Religion in Urban Everyday Life: Shaping Modernity in Lodz and Manchester.

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In the tavern there is no loud shouting or singing on Sunday evenings, but in the preaching-home the noise is so great that until late at night the neighbours cannot sleep.[1]

A Manchester businessman bitterly complained about the noise his workers made on a Sunday evening: curiously not in a pub, but in a chapel. This example clearly indicates that religion in industrial cities was not swept away by secularisation, but constituted an integral part of modern urban society.

"Promised Land" and "Cottonopolis": respectively Lodz and Manchester became industrial myths in their part of Europe. Migrants of all social strata focused their desires, professionally and privately, on the overall goal of making that myth a reality. Migration centres as they were, Lodz and Manchester created and amalgamated ethnic and religious diversity. Both cities did not provide any social continuity; all public institutions had to be newly established. During the 19th century in both new societies, new social strata emerged, which developed various activities in urban everyday life. Religion was one of the most persistent elements of urban society, though tremendously challenged by the extreme changes of urbanisation and industrialisation, and occupied public spaces in all its diverse aspects. Therefore, the established religious institutions of Lodz and Manchester had to create new patterns of social and pastoral activities to remain attractive. And, indeed, religion became, for various reasons – as an alternative to socialist and secular tendencies – fashionable. For example, the new bourgeoisie defined its new social role with a piety and a social prestige defined by Christian morality. In everyday life, religion was visible and stimulated enormous social activity which boosted modernity in those urban societies. Those two case studies give evidence how multiethnic and multi-religious cities created a lively climate of religious competition, vital for charitable activities and social life as a whole.

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[1] Quoted from Chris Aspin, *Lancashire 1750-1850. The first Industrial Society*, Preston 1995, p. 152.

Lodz and Manchester – two urban microcosms

We all are here in Lodz for the reason to set up a business, to make money. None of us wants to stay here forever. And everybody makes money, as much as he is able to and as much as he can.[2]

Two major European industrial cities, both myths of unlimited economic and social growth: Manchester embodied industrialisation itself, but quickly Lodz gained almost the same economic importance in the eastern half of Europe. Long before Lodz, Manchester was celebrated as the ultimate sign of the Industrial Revolution in literature. Benjamin Disraeli praised Manchester in his novel *Coningsby* as the "most wonderful city of modernity".[3] Leon Faucher as early as 1844 described a city with an extraordinary atmosphere, where the chimney smoke disclosed a mysterious activity.[4] Manchester functioned as a synonym for something surreal: the Machine Era. Everywhere in Europe new "Manchesters" were built. Elberfeld was baptised as the "German Manchester", Chemnitz the Saxon and even Lyon was christened the "Manchester of France". Manchester also got a negative connotation. Already quite early socialists called their political opponents "Manchester liberals". Frederick Engels, who was initially sent to Manchester by his father to heal him from his "political volatility", described the new spirit of the capitalist entrepreneur:

Once I walked with a businessman through Manchester and spoke with him about the unworthy and bad houses, the appalling living conditions in the working-class quarters, and admitted him, that I have never had seen a similarily miserable city. The man listened silently until I stopped, and at the corner, were we parted, finally replied: And nonetheless you can earn a fortune here; Good Morning, Sir![5]

The rapid accumulation of wealth and the social advancement that accompanied it gave both cities a tremendous vibrancy and sense of excitement. Many entrepreneurs and workers arrived in those textile centres to try their luck. Almost religiously they entered the *Promised*

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[2] Władysław St. Reymont *Das Gelobte Land*, Leipzig 1984, p.10.
[3] Benjamin Disraeli, *Coningsby or the New Generation* [1844], London 1889, p.155. As reference to the 19th Manchester fiction see Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*, London 1995. [first published 1854]; Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton. A Tale of Manchester Life,* London 1996. [first published 1848], Elizabeth Gaskell, *Wives and Daughters*, London 1996. [first published 1866].
[4] Leon Faucher, *Manchester in 1844*, London/Manchester 1844, p.16.
[5] Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, London/Moscow 1975, vol. IV, p. 347-374.

Land, where, as it seemed at first glance, not church bells, but factory sirens and the hammering of the looms told the hour. Thomas Carlyle summarised for Manchester in 1839:

> *Hast thou heard, with sound ears, the awakening of a Manchester, on Monday*
> *morning, at half-past five by the clock; the rushing off of its thousand mills, like*
> *the boom of an Atlantic tide, ten-thousand times ten-thousand spools and spindles*
> *all set humming there, - it is perhaps, if thou knew it well, sublime as a Niagara,*
> *or more so.* [6]

The ethnic and religious structure of Lodz proved to be remarkable. In 1839 Lodz counted 6,648 Germans (78 %), 1,135 Poles (13 %) and 776 Jews (9%). Only a quarter of a century later the population grew rapidly.[7]

Lodz: Population in 1864, 1897 und 1913[8]

	1864	1897	1913
Germans	22,531 (67,2%)	67,300 (21,4%)	75,000 (14,8%)
Jews	6,539 (19,5%)	92,400 (29,4%)	171,900 (34,0%)
Poles	4,456 (13,3%)	145,600 (46,4%)	251,700 (49,7%)
Orthodox (Russians)	7 (0%)	7,400 (2,4%)	6,300 (1,3%)
Total	**33,533 (100%)**	**314,000 (100%)**	**506,100 (100%)**

By 1900 Lodz was the biggest textile centre within the Russian Empire. The mechanisation of the looms was moving forward steadily and after the fall of custom barriers between the Kingdom of Poland and Russia, the industrial expansion continued. This industrial boom was based on cotton, indeed, 94 % of all Lodz-manufactured goods were textile products.

