western countries with a longer democratic history and Eastern countries with a burden of the communist past, but between the countries (both Western and Eastern) which impose a high degree of regulation on minority or new religions and those which seem to be more tolerant of public religious issues. Also, a closer look inside one particular country shows that the issue of regulation of religion is a highly complex reality. This chapter, therefore, draws on a previous work which argues that (1) in regard to the Church-state relations post-communist Europe does not presents a unique case and Europe as a such faces a more general problem of balancing historically shaped Church-state relations that favoured traditional churches with the rising religious and socio-cultural pluralism; (2) that there is no clear connection between the general socio-religious profile of one country and its Church-state relations, i.e. that the countries which are similar in terms of high or low religiosity or high or low religious monopoly are not, at the same time, similar in terms of their Church-state relations; (3) that, in order to understand a basic socio-religious configuration, more attention should be paid to social expectations of people about the public (social) role of Churches; (4) that there is a need to complement studies of the Church-state relations with new understandings of (individual and group) identity construction in contemporary societies (Zrinščak 2011). Drawing on these arguments, this chapter seeks to investigate factors which shape the way religions have been regulated and the way in which this regulation can be understood in relation to diversity and pluralism. In particular, the first and main section of the chapter focuses on the Church-state relations in Croatia, which

is usually described as a country with a dominance of collectivistic religions and/or a post-conflict country with a burden of the dominant religion's exclusionary effects on others, but which at the same time maintains public recognition and acceptance, though in different degrees, of a wide range of minority religions. Theoretically, the question is whether the notion of collectivistic religion helps in understanding its way of developing relations to other religions, and what is the role of other social factors in that respect. The next section expands to other post-communist countries and the way they deal with the diverse religious landscape, particularly by examining phases of regulations in different countries. Theoretically, the question is whether the notion of post-communist social space helps in understanding the ways in which different countries deal with their religions. The final, concluding section connects the analysis of Croatia and other post-communist countries with a general discussion on the public recognition of religions in Europe and briefly discusses results of the analysis in the light of future research agenda.

Without going into details, it should be noted that the chapter follows the authors who differentiate between (1) religious diversity as a fact or description of religiously diverse reality (meaning different religions or individuals who are free to build/combine their religious identity), (2) religious corporate pluralism or acceptance/recognition of different religions in the public sphere and (3) (full) religious freedom or religious pluralism as a (positive) value (Dobbelaere and Billiet 2003; Beckford 2003). Although these meanings can be further explored in their different usage, this chapter mainly deals with the recognition of different religions in the public sphere, which is mainly conditioned by the state regulation and by public expectations about their social roles. Thus, it demonstrates further that sociology needs more knowledge about the circumstances and factors influencing ways and forms of the public recognition of different religions in different societies.

Croatia: Religious Diversity in "Post-Yugoslav", "Post-communist" and "Post-conflict" Society

Church and State: Two Phases and Three Tiers

In terms of the Church-state relation, Croatian post-communist history can be divided into two phases. The 1990s are characterized by the transition from the communist to post-communist social order. However, in the case of Croatia this period was marked by the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia and building of an independent Croatian state, the process which was accompanied by its war of independence and by the war in the neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of this had considerable effects on the overall social development. Religion was an important part of the overall social processes in the post-communist period. However, this importance comes not only because religion was an important marker of the identity of different nations in the former Yugoslavia (which simply blew up

during its downfall), but also because the communist treatment of religions enhanced their political features. Although religion was very much present in everyday lives of the majority of people, religion did not have access to the public scene and though the way it could operate in society was strictly prescribed by the regime, Churches were actually the only social institutions which were not totally controlled by the state and which had a capacity for articulating anti-communist voices. Thus, the immediate post-communist period brought social benefits mainly to the Catholic Church, and was conditioned by restrictions on religion in communism and general support for religion in post-communism, but mainly by the nation- and state-building process which further strengthened the link between the Catholic Church and the Croatian nation. Hence, the Government introduced confessional education in public schools as a non-obligatory subject and in 1996 and 1998 signed four agreements with the Holy See on the position of the Catholic Church, which regulated their numerous rights: from acknowledgement of its full legal entity, co-operation with the state in numerous fields (education, culture, social services, military and police, etc.) to the partial co-funding from the state budget.[1] By regulating the relation with the Catholic Church in such a way and in line with the Constitutional principle of separation of the Church and the state, Croatia positioned itself among the European countries which follow the so-called concordat or co-operation model between the Church and the state (Ferrari 2003a, b; Robers 2005).

