

Call for Papers of the section „Sociology of Religion“ for the sections' session at the 37th Congress of the German Society of Sociology „Crises of Routines – Routines of Crisis“, October 6–10, 2014, in Trier (Germany)

Crisis of Religion or Crisis of Secularity?

In recent years a considerable amount of scholars speak of a return of the religious, of the religions, and even of the gods (Graf 2004). Hints at the growing public importance of religions in the context of new conflicts are as well taken as arguments as the examples of new phenomena of religiosity, spirituality or religious community building. This discussion given, the theory of secularization, which for decades had prevailed as paradigm, is often already classified as dead (Stark 1999), predominantly however as out-dated, obsolete or at least as being in a big crisis. And do not the further existence of religions and their public visibility support the existence of a post-secular society and arise at least doubts on the assertiveness of the secular (Habermas 2009)?

But some indications irritate and point also today in the direction of secularization. For example the number of members of religious organizations is as well shrinking as the portion of people, who classify themselves as religious. After all also the discussions on religion at the political level seem to run rather in the direction of a stricter separation between State and Church, or between Religion and Politics. And how are the disputes on Islamic fundamentalism and the abolishment of the transfer of state money to the Churches to be qualified? Are they religious communication, do they hint at the above mentioned greater public visibility of religion, or do they represent something totally different, which has only little to do with religion? Maybe this is about parallel development, that signify as well a crisis of religion as a crisis of the presumption of secularization – or none of both? Here arise the question, whether perhaps on the one and on the other side routines of interpretation (secularization, secularity, return of religions, post-secularity) have got fixed, that in society cannot be proved any more?

The announced session recur at this debate with regard to the question, whether presently we have to do with a crisis of religion or/and with a crisis of the in Europe up to now largely accepted presumption of secularity. Contributions are called for, that either theoretically or empirically deal with this question and submit an appropriate answer. Possible are case studies and internationally comparative studies for Europe. Especially desirable are contributions from this year's guest country of the congress, Poland. Precisely Poland constitutes an interesting case which allows to test as well the maintenance of the social significance of religion as secularization (Hainz et al. 2014).

Meaningful abstracts of one to two pages are called for, that show as well the research approach, the theory used as the expectable answer to the core issue of the session. These abstracts are to be submitted until April 24, 2014 via e-mail to both following addresses: pickel@rz.uni-leipzig.de / m.hainz@hfph.de