Manchester also saw a rapid growth of its population. The City of Manchester (unlike Greater Manchester) rose from about 70,000 in 1800 to 544,000 exactly a hundred years later.[9] Religiously, the English city was even more diverse than Lodz. As we are lacking any precise information, the only evidence provides the church attendance census in March 1851. At this time, the borough of Manchester counted 303,000 inhabitants. Out of the total number of people attending service that day, the Anglican (32 churches) attendance accounted for 34,4 %, the Roman Catholic 23,3 % (seven churches) and the Nonconformists 42,3% (80

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[6] Quoted from Malcolm Bee, *Industrial Revolution and Social Reform in the Manchester Region*, Manchester 1997, p.7.
[7] Oskar Eugen Kossmann, *Lodz. Eine historisch-geographische Analyse*, Würzburg 1966, p.151.
[8] Oskar Eugen Kossmann, Lodz, p.158.
[9] Alan Kidd, *Manchester*, Edinburgh 2002, p.14.

chapels and churches). Among those Nonconformist groups, which formed a stronghold in Manchester, it embraced Independents (or Congregationalists), Baptists, several types of Presbyterians, four or five sorts of Methodists, Quakers, Unitarians, Swedenborgians and so on.[10] Manchester's ethnic structure is hardly looked at: only the Irish, by far the biggest ethnic group, drew some attraction.[11] In 1841, just before the Irish Famine, 30,304 Irish, in 1851 even 52,801 (13,1% of the entire population) still Ireland-born Irish lived in Manchester. After London, Liverpool and Glasgow, the city provided home for the fourth largest Irish community on the British mainland. The unifying element of the Irish community based largely on Catholic community life. From the outside the Irish were seen as a threat for public health and were regarded as criminal, lawless, wild, uncivilised and fanatic. For the English majority the Irish remained an isolated exotic group, their sense of community and different religion led to antipathy and even hatred.[12]

Next to the dominating Irish group, the Germans represented with half of all 180 trade companies, the biggest ethnic majority. Out of 420 companies of foreign entrepreneurs in 1870, 154 were in German hands.[13] Their meaning as "sons of the old Deutschland" in the business life of Manchester were praised in an article in the *Manchester Guardian* 1888:

> *If one proceeded to test the quality of the Manchester Royal Exchange minus its German element, it would almost be like sampling rum punch out of which some malicious mixer had left the rum. Should this seem an exaggeration, let the Master of the Exchange get up and bar the door some day and keep out the Teutons. Echoes of comparative emptiness would ring to the roof.[14]*

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[10] All numbers based on E. Alan Rose, 'Church and Chapel in Manchester 1847-1914', Chris Ford/Michael Powell/Terry Wyke, eds., *The Church in Cottonopolis*, Manchester 1997, pp.195-196. See also the original Parliamentary Papers 1852/53, LXXXIX, Census, 1851: Religious Worship (England and Wales) Summary Tables for Manchester and Salford. See on the interpretation of the census also D.M. Thompson, 'The Religious Census of 1851', R. Lawton, ed., *The Census and Social Structure*, London 1979.

[11] See also studies on the Irish Michael Herbert, *The Wearing of the Green. A Political History of the Irish in Manchester*, London 2001; Mary J. Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity: The State, the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain*, Aldershot, Avebury 1995; W.J. Lowe, *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire. The Shaping of a Working Class Community*. New York [Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, Paris] 1989. [=Irish Studies Nr.1]; Sheridan Gilley, 'English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1780-1900', Colin Holmes, ed. *,Immigrants and Minorities in British Society*,London 1978, pp.81-110.

[12] Clemens Zimmermann, *Die Zeit der Metropolen. Urbanisierung und Großstadtentwicklung*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, p.61.

[13] Hartmut Berghoff, *Englische Unternehmer*, p.72. See also on the Germans Sue Coates, ,Manchester's German Gentlemen: Immigrant institutions in a provincial City 1840-1920', in *Manchester Region History Review*. vol. 5, (1991/1992), pp.21-30; Rainer Liedtke, „…deutsche Geistescultur zu fördern". Deutsch-jüdische Immigranten und die Schiller-Anstalt in Manchester', in *Tribüne* 29 (1990), pp.146-153; S.D.F. Thomas, *Some Aspects of the German Community in Manchester circa 1870-1920*, Manchester University, 1980 [unpublished manuscript].

[14] *Manchester Guardian*, 4 July 1888.

The Jewish community came third, and included both Askenazim from Eastern Europe, and Sephardim who had been arriving since 1856 in larger numbers from Corfu, Aleppo, Constantinople and Morocco to Manchester, and in 1900 represented the biggest religious minority with 20,000.[15] Greeks had maintained their own Greek-Orthodox church since 1860, followed by Armenians and Italians.[16]

Religion versus Urbanisation/Modernisation? A Theoretical Approach

The 19th and early 20th centuries were regarded in many Western countries as a time of religious crisis. The crisis was generally believed to be most acute in the cities and especially among the working class. This paper focuses on religion and its impact on everyday life in two major European cities – Manchester in the West, and Lodz in Central Europe.

I shall show how, for instance, belief and unbelief related to the experience of poverty and social exclusion, to the ways in which people celebrated or survived the turning points and crises of life, to the relationship between women and men, and to political organisations. By focusing on the part played by religion, and sometimes by secularism, for instance, in the everyday life of working-class communities, I hope to demonstrate the importance of a dimension that is so far too often ignored, dismissed or mentioned only in passing.[17]

The question of the extent and causes of the secularisation of Western societies has been hotly debated by sociologists, especially over the last thirty years. The classical approach to the question, which goes back to Max Weber, and which is championed by such historians as Alan Gilbert and such sociologists as Bryan Wilson and Steve Bruce, sees a secularisation as an inexorable, pervasive and universal process, intimately related to other aspects of modernisation, such as mechanisation and bureaucratisation.[18]

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[15] Figures approx. given for 1825: 275; 1850: 1,000; 1875: 3,000; 1900: 20,000; 1950: 50,000; 1995: 30,000. Figures from: Alber Radcliffe, 'Christians and Jews in Manchester', in Chris Ford/Michael Powell/Terry Wyke, eds., *The Church in Cottonopolis*, Manchester 1997, p.207. See generally on Manchester Jewry Bill Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry*, 1740-1875, Manchester 1985.