During this first phase, other religious communities were free to operate, but their position and rights were not regulated and the issue of their social position was not part of the public agenda. That changed in the early 2000s, when the party in power changed for the first time after 1990. The newly elected left-centre coalition opted for a more democratic development and re-established its relations with the EU with a clear goal to effectively start the process of joining the EU (Stubbs and Zrinščak 2009). Part of this agenda was equality of other religions, vivified in passing the Law on the Legal Position of Religious Communities in 2002, which regulated the procedure of registration by the Ministry of Administration. Moreover, the Law envisaged the possibility of concluding agreements between the Government and respected religious communities on issues of mutual interests which would grant them the rights enjoyed by the Catholic Church on the basis of agreements with the Holy See. Following this Law and further Government's regulation on the criteria for signing the agreements (passed in 2004), the Government concluded a total of seven agreements with 16 (mainly traditional) religious communities, from the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Islamic Community, several Protestant communities, to two Jewish communities which exist in Croatia. The political climate changed after the Law came into force in 2002, which provoked some backlashes in the willingness of the Government to further recognize the rights of smaller religious communities (the backlash came in 2004 when the right-wing party came back to power and indeed did not change when the left-wing party

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[1] More on that in Zrinščak (2004, 2007).

came back to power in 2011!). Still, the Law had a very positive influence on the position of religious communities and, as religious communities themselves have been very positive about the overall legislative framework in Croatia up to today, the post-2000 period is here treated as one period or as the second phase in terms of the Church-state relations, despite the backlash.

Governmental actions in the first and the second period resulted in the system which is known in many European countries as a three-tier system. The first tier is occupied by the Catholic Church due to international agreements which guarantee its rights but also due to its position and overall social role and influence. In this respect, it is worth highlighting that according to the 2011 Census, 86.28 % of citizens belong to the Catholic Church. The second tier comprises religions that have agreements with the Government in place. The Agreements grant them (at least at the normative level) the same rights enjoyed by the Catholic Church. The third tier comprises all other religious communities which are registered as such and which, on the basis of this registration can operate freely, but as they do not have an agreement with the Government they cannot enjoy additional rights, such as having confessional education in public schools, official (*eo ipso*) recognition of religious marriage, funding from the state budget, etc. This third tier could be even further distinguished into two additional ones. The Law of 2002 introduced differences between the then existing religious communities which were able to perform a simple registration procedure and the new ones, those established after the law had come into force, whose registration was complicated by additional criteria: at least 5 years of existence as citizens association and having at least 500 members – the criteria (particularly the latter) which many of the "old" religious communities do not comply with. Although it is not easy to obtain official (detailed) data and to assess what all this actually brings in respect to the public recognition of smaller religious communities, the fact is that Croatia has a total of 44 registered religious communities – 17 with the agreements and 27 without the agreements with the Government. In relation to further analysis, it should be noted that among the registered religious communities in Croatia there are also those which provoke debates and introduction of restrictions in some other countries, such as Jehovah's Witnesses or the Church of Scientology.

A Puzzle About Public Recognition: Islam vs. Small Protestant Churches

In the same year when the Law on the Legal Position of Religious Communities was adopted by the Croatian Parliament (2002), the Government signed the first agreements with two traditional religious communities, the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Islamic Community. According to the 2001 Census (a year prior to signing of the agreements) these were minority communities (accounting for 4.42 % and 1.28 % respectively) with a history of conflicts or at least tensions, as

they also represent different nations, Serbs and Bosniaks. However, due to the fact that these are traditional and old religious communities with a long-standing presence, and due to the wish of the Government to respect their rights thus exemplifying its strong democratic and pro-European stance, these were the first two communities which were able to exercise the rights set out in the 2002 Law.

Thus, the agreement with the Islamic Community regulated a range of rights, from the right to organize confessional education in public schools (based on the number of pupils who were interested in Islamic education), the right to establish their own schools, educational, cultural, and social institutions which were recognized and co-funded by the state, to the official recognition of religious marriage, chaplaincy in military and police forces, the right to be free or not to go to school during religious holidays, etc. As underlined on several occasions and reiterated over the years by the leaders of the Islamic Community in Croatia, this agreement and its observance in everyday life at the national and local levels, places Croatia among a few European countries to have officially recognized Islam (Austria, Belgium, Spain), which is a precondition for the full equality. Moreover, the Islamic Community leaders have been heard to say that Croatia has the best solution for "Islam issues" in Europe and can therefore be a role-model for other countries.[2]

Such a favourable image of respecting religious diversity has a different face when it comes to a few particular religious communities wishing to sign agreements with the Government. The Government firmly declined to do so. Although the Government signed agreements with a few Protestant and other Christian Churches (such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Reformed Christian Church, the Evangelical (Pentecostal) Church, the Christian Adventist Church, the Union of Baptist Churches, etc.), it declined to do so with three small Churches – the Protestant Reformed Christian Church in the Republic of Croatia, the Full Gospel Church and the Word of Life Church. The argument was that they did not comply with the criteria for signing the agreements that the Government passed under the Governmental Conclusion in December 2004. It has to be noted that this Conclusion established additional criteria not envisaged by the Law itself and, moreover, the Government itself did not observe them in the case of some other religious communities with which it signed agreements in the following years. After the case had not been settled in Croatia and after the Constitutional Court had declared it had no jurisdiction over passing such a decision, in December 2010 the case was brought before the European Court of Human Rights, which ruled in favour of these communities. However, the ruling has not been implemented so far (late 2013) and, what is more, this issue has not been high on the public agenda in the meantime.[3]

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[2] Interview by Aziz ef. Hasanović, leader of the Islamic Community in Croatia: http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/hasanovic-hrvatska-primjer-zemljama-evrope (Accessed 15 September 2013).

[3] More about that in Zrinščak et al. (2014).

What to make of this puzzle: recognition of full rights to some religious communities (or rather to many of them, including those with a history of conflicts and tensions) and denial of the same rights to some others? What places Croatia among a few European countries that fully recognize the Islamic community and why the same is not extended to others? Are the reasons of sociological interest and what are the social consequences?

Collectivistic Religions and Their Capacity for Otherness

In searching for the answer, I will rely on the concept of "collectivistic religions" introduced and extensively analyzed by Slavica Jakelić (2010). In brief, her main thesis is as follows: "the analytic perspective that focuses on choice correctly recognizes one large part of contemporary religiosity, but omits its other major component: the millions of people around the globe who were 'born into' some religious group rather than religiosity 'born again'. They experience their religion as ascribed to them rather than chosen by them as fixed rather than changeable, despite *and* because of the fact that their religious identities are profoundly shaped by the historical and cultural particularities of their social location" (Jakelić 2010: 1). She argues that collectivistic religious traditions are generally viewed with suspicion. The general (dominant) perception is that collectivistic religion is a kind of dying phenomenon which will be replaced by voluntary religious belonging and that Western Europe is both 'seculariz*ed*' and 'seculariz*ing*'. The idea that collectivistic religions are always reduced (or reducible) to something else because they are identity-oriented is, according to her, historically but also theoretically problematic. This is based on an implicit theory of religion, which understands religion to be about beliefs and rituals (i.e. theology) and not about a kind of belonging that shapes communal boundaries (i.e. identity, culture, or politics) (pp. 9–10). On the contrary, the notion of collectivistic religion puts forward threefold claim: "first, that religions have long been and still are a source of collective identity in their own right; second, that religions, when constitutive of collective identities, are highly adaptable to historical changes: and, finally, that collectivistic religions offer viable resources for tolerance of religious Others, despite their role in establishing group differences" (p. 187). Furthermore, in a detailed analysis of the role of (collectivistic) Catholic Church in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Slovenia (extended as well to the study of the role of respective dominant Churches in Greece, Ireland, and Poland), it is shown that the theoretical perspective which reduces collectivistic religions to 'religious nationalism' and portrays them as essentially anti-modern and intolerant is fully wrong. Yes, they produce such results, but they also produce completely opposite ones. It is because the Church is not a monolith unity itself and also because different social circumstances and different social localities shape the way religion produces specific social consequences. Temporal dimension is easily overlooked in that respect, but (collectivistic) religions change over time. Moreover, the religious