[16] N.J. Frangopulo, 'Foreign Communities in Victorian Manchester', in *Manchester Review*, vol. 10 (1965), pp.189-206; N.J. Frangopulo, *Rich Inheritance: A Guide to the History of Manchester*, Wakefield 1969.

[17] This chapter owes very much to the inspiring and groundbreaking research done by Hugh McLeod, *Piety and Poverty. Working-Class Religion in Berlin, London and New York, 1870-1914*, New York/London 1996; *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848-1914*, Basingstoke 2000; *European Religion in the Age of the Great Cities, 1830-1930*, London/New York 1995. See also in stark contrast Standish Meacham, *A Life Apart: The English Working Class, 1890-1914*, London 1977, pp.15-16, 26, 53, 120, 164-5, 199-200, makes a few references to religion, but only to dismiss the subject as peripheral.

[18] Alan Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914*, London 1976; Alan Gilbert, *The Making of Post-Christian Britain*, London 1980; Robert Currie/Alan Gilbert/Lee Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700*, Oxford 1977; Bryan R. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, London 1966; Steve Bruce, ed., *Religion and Modernization*, Oxford 1992.

The 19th century saw a growth of cities on a scale far beyond anything seen before in the world's history. With Manchester and Lodz the century saw the proliferation of second-rank cities. From the start, there have been two opposing views as to what those social revolutions meant for religious traditions. By the 1830s and 1840s, there were many voices proclaiming that the cities were strongholds of irreligion. Most famous, perhaps, was Engels' study of the English working class in 1844, in which he claimed that religion had effectively died out.[19] While most such comments concerned the working class, some observers saw the city as a whole as a religious desert. One of Engels' contemporaries, a London clergyman, claimed in a sermon of 1844 that 'the life of cities is essentially a worldly life', whereas 'the country with its pure serenity – oh, how unlike the hot thick breath of the towns – of itself inspires some feelings of religion'.[20] Meanwhile, a Berlin clergyman was comparing his city to Sodom and Gomorrah, and suggesting that it would be a suitable site for a mission to the heathen.[21]

But at the same time there were also those who saw the cities as the most dynamic centres of religious activism. To a Scottish Evangelical in the 1830s Glasgow was "Gospel City", leading the nation in its religiously inspired reform movements and its evangelistic enterprises.[22] And Robert Vaughan, the English Congregational minister who published *The Age of Great Cities* in 1843, was equally optimistic about the influence that these cities could exercise over the nation.[23] Of course, most of these commentators were deeply involved in the religious controversies of their time, and their commitments strongly coloured their judgements. For instance, the enthusiasm of Nonconformists for urbanisation was influenced by the fact that they saw the cities as a powerful counterweight to the religious traditionalism of the countryside.

The same differences of interpretation are to be found among modern historians and sociologists writing the religious history of the 19th century. The most familiar view is that of Alan Gilbert, who sees urbanisation as essentially synonomous with secularisation – in spite of a temporary religious revival in the early stages of the English Industrial Revolution. Gilbert, like most other writers who have seen urbanisation and secularisation as intimately related, argues that both are to be seen as aspects of 'modernisation', which revolutionised Western societies in the 19th century. Exponents of modernisation theory generally argue that

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[19] Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, 1845, reprint Oxford 1958, p. 141.
[20] B. I. Coleman, *The Idea of the City in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, London 1973, p. 97.
[21] Jürgen Boeckh, ‚Predigt in Berlin', in Kaspar Elm/Hans-Dietrich Loock, eds., *Seelsorge und Diakonie in Berlin*, Berlin 1990, pp. 317-8.
[22] Callum Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730*, London 1987, p.141.
[23] B.I. Coleman, *Idea of the City*, pp.87-94.

religion was in severe decline in the cities of 19th and early 20th century Europe and North America, and that its strength lay in backward rural communities, where the modernising forces had not yet penetrated.[24]

However, there is a rival school, represented by such historians as Callum Brown, which holds that 19th century urbanisation frequently stimulated religious growth.[25] This approach was, that big cities by their nature were pluralistic; they lend themselves to the formation of numerous discrete subcultures, since the supervision of such matters as morals, beliefs and religious practices by employers, magistrates or the church was no longer practicable. In the circumstances of the 19th century Europe, this meant that religion declined, or at least appeared to be declining in the cities, as the urban population enjoyed a degree of freedom that was not available elsewhere. This counterargument, that urbanisation stimulates religious growth, has been presented in its most ambitious form by the American sociologists Roger Finke and Rodney Stark. They contend that urbanisation tends to be associated with increasing religious pluralism, and that the greater the degree of pluralism, the higher the proportion of the population that is likely to be religiously active. This partly because competition keeps religious denominations on their toes, and partly because the multiplication of denominations permits each religious group to cater for the needs of a particular section of the market: the greater the variety of 'brands' available, the more likely is that every 'customer' will find something which she or he likes the look of.[26]

Callum Brown suggests, that so far as 19th century Britain was concerned, secularisation was not caused by urbanisation, and that in the case of Scotland urban growth did more to stimulate revival than to hasten decline. The 1851 religious census showed that Scottish church attendance was higher in towns than in rural areas, and Brown's study of church statistics leads him to argue that religious influences in Scottish society reached an all-time peak in the late Victorian period. While the 19th century religious boom affected all parts of Scotland, it was the towns which generated most of the instruments of revival – the new, highly active Dissenting churches, the missions, Sunday schools, and a wide variety of reforming crusades with objects that ranged from sabbatarianism, to temperance, to the provision of parks, to stricter control of house-building and sanitation.[27]

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[24] Alan Gilbert, *Religion and Society*, pp. 110-5, 145-8, 184-7.
[25] Callum Brown, 'Did urbanization secularize Britain?', in *Urban History Yearbook,* 1988, pp.1-14.
[26] Roger Finke/Rodney Stark, 'Religious economies and sacred canopies: Religious mobilization in American cities, 1906', in *American Sociological Review*, 53 (1988), pp.41-49.
[27] Callum Brown, *Did urbanization secularize Britain* ?