life is not reducible to the image of a dominant and powerful Church. Quite the contrary, strong institutional religiosity co-exists with individualized, personally shaped religiosity in a country such as Croatia (Nikodem and Zrinščak 2012).

Going back to the issue of the role of Islam in Croatia, several historical facts are of interest. The coming of Islam to the territory of Croatia and particularly neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina was connected with the Ottoman invasion. Throughout the centuries, Islam has been perceived as a completely different religion, as a religious other, religion (and culture) which had threatened the essence of Christian Europe. Still, Islam has remained a dominant religion in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Ottoman Empire collapsed and as such became a part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire and later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918–1941) and communist Yugoslavia (1945–1991). The public recognition of Islam as a religion with full equal rights goes back to that period. The Croatian Parliament, which existed at that time, although with a limited purview, passed a law on the recognition of Islam as an official religion in 1916, following the same law passed in the Austrian Parliament in 1912 (Potz 2005). Future position of Islam was very much connected with the political turnovers that dominated the territory of Croatia and former Yugoslavia throughout the twentieth century. Besides the communist repression in the post-WWII period, particularly in relation to the public visibility of religions, the issue was the recognition of Bosniak people as a separate ethnic group in line with their separate religious identity (Islam). The separate identity was questioned due to several historical reasons but particularly due to the fact that Bosniaks speak the same or very similar language as Croats and Serbs which are other majority ethnic groups that live in Bosnia and Herzegovina and whose motherlands are neighbouring Croatia and Serbia. This was solved in the 1960s when the communist Government officially recognized Muslim people as a separate nation. The term Muslim was understood to have a secular meaning, but with an obvious implicit recognition that the Ottomans and Islam as the dominant religion created a group which differs from Croats and Serbs in its ethnic dimension. In the post-Yugoslav period Muslims renamed themselves Bosniaks based on their ethnic belonging, while underlining the strong connection between their ethnic (Bosniak) and religious (Islam) identity. Despite the fact that religion has been the main marker of difference between Croats (Catholics), Serbs (Orthodox) and Muslims or later Bosniaks (Islam) and thus an important part of shaping group boundaries, similarities in language, and partly culture, and the long history of co-existence, albeit marked with tensions and conflicts, gave rise to both inclusionary and exclusionary effects of religion towards the Other. Which effects would occur and prevail depended on the complex relations between history and contemporary social processes. This was visible during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the early and mid 1990s. In one period of the war there was an armed conflict between Croats and Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the conflict that disrupted the alliance between Croats and Bosniaks who had jointly faced Serbs' intention to dissolve Bosnia and Herzegovina as one country. As the armed conflict involved ethnic groups with very different religions (Catholicism and Islam), it immediately acquired religious features as well, particularly visible in the use of religious

symbols in order to mark and enforce separate identity (Pace 2004; Zrinščak 2002). Interestingly, a part of the Catholic Church supported the conflict, but the other part (the larger one) strongly opposed it both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia. The then Archbishop of Zagreb and president of the Croatian Bishop Conference, Cardinal Kuharić, known as the religious leader who firmly supported the independence of Croatia during the break-up of Yugoslavia and underlined the link between the Croatian ethnic identity and religious Catholic belonging, also firmly opposed the conflict between Croats and Bosniaks.