Forms of new political and social integration: Religion in the Industrial Society

Manchester and Lodz functioned as spaces of modernisation and communication for social groups, ethnic groups, institutions and individuals. By the steady migration the permanent threat of ethnic and religious tensions became virulent, which in those highly industrialised textile centres could also erupt in the framework of labour movement. In the wide field of social history of industrialised regions, this paper can only reflect on several research topics, which lead to further questions.[28] Manchester and the religious and socio-economic impulses from England will be covered more broadly, as the religious revival originated here and witnessed multiple, regionally modified receptions. At the same time the English case offers a wide range of interesting comparative aspects for Central Europe.

An analysis of the historiography on Lodz and Manchester underlines a fundamental difference. Lodz as a city of Central Eastern Europe was until recently dominated by controversies over its ethnic and national structure. While German Lodz research overvalued the German influence, the Polish praised the Polish contribution, while the Jewish was mostly ignored or marginalised.[29]

Rosa Luxemburg's dissertation on the Lodz cotton workers functioned as an appendage to Engels' memoirs on Manchester.[30] Luxemburg established the social dimension in Lodz historiography, which later on in socialist Poland resulted largely in ignoring the wider context. At the moment, one can witness another trend a supranational prospective, which is also worrying: the celebration of a multicultural past of Lodz. On one hand it reflects

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[28] See the inspiring works of Olaf Blaschke/Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, ‚Religion in Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sozialhistorische Perspektiven für die vergleichende Erforschung religiöser Mentalitäten und Milieus', in dito., eds., *Religion im Kaiserreich. Milieus – Mentalitäten – Krisen*, Gütersloh 1996. [=Religiöse Kulturen der Moderne vol. 2], pp.7-56; Hartmut Lehmann, *Protestantisches Christentum im Prozeß der Säkularisierung*, Göttingen 2001; Wolfgang Schieder, ed., *Religion und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart 1993.

[29] Examples of the German historiography Otto Heike, *Die Aufbauleistung rheinischer Textilpioniere in Mittelpolen*, Neuß 1964. [=Schriftenreihe des rheinischen Heimatbundes, vol. 11]; One of the best-balanced studies is Oskar Eugen Kossmann, *Lodz. Eine historisch-geographische Analyse*, Würzburg 1966. [=Marburger Ostforschungen vol. 25]. Before 1989 on the Polish side among others: B. Baranowski/J. Fijałek (ed.): *Łódź – Dzieje miasta. vol.1: Do 1918 r.*, Warszawa/Łódź 1988.[=Łódź. Dzieje miasta, ed. R. Rosin]; Julian Janczak, *Ludność Łodzi przymysłowej 1820-1914*, Łódź 1982.
After the political changes some major studies appeared. See Jürgen Hensel ed., *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz 1820-1939. Eine schwierige Nachbarschaft,* Osnabrück 1999.[=Einzelveröffentlichungen des DHI Warschau vol. 1]; Krzysztof Kuczyński, Barbara Ratecka, eds., *Niemcy w dziejach Łodzi do 1945 roku*, Łódź 2001; Stefan Pytlaś, *Łódzka burżuazja przemysłowa w latach 1864-1914*, Łódź 1994. Some studies on the Lodz Jewry have also been published, François Guesnet, *Lodzer Juden im 19. Jahrhundert. Ihr Ort in einer multikulturellen Stadtgesellschaft*, Leipzig 1997; Wieslaw Puś *Żydzi w Łodzi w latach zaborów 1793-1914*, Łódź 2000.

[30] Rosa Luxemburg, ‚Die industrielle Entwicklung Polens', Leipzig 1898. [Diss. Zürich], Rosa Luxemburg, *Gesammelte Werke*. Vol. 1 (1893-1905). 1. half vol., Berlin (Ost) 1972.

the understandable search for a new local identity, which was ousted in Socialist times, but on the other hand the past is constantly idealised and more uncritical than ever before.[31] Manchester on the contrary focused for a long time only on the working class and social history in one of the oldest industrial centres. A synthesis of multicultural aspects in the context of ethnicity and religion has so far not been established.[32]

Manchester, the biggest industrial centre of the world, was described by Engels as the "hell on earth". He pictured the city in 1845: "If one wants to see, how little space a human being needs to move, how little air – and which air! – he needs to breathe, with how little civilization can exist, than he has to come here".[33] Reymont did the same for Lodz in his novel *Promised Land*. For obvious reasons both industrial giants have been the ideal research topic for social and economic studies and the nurturing of the trade union and labour movement has helped to make them a natural place upon which social and labour historians could base their work. Yet this research has taken a very materialist view of society. Studies which trace the changing structure of the cotton industry tabulate power loom workers' wages in the finest detail but have little to say about the broad sweep of the spirit of the people. There have been double standards. The decision by members of the working class to join a trade union is a sign of working-class autonomy; the decision by a member of the working class to join a church is a sign of naïvety and social control. Religious attendance, and attendance of the penumbra of church associations by the working class, has been interpreted as an unwitting act of collaboration with the manipulations of the middle class. Church attendance figures were often presented as evidence that religion was a minority interest in Victorian England. Already in 1957, E.R. Wickham pointed out that "there has been something of a long standing conspiracy to oversecularise English history".[34]

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[31] As examples might serve Marek Budziarek/Leszek Skrzydło/Marek Szukalak, *Łódź nasze miasto/Lodz unsere Stadt*, Łódź 2000; Marek Budziarek/Małgorzata Laurentowicz, *Triada. Polacy – Niemcy – Żydzi*, Łódź 2001.

[32] Manchester historiography is immense. For orientation the following bibliography might be helpful: T.J. Wyke: 'Nineteenth Century Manchester': a Preliminary Bibliography, in: Alan Kidd/K.W. Roberts, eds., *City, Class and Culture. Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester*, Manchester 1985, p.218-271. Only a few works concerning Manchester: Alan Kidd, 'Introduction: The Middle Class in Nineteenth-Century Manchester', in: Alan Kidd/K. W. Roberts, eds., *City, Class and Culture*, Manchester 1985, p.1-24; Alan Kidd, *Manchester*, Edinburgh 2002. Important aspects on the 19th century: Mary B. Rose, *The Lancashire Cotton Industry. A History since 1700*, Preston/Oxford 1996; Gary S. Messinger, Manchester in the Victorian Age. The half-known City, Manchester 1985; Trevor Griffith, The Lancashire Working Classes c. 1880-1930, Oxford 2001; Chris Aspin, *The First Industrial Society. Lancashire, 1750-1850*, Preston/Oxford 1995; Peter Shapely, *Charity and Power in Victorian Manchester*, Manchester 2000. [=Chetham Society, Bd. XLIII, Third Series].

[33] Hartmut Berghoff, *Englische Unternehmer 1870-1914. Eine Kollektivbiographie führender Wirtschaftsbürger in Birmingham, Bristol und Manchester*, Göttingen 1991. [=Bürgertum. Beiträge zur europäischen Gesellschaftsgeschichte vol.2], p.53.

[34] E.R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City*, Sheffield 1957.

Church historians must also bear some responsibility for the imbalance and gaps remaining in modern church history. Whilst social historians have often been of the left, church historians have mostly been presented church history from an establishment point of view. Altogether the situation has changed. During the last two decades there have been significant historiographical trends. In Britain, religion has been rediscovered and fully integrated into 19th century social history.[35] Due to communism, Polish historiography has completely neglected the social function of religion other than as in its nation-constituting function. An end to a positivist approach is long overdue.

The religious revival in the industrial era started in England, from where it went to Germany and further towards Central Eastern Europe. The English case is therefore decisive: before the Industrial Revolution the Anglican Church was able to keep her outstanding position by her tight connection between clerics and the landed aristocracy. Through this the Church gained at least externally a relative strength, but became internally rotten. Spiritual monotony dominated the Anglican community for a long period; the stench of the rot drove herds of the flock ran away. In the new industrial centres, which created a completely new social strata – the factory workers – rose the need for adequate pastoral services.

John Wesley was on top of the new religious awakening. He proclaimed a new religious enthusiasm "through the experience of existential sinfulness of the individual earthly existence to come to the conviction, that Christ died for the forgiveness of all our sins".[36] As a wandering preacher in the course of 50 years he gave more than 40,000 sermons in the industrial and mining districts in the North of England: Wesley became the missionary of the new industrialised England. Everywhere new 'chapels' as base groups were founded, a nationwide conference was set on top of a tightly centralised hierachy. Methodism, as it was henceforth called, as the biggest Nonconformist group, never threatened the older 'dissenter' groups, which had their members in pre-industrial businesses. Methodism was the first mass movement based on religious and ethic motifs and therefore operated as an example for the

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[35] Donald A. Kerr, ed., *Religion, State and Ethnic Groups. Comparative Studies on governments and non-dominant ethnic groups in Europe 1850-1940*. Vol. II, Aldershot 1992; Hugh McLeod, *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City*, London 1974; Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850-1914*, 1996; Frederick Michael L. Thompson, *Gentrification and the Enterprise Culture. Britain 1780-1980*, Oxford 2001; Chris S. Ford, *Pastors and Polemicists. The Character of Popular Anglicanism in South-East Lancashire 1847-1914*, Manchester 2002. [=The Chetham Society, Vol. XLIV]; Gerald Parsons, ed., *Religion in Victorian Britain*, vol.1: *Traditions*, Manchester 1997; Gerald Parsons, ed., *Religion in Victorian Britain*, vol.2: Controversies, Manchester 1997; S.J.D. Green, 'Religion in Industrial Societies: The North of England since c. 1750', in: *Northern History*, vol. XXXIII (1997), pp.238-258.
[36] Peter Wende, *Geschichte Englands*, Stuttgart 1995, p.220.

later social dynamism, but also for political action groups.[37] Not without meaning was John Wesley called the "Father of the new English democracy".[38] At the time of his death England once again was a Christian country.

Religious zeal stimulated all parts of society. Already Leon Faucher summarised in 1844: „In political opinions radicalism prevails. As to religious sects, the latest imported is generally the most acceptable. Manchester contains more Methodists, Quakers, and independents, the adherents to the established church...".[39] For whatever reason it has to be summoned: the church penumbra, whether voluntarily or by force, provided many people in the new industrial centres of all social strata with an extraordinary respectability, which stood very much in contrast to the light-hearted vulgarity of the previous generation. It also provided a sense of community; Even though somehow merciless and limited with hatred among many defenders of the truth, church attendance and piety contributed enormously to civilising society.[40] But for a „Second Confessional Era", as the German historian Olaf Blaschke put it, there is no proof.[41] Objectively church attendance dropped in 19th century, but – interestingly – it also created new religious spheres and stimulated religious phenomena which tried to adjust to industrialisation and urbanisation. Instead of a general secularisation I favour speaking of a "new diversity". The rapidly progressing secularisation provoked undoubtedly religious counter-action. Manchester's Nonconformism, the Lodz' Protestant evangelicalism as well as the revival of long-forgotten rituals within the Catholic Church (i.g.: Sacre Coeur-Cult or new pilgrimages) give clear evidence of that tendency. The established churches were facing tremendous challenges: Industrialisation and urbanisation released the people from the bonds of a traditional society and shaped it completely new. The religious infrastructure was not able to cope. Neither the Church of England nor the Roman-Catholic or Protestant Church in Lodz was able to react appropriately to the new challenges.