To sum up, both inclusionary and exclusionary effects of Catholicism on other religions can be traced throughout history to the present day. As regards the position of Islam in Croatia, the inclusionary effects prevail due to a number of reasons. Similarities in language and (partly) culture are important factors in this regard, in line with the Europeanization process which was translated into the need to respect others. The issue of similarity is particularly interesting and needs further elaboration, the one that exceeds the scope of this paper. Still, the long history of co-existence and the fact that the Muslims who live in Bosnia and Herzegovina are autochthonous people and that those who live in Croatia today are those who had (mainly) come to Croatia in search of jobs during the Yugoslavian period, have evoked the widespread feeling that the possibility of not recognizing full rights of the Islamic Community is simply out of question. It is also quite interesting that this happened at a time when major configuration of the way Islam was living was going on. The post-communist circumstances, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina which had some religious features and the support to and influence on Muslims by other countries with the Muslim majority provoked the growth of religiosity in Bosnia but also internal differences in Islam. There is no need to exaggerate, but volunteers and soldiers who came to Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war from other countries brought pluralisation of Islam in Bosnia. At the same time, leaders of the Islamic Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been very eager to underline the European character of Islam in European countries, as visible in the launch of an official document entitled "A Declaration of European Muslims" (2006), issued by the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but fully endorsed by the Islamic Community in Croatia and officially released in Zagreb, the Croatian capital, not in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mustafa Cerić, the then Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina, said that this document could be viewed as an appeal to: (1) the European audience not to make a mistake in generalizing Muslims and not to spread Islamophobia, (2) to the Muslims who live in Europe to take seriously events in New York (September 2001), Madrid (March 2004) and London (July 2005) that may have great consequences for their stay in Europe and their status in Europe, and (3) to the Muslim world at large to help the Muslims in the West, and especially in Europe, to develop a kind of dialogue that would be acceptable to Muslims and to Europeans. This Declaration was prompted, among other things, by the fact that the Muslims with centuries-long presence in Europe differ in cultural, but also in religious terms, from the Muslims in other parts of the world.

As shown, the circumstances which favour public recognition of specific religious communities are complex and include both historical and contemporary factors. Therefore, the capacities of societies to produce tolerance towards and recognition of others are not reducible to a single factor. Social distance, as a usual measurement of attitudes towards others is, as this analysis suggests, just one of the elements in creating a full picture of the social status of a group. Thus, in the Croatian case, there is a mismatch between the results of the social distance towards Muslims and their public recognition. A comprehensive analysis of anti-Muslim prejudice in Europe based on the 1999–2001 European Value Survey data has reported that the social distance towards Muslims (measured as a percentage of those not willing to have Muslims as their neighbours) is in general higher in Eastern Europe than in Western Europe, while in Croatia it is higher than the Eastern European average (Strabac and Listhaug 2008). Also, interestingly, religiosity does not have strong positive effects on prejudice towards Muslims.

While not downplaying the effects of prejudice or denying the social effects that the existing intolerance towards different minorities in the Croatian society may have, this chapter would support the thesis that one set of factors in the relation between Muslim minorities and the majority population are "to a larger degree under national control", as well as that "national attempts to develop harmonious relations between the majority population and Muslim minorities might prove to be an especially challenging endeavour" (Strabac and Listhaug 2008: 283–284). This point underlines that the state capacity for full recognition of others should not be reduced to the religious capacity of developing full respect for different religions/groups. Although this chapter deals with religions and the way the religious role in shaping group differences influences the position of religious others, it suggests that even when a religion assumes a collectivistic social role, religion is not reducible to such a role, and particularly that a society is much more than the entity produced by religion and ethnic links.

Assuming this is so, then why is full recognition not extended to small Protestant Churches as compared to the Islamic Community and other Protestant Churches (and other Christian and Jewish ones) which have been recognised and enjoy special rights?