Everyday life in urban religious environments

One potential problem in a comparative study of this kind is that the information obtained from the two cities is not always strictly comparable. And, as I pointed out earlier on already,

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[37] Kurt Kluxen, *Geschichte Englands*, Stuttgart 1991, p.526.

[38] Kurt Kluxen, *Geschichte Englands*, p.527.

[39] Leon Faucher, *Manchester in 1844. Its present condition and future prospects*.

[40] Chris Aspin, *Lancashire*, p.152. On Sunday schools: Thomas Walter Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability. Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture 1780-1850*, New Haven/London 1976.

[41] Olaf Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?', in: *Geschichte und Gegenwart* 1 (2000), p.38-75.

most of the results are still based on the English example, whereas my work on Lodz needs considerably more attention.

In Lodz and Manchester, there were the filthy streets, the crumbling buildings, the familiarity of crime and prostitution, and the accidents in the factories. Many poor people were engaged in a constant struggle to maintain standards of cleanliness and order – to stay 'decent' and 'respectable' – in the face of the dirt and decay, the smells and the noise. How did the experience of poverty affect people's religious beliefs and allegiances? And how did their religion affect the ways in which they coped with poverty? The most famous answer probably is that religion was 'The heart of a heartless world… the spirit of spiritless conditions… the opium of the people'.[42] Marx's famous aphorism was wrong in several ways. Firstly, there is plenty of evidence from 19th century cities to suggest that the experience of poverty nourished doubt and despair as much as religious faith. Secondly, religious commitment was more often found among those working-class people whose situation was improving than among those who were in the direst poverty. Thirdly, religious belief, rather than inducing passivity, more often provided a stimulus to action.

Religion did more than help people to accept their suffering: it frequently led into one or more of three ways of ameliorating the situation, which could be mutually exclusive, but were not necessarily so – individual self-help, neighbourly support, and political action. The association between religion and self-improvement is a very familiar theme in accounts of working-class people during this period. Saving banks at local parishes were established, especially in Protestant and Roman-Catholic parishes. Under pastoral direction saving took on a ritual character, and the correct performance of every detail of the rite reminded the savers of the solemnity of what they were doing. Homes of churchgoing workers, as it was stated by a Berlin city missionary in 1886, were distinguished by 'the greatest possible cleanliness'.[43]

Similiar themes of industry, thrift, sobriety, a passion for cleanliness and order etc. emerge in accounts of strongly churchgoing Catholics as well as within the Jewish community: Ideas of community and mutual responsibility were particularly strong and explicit in the Judaism of this period. Not only were there numerous charities supported by the more prosperous members of the Jewish communities of Lodz and Manchester – the principle of mutual aid was integral to the small synagogues formed by groups of immigrants in areas like Manchester Cheetham Hill or Lodz-Baluty. These communities were based not so much on the fact that the members were all Jews, or that they were neighbours, as on the

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[42] 'Introduction to Karl Marx, Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law', in: Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works*, 32 vols so far published, London 1975, p.175.
[43] Otto von Leixner, *Soziale Briefe aus Berlin*, Berlin 1891, p.195.

fact that they were Jews coming from the same town in Europe. In this way the community of mutual obligation was narrowed down – but the sense of obligation to those within the communities was very strong. In particular, the newly arrived immigrant could expect a bed in the home of a *landsman*.

In Manchester and Lodz, the working-class areas were full of drinking places. The Manchester pub was often a Gothic place, rivalling the parish church as the most conspicuous local landmark, whereas the Lodz bar tended to lie at the bottom of the block of tenements, mostly in some dirty courtyard, and was often reached by descending a flight of stairs. All alike were strongholds of the working-class male. The pub was the most vivid symbol of the separation of male and female worlds. It represented a freedom that most men could enjoy, at least for a few hours in the evening, but which was much less often available to married women. The atmosphere of the pub tended to be aggressively masculine.

Places of worship were among the few environments in which the sexes did to some extent mix – and indeed some people went to church precisely for that reason. Nonetheless there were plenty of religious activities that were organised on a single-sex basis. Organisations or events for women tended to attract a larger participation than those for men; but where men did take an interest in religion, the aspects that interested them were often different from those which interested women.[44] Sectarian conflict was, for instance, an area of religion in which men came to the fore. Certainly in Lancashire fathers were accustomed to make life hell for those of their children, who chose a marriage partner from the wrong faith: Protestants tended to feel degraded by the admission of a Catholic into the family, and Catholics felt betrayed when one of their number married a Protestant.[45] Otherwise it was women who took the leading role in those areas of religious life that related to the home, to the upbringing of children, and to rituals connected with the annual cycle or the life-cycle. Sometimes, this was a matter of an accepted division of labour – for instance, mothers taught their children their prayers, because prayers were conventionally said before going to bed, and mothers generally put the younger children to bed. On the other hand, prayers of all sorts seem to have been said more frequently by women than by men. This was probably because the help of God was frequently sought in those areas of life that were least humanly controllable, and most of these fell within the sphere of female responsibility. It may also be that social conventions that tabooed any public display of emotion by men would have made

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[44] Hugh McLeod, *Working Class and Piety*, p.152.
[45] Hugh McLeod, *Working Class and Piety*, p.154.

it much more difficult for men to pray in front of others, except in a formalised way, as in a church service or a grace before eating.