The reasons are far from obvious. No single official explanation has been offered during all these years. Even more, the issue has not attracted much public interest, and this fact could indeed be part of the answer. The position of the Catholic Church is an issue which provokes heated public debates. The social position of Muslims, Orthodox Christians or Jews is an issue that attracts public interest. Opinions diverge on both issues, but the public interest and sensitivity is present. For specific reasons (such as those explained here in regard to the Islamic Community) these Churches and communities can provoke public concerns about their rights, though this is not to suggest that the public is unanimously in favour of their full rights. Still, the official standpoint has not questioned the need for their equal treatment and this standpoint has not provoked a single opposition (at least not a public one). Several Protestant and other Christian Churches, such as Lutherans, Baptists, Calvinists, Pentecostals, Adventists, Churches of Christ received the same

treatment (recognition of full rights by signing agreements with the Government), but this was not the case with the Churches briefly outlined previously. In general, the public interest in any Protestant Church is hardly noticeable. They simply do not have the capacity to attract the interest of the public in their problems or in resolving problems with the implementation of the Agreements or in the life of those Churches which are registered and can freely operate but cannot enjoy the same rights as others. It should be also noted that these are small communities, not well known and that some of them are generally labelled as small religious communities, or even sects, giving rise to public suspicion. Also, as heard in the public discourse from time to time, particularly during the Parliamentary and public debate on passing the Law on the Legal Position of Religious Communities, the question remains of where to draw the line? There is no general support in favour of the same treatment of all religious communities irrespectively of their history, teachings and particularly their size. This suggests that the social meaning of "equality" and "recognition" is far more complex than usually perceived.

Religious Diversity and "Post-communist" Space

Although the term post-communist has been widely used, the analysis mentioned earlier concerning the Church-state relations in "post-communist" Europe suggests a very limited explorative power of such a term for two main reasons (Zrinščak 2011). The first one is related to a huge diversity of post-communist societies in a number of aspects: history, post-communist transition, social development and prospects, religious composition, level of religiosity and ways in which their Church-state relations have been developing. The second one is related to the numerous similarities in the Church-state relations between Western and Eastern Europe and the same dilemmas they face, though in slightly different degrees and ways.

Religious diversity is a fact of Central and Eastern European countries as the region comprises countries with very different confessional traditions (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Muslim, etc.) with a long-standing existence in the region as a whole. On the other hand, there are countries which are very monolithic, as more than 90 % of their population belongs to one confession ("Catholic" Poland, "Orthodox" Romania), and countries with different confessions, or those with a large share of atheists (Hungary, Czech Republic and Estonia). The important thing is that diversity is a historical fact, and although it was influenced by atheist regimes, it has not changed as such during the twentieth century. However, the post-communist transition brought about profound social transformation, which includes pluralisation of thoughts, life styles, religions and different ideological stances about the social position and role of religions, both traditional and new ones. This means that the diversity experienced in the post-communist period has been significant, but still different from the one experienced by many Western

European countries, as these countries have still not faced immigration from non-European countries.

These aspects of post-communist social transformation have been reflected in two phases of the Church-state relations which, interestingly, partly differ from what has been described in regard to Croatia. On a more abstract level, it is interesting to note that in many countries the immediate post-communist period (the early and mid 1990s) brought about overall liberalization (as a general reaction to the communist times), which included very liberal conditions for the registration of religions, new ones as well. That triggered opposition from dominant Churches as well as from large sections of society and initiated passing of stricter regulation and stricter conditions for obtaining certain rights. Hungary passed a law in 1990 by which requirements for registration of Churches and other religious communities were quite formal, resulting in the most liberal or permissive regime of the Church-state relations in Europe (Schanda 2003, 2005; Uitz 2012).[4] In the meantime there were several attempts to make requirements stricter, particularly in relation to "dubious sects". However, these initiatives have faced opposition, demonstrating that social consensus on such issues is hardly possible. Still, the Law was amended in late 2011 allowing only a limited number out of over 200 religious associations under the 1990 Law to continue enjoying the Church status, while all others remain religious associations with limited privileges (Uitz 2012). The Czech Republic had a different trajectory, but the consequences are similar (Tretera 2005; Moravčikova 2012). According to the 1992 Law the registration was possible for the religious communities with 10,000 members or 500 members if they belonged to the World Council of Churches. The 2002 amendments made the requirements much easier (only 300 members), but the same Law limited the rights of newly registered communities and the rights such as the right to teach religion in public schools, to have pastoral care in prisons and army, etc. are now recognized as "special" and granted only to those communities that have been registered for more than 10 years and have more than 0.1 % of inhabitants as their followers (which is a bit more than 10,000!). Slovakia has a stricter system that was established in 1991 and has not been changed since. Under this system 20,000 adult citizens are necessary in order to meet the registration criteria (Moravčikova 2005, 2012). Poland does not have such a strict system (the basic requirement is that the organization has at least 100 Polish citizens as its members), but nevertheless there are two groups of Churches and religious communities. The first group, which has greater rights, comprises only 14 out of 150 registered Churches and religious communities (Rynkowski 2005). Changes towards much stricter requirements and, moreover, changes towards very limited religious rights occurred in Russia. However, as Russia is, along with some other post-Soviet Union countries, a special case in this regard, it is not covered here under the heading of "post-communist" Europe (Shterin and Richardson 1998, 2000).