For poorer women, contacts with the churches as charitable agencies permitted a vital addition to precarious household resources. In this respect large numbers of women, whose husbands had little knowledge of organised religion, needed, as a part of their responsibilities within the household economy, to be familiar with clergymen, district visitors, parish nurses and such like. This did not necessarily make for friendly relations with the church. Since so much charity was distributed by religious bodies, this meant that large numbers of poor women had to establish some kind of relationship with a church, chapel or mission. The relationship took many different forms. Occasionally quite close friendships were made between the charitable agents and the women they visited. For instance, this seems to have been the case sometimes with the Bible Nurses in Manchester – working-class women who combined visiting the sick and dying with reading from the Bible and preaching. Sometimes the relationship between receivers and givers of charity was seen in terms of reciprocity: the church provided help that was needed, and the recipient showed her gratitude by attending services.[46]

A stunning example is provided by Jewish life in Manchester. Returning to the patterns of Jewish synagogue attendance, the relationship between male and female Jewish religiosity in this period has been discussed by Rickie Burman on the Manchester 'ghetto' in the early years of the 20th century. Burman argues that the religious role of women, which had been relatively peripheral in the *shtetl*, became increasingly important in Manchester immigrant communities, and central in the second generation of Manchester Jews. This was because of the reduced role in Jewish life of the synagogue, which had belonged mainly to the male sphere, and the increasing importance of household observances, which were a mainly female responsibility. In Manchester around 1900 the male sphere of public religiosity was under pressure, both because of the need to work on the Sabbath, and because businessmen were replacing scholars as the role models that Jewish parents presented their children: fathers who spent too much time at prayer were increasingly seen as failing in their duties to their family. Women also gave up the practice of wearing wigs, and more slowly gave up ritual bathing. But most of those religious practices which did continue fell within the female

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[46] Hugh McLeod, *Working Class and Piety*, p.156/157.

sphere; for instance, the Sabbath evening meal, the maintenance of a kosher kitchen, and ensuring that boys received a religious education.[47]

Especially with Catholics sport and religion were also effectively mixed by some parishes in this period. In fact, Catholicism was so much bound up with ideas of respectability, decency, etc. among the Irish community that anyone who aspired to a position of public prominence as a politician, businessman, doctor or trade union leader could find it helpful to be 'seen at mass'. Nonetheless while Catholic piety was an integral part of the prevailing ideal of Anglo-Irish womanhood, the church had some powerful competitors for the allegiance of the men. In particular, Manchester's numerous pubs were focal points of an alternative Anglo-Irish culture, coexisting rather uneasily with the culture supported by the church.

Popular educational institutions became particularly important and were closely linked with the search for 'respectability', beginning with the rapid development of the Sunday School movement from the 1780s, the spread of friendly societies from the early 19th c. and the development from the 1830s of the temperance movement, and throughout this period the rejection by a section of the working class of many traditional amusements involving violence, gambling or cruelty to animals. The change was epitomised in the democratisation of the concept of 'respectability', and the increasingly current distinction between a 'respectable' and a 'rough' working class. In the chaotic conditions of fast-growing industrial villages and working class suburbs churches and chapels were often strongholds of this respectable working class. In Britain, at least, the desire for 'respectability' and a repudiation of 'rough' habits of life was often a major concern of working-class churchgoers, and a strong attraction of church life seemed to be that it offered an orderly, self-respecting and independent style of life.[48]

The same applies for Lodz, even though hardly ever researched. Of course, the Lodz situation has been different in many respects. It was an entirely artificial city, founded in partitioned Poland mostly by Non-Poles, Germans and Jews. In Lodz, those ideas could not rely on a developed system of churches and chapels, but everything was still very much in constant flow until 1914 and even beyond that date. But there is very strong evidence, that Protestant and Jewish charities shared the same attitude of respectability, which meant, people started to set up charities, women became actively involved in community life. For instance, the *Christliche Wohltätigkeitsverein*, a mostly German-speaking and Protestant institution,

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[47] Hugh McLeod, *Working Class and Piety*, p.162. See also Rickie Burman: 'She looketh well to the ways of her household': The changing role of Jewish women in religious life, c.1880-1930, in: D. Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English women*, pp.234-57.
[48] Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the people of Western Europe*, p.80/81.

provided a huge network of charitable businesses. Apart from orphanages (*Evangelisches Waisenhaus*, set up in 1888), shelter for the homeless, institutions for the disabled and hospitals (for instance the *Haus der Barmherzigkeit* founded in 1904), it was also very much involved on more grassroot level with garden parties, charitable bazaars, station missionary etc.[49] The major distinction to be made was that of the lacking assimilation of Lodz Germans and Jews. Around 1900, only about 4 percent of Jews spoke Polish at home, approximately 1 percent spoke German. The overwhelming majority of Lodz Jews regardless of their social status remained in the Yiddish-speaking world of the *shtetl*-tradition, from where they came to Lodz.[50] This linguistic separation prevented very often municipal activities and left charitable activities to the separate religious communities. For Lodz Jewry it is already proven, that due to the rapidly-growing city, people sought religious comfort. Urban environment and traditional values stimulated religious life to that extent, that the number of Jewish prayer houses for specific feasts grew still until the turn of the century.[51]

Respectability could also be found within the Protestant entrepreneur circles of Lodz. Among those, who sought their fortune in the *Promised Land*, were Protestant prototypes in search of a new religious respectability. Their ethical norms surprised the Russian authorities, even though especially for those reasons they had previously recruited foreign businesses. A report of a Russian Investigation Commission from 1885, which aimed to look at the national unreliability of German businessmen in Lodz, came to the conclusion, which implies many parallels to the Mancunian entrepreneur:

> *The Lodz businessman is not simply owner of his factory, but a person, which practically is even familiar with the banalities of his business. He lives close to his premises, supervises the entire manufacturing process and is informed about everything, even , if there are managers in bigger companies. He follows the news of his profession abroad very closely, orders as soon, as he hears of better or more efficient machines regardless whether his own machines are still in good shape. The majority of Lodz businessmen owes its present situation their own labour. Quite a few started their career as simple workers themselves. Zealously and under limitation of their personal needs until the extreme they climbed until*

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[49] Erich Dietrich/Otto Heike, eds., *Wege der Evangelisch-Augsburgischen Kirche in Polen. Zum 150. Jahrestag der Gründung der ersten evangelischen Gemeinden und 50. Jahrestag der Einweihung der St. Matthäi-Kirche in Lodz*, Düsseldorf 1978, p.14/15.

[50] Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, ,Auf dem Weg zur Bürgergesellschaft. Modernisierungsprozesse in Lodz (1820-1914)', in: Jürgen Hensel, ed., *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz, 1820-1939*, Osnabrück 1999, p.123.

[51] Francois Guesnet, ,Das Verhältnis von Juden und Deutschen im Spiegel ihrer Organisationen im Lodz des 19. Jahrhunderts', in: Jürgen Hensel, ed., *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Lodz, 1820-1914*, Osnabrück 1999, p.157.

they reached eagerly their ambitious position as independent businessman. Interestingly, until now (1886), despite the great self-earned wealth, they stick to the old customs and dedicate themselves to twelve hours per day by entering the factory first and leaving the premises last. From outside one sometimes can hardly distinguish them from ordinary workers.[52]

Sunday school – as Thomas Walter Laqueur argued – was largely the creation of the working-class community, the product of the infinite inventiveness and ingenuity of men and women who, under the most adverse conditions, created a culture of discipline, self-respect and improvement within which to wage the battle for social justice and political equality.[53] He underlines, that bourgeois world view triumphed in the 19th century and the middle classes established a moral hegemony in England. Sunday schools provided a new and unprecedentedly wide sphere of lay activity within both Anglicanism and Nonconformity. They formed part of a distinct religious subculture. The period 1780-1850 witnessed the birth of a working-class culture that was deeply rooted in that ethic of education, religion and respectability which was embodied in the Sunday school. Sunday schools were largely a creation of the community they served and "helped to keep the soul alive in a population living under conditions that degrade the mind".[54] Apart from the selfish interest to recruit future followers for the churches, the Sunday School maintained in their own right a vital religious culture. The Christianity of the Sunday schools may have played a particularly important role in interpreting a world characterised by relatively high child mortality rates and low life expectancy. The schools certainly provided communal and spiritual support for the sick and dying, and teachers must often have spent as much time in the pastoral visitation of their charges as they did in evangelism and teaching. The schools also provided practical help and a comprehensive network of support structures, including sick and burial societies. It is also important to remember that the same schools offered their pupils an entrance into a world of leisure – of tea parties, treats, and outings.[55]

Therefore the role of Sunday School mentality cannot be underestimated. The Accrington industrial chemist, John Emmanuel Lightfoot (1802-1893), once remarked near the end of his life, recalling that as a young man he used regularly to attend six or eight services every Sunday at the Wesleyan Methodist chapel of which he was a member. There

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[52] Rudolf Kornacker, 'Karl Scheibler und seine Stadt Lodz', in *Der Kulturwart* 197 (1994), p.1-23, here p. 12/13.
[53] Thomas Walter Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability*, p.241-245.
[54] J.L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Town Labourer, 1760-1832*. 1917, p.248, quoted after Thomas Walter Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability*, p. 245.
[55] Marc Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society. Oldham and Saddleworth 1740-1865*, Oxford 1994, p.258.

was a prayer meeting at 7 a.m., Sunday School at 9 a.m., morning service, afternoon school, love feast and evening service, before and after which there were usually additional prayer meetings to make the day complete. Strict codes of conduct governed the lives of the church members. The Primitive Methodists of Haslingden decided in 1832 that "If any [Sunday school] teacher be found guilty of Sabbath-breaking, frequenting public houses, card tables, dancing rooms, cricket playing or gaming of any kind, or any other practice contrary to the Word of God, they shall be admonished for their conduct. If they reform, well: if not, they shall be expelled from the society".[56] It has to be once again clarified: people voluntarily submitted to those strict codes of Nonconformist conduct with its enormous boost for education. In 1867 Sir James Kay-Shuttlewoth summed up the contribution of the Sunday schools to education. He wrote to the scholars of the Bamford church where he had once been a superintendent: "Long before even enlightened statesmen and leaders of public opinion cared for the education of the people, the congregations had begun to work in the Sunday schools. When the Government first attempted to organise national education, it not only found its machinery ready to hand, but also found that the churches and congregations contained themselves the zeal and purpose as to public education".[57] The instruction offered by the Sunday schools, though extremely limited, was of inestimable value and was the key used by many people to unlock the doors to richer storehouses of knowledge. The Haslingden Primitive Methodist school welcomed children of all denominations, "provided they be free from offensive and contagious distempers" and set out to teach them "to read tolerably well, to write legibly and to understand the addition, subtraction and multiplication of money".[58] Not surprisingly, Manchester and the North-West of England, became the birthplace of the state education lobby. The Lancashire (later National) Public Schools Association (LPSA), founded in 1847, was a product of the same Manchester tradition of radicalism which had given rise to the Anti-Corn-League. Among its early members were Richard Cobden, Jacob Bright and Samuel Lucas. The LPSA campaigned for a rate-aided, locally controlled non-sectarian education system. This Nonconformist secular approach was opposed by the Manchester and Salford Committee on Education formed in 1851 by Anglican and Methodist ministers. But also not surprisingly, Mancunian radical Nonconformity pushed the foundation of Owens College in 1850, which Nonconformists set up on the principle of non-subscription,

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[56] Chris Aspin, *Lancashire*, p.148/149.
[57] Chris Aspin, *Lancashire*, p.151.
[58] Chris Aspin, *Lancashire*, p.151.

that is, there were no religious tests for students. At this time the only other English educational institution of higher learning open to Nonconformists was London University.[59]

The value of "respectability" became a permanent virtue of urban society, only based on religion and its stimulus to everyday life. The general conclusion reached was that the century had been one of steady growth and progress. The rapid population growth experienced in the Lancashire towns and villages had given the inhabitants a sense of social evolution. Assessments in local newspapers, and in works of local history, breathlessly relate how towns had been little more than villages at the start of the century, devoid of made-up streets, lacking in rudimentary sanitation and street lighting, devoid of significant public buildings. Veterans of the town were encouraged to