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[4] For an overview of Church-Sate relations in Central and Eastern Europe see also Ferrari and Durham Jr. (2003).

Although countries differ with regard to the phases of the Church-state relations in the post-communist period, changes that occurred in the meantime have, in one way or another, brought them, with some variations, to the cooperationist model, which privileges certain traditional Churches and allows other religious communities to act as such and to be present in the public, but without enjoying specific rights. Therefore, a clear two- or three-tier system has been established. All of this causes tensions and debates, which are indeed very similar to those in the majority of Western European countries. As already pointed out, the question is how to achieve a balance between the historically shaped Church-state relations and emerging diversity, or rather how the diversity and overall pluralisation might be transferred in an acceptable social space for very different religions. This is also reflected in the debates about new religious movements in the immediate post-communist period. Public debates were in turn reflected in the analyses of the scholars as well as in the concerns about the position of different religions and about observance of basic human and religious rights (e.g. Barker 1997; Črnič 2007, etc.). While it became obvious in the meantime that social hysteria over spectacular rise of new religious movements has been exaggerated and while countries were trying to find, more or less successfully, ways to accommodate to the changing social and religious landscape, it has also become obvious that the post-communist countries significantly differ in the way they treat new religions. Findings of the analysis of new religious movements in a number of Western and Eastern European countries points to "uniqueness" and "differences" over any clear pattern: "This brief overview reveals tremendous variance in the legal status of NRMs and other minority faiths in the 'new Europe'. Some nations such as Hungary and the Netherlands have seemed more solicitous of minority faiths, while others, such as France and more recently Russia, seem quite hostile to such entities. Also, the pattern of legal protections and opportunities afforded such groups varies by location and time, with great changes sometimes occurring in a short period, as has been the case with Russia" (Richardson and Lykes 2012: 321) (author's highlights).

Instead of Conclusion: Diversities and the Research Agenda in "Post-secular" Europe

Starting from an empirical fact that public acceptance of religious diversity has become highly problematic and has been provoking heated debates, even at the time when contemporary European societies face the acceleration of diversity in different social fields, this chapter has demonstrated that the concepts usually used to describe the countries of Central-Eastern or South-Eastern Europe, such as the "post-communist", "post-Yugoslav" or "post-conflict", are not of much help in analyzing how these countries regulate the position and rights of different religious communities and social consequences thereof. By focusing principally on Croatia, it has proved that a complex combination of social and cultural factors (both

historical and contemporary) is at play in explaining why Croatia, in respect to the rights and privileges that the Islamic Community obtained, can be considered even a role-model for other European countries at the same time when pluralism in general has not been considered as a highly respected value in the Croatian society and when the same rights have not been extended to a few Protestant religious communities. The extension of the analysis to other "post-communist" countries, mainly those Central-European, has shown how they, after having initially embraced religious pluralism, established a two- or three-tier system in which the rights and position of religious communities differ according to their historic and social relevance. Thus, the dominant or national, or in the majority of cases the Catholic Church backed by international agreements with the Holy See, occupied the first tier, followed by other religious communities (usually those historically present) with special privileges and rights, while a range of very different religious communities comes at the end, as they are free to operate but are deprived of enjoying any special privileges. Very interestingly, particularly in view of the consequences for future research agenda in this field, post-communist countries have positioned themselves close to many other Western European countries in which different religious communities have different types of access to the public sphere and can enjoy different types of state support. Moreover, also interesting from the point of view of research agenda is the fact that focusing just on a two- or three-tier system does not help much in explaining the details of how different religious communities are treated in a society and whether some of them face major restrictions in their public appearance. Hence, the multi-tier system which operates in the majority of Western, Central, and Eastern European countries actually hides a huge range of differences in respect to the treatment of different religious communities.

In explaining the particularities of the Croatian situation the chapter relies on the notion of "collectivistic" religions as analyzed by Slavica Jakelić (2010). The use of it was triggered by two main ideas. The first one is that most of the sociological literature describes collectivistic religions as identity-oriented, religions whose main aim is to sustain group boundaries and, consequently, it views them with suspicion because of their alleged consequences (i.e. religious nationalism), but also because it is assumed that collectivistic religions are a dying phenomenon, a phenomenon not pertaining to the modern or post-modern social conditions. Secondly, collectivistic religions are not seen as being capable of producing tolerance towards other religions and other social groups. However, as shown by Jakelić, and as demonstrated in this chapter, collectivistic religions have the capacity for both exclusionary and inclusionary effects towards the Other. Collectivistic religions vary in space and time and the argument is that a detailed ethnographic insight is a precondition for any sociological conclusion about how collectivistic religions influence the regulation of diversity in a specific society.

All that might be of interest for the general research agenda about diversity and particularly on the Church-state relations in Europe. As indicated in the introductory part, religious discrimination has been on the rise around the globe and although Western European countries are still much more tolerant and pluralist as

compared with other parts of the world, they are also experiencing rising religious regulation and very heated public debates with uneven consequences for the rights and positions of different religious communities. The issue is not only Islam, but many other particularly smaller religious communities or new religious movements, public recognition of which is opposed by large sections of societies. This should be connected with an observation that the Church-state relations in (Western) Europe are still heavily influenced by the history, particularly by the way religions had been connected with the process of formation of modern nations and states, and that the normative liberal principle of state neutrality clashes with empirical reality of state involvement in religious matters (Madeley 2003a, b). Still, the reality of the Church-state relations and debates about public religions in Europe, and about (non)secularity, suggest that the state involvement in the regulation of religions, and even higher religious discrimination, is just part of the wider story, i.e. part of the fact that collectivistic religions are realities of Europe, though in different ways and degrees. European identities, political and cultural, whether local, national or global, are strongly connected with religions and religions have continued to play a distinctive role in shaping identities in wider Europe. Whether or not we would agree with a rather normative Casanova's statement (2008) that the European anxiety to recognize Christianity as one of the constitutive components of European cultural and political identity is "responsible" for debates about Islam and other minority religions, the fact is that the role of religion in sustaining a separate identity (and the way these identities interact with other social processes) is a crucial step in understanding if and how diversity is recognized, i.e. the diverse recognition of diversities in different societies. Hence, the concept of collectivistic religions or, in general, the concepts of (religious) identity and (religious) memory (Hervieu-Léger 2000) should be employed more systematically in the contemporary sociology of religion.

Finally, although they were not part of the analysis in this chapter, arguments presented suggest also that research agenda should not be very impressed by the concept of "post-secular" Europe. As it has been shown, the focus on post-secular (which in general wrongly describes the continuing role of religion in different European societies) has diverted attention from the questions of involvement of states in shaping and regulating public response to religious diversity (Beckford 2012). Also, the notion of an open public space inside which secular and religious voices/actors meet and discuss have diverted attention from the fact that public space is heavily influenced by interests and discourses of most powerful social groups (Susen 2011). Therefore, the issue here is not the normative statements on liberal and/or secular preconditions for modern societies or how these principles have (have not) been translated into reality, but rather which groups have the power to shape debates. Which groups define what is equality (or neutrality) and in what ways and what do equality (or neutrality) mean in very practical terms of everyday life? The crucial issue here is a continuing link between religion(s) and identity (ies), and the way in which (in terms of spatial and temporal factors) it influences the Other.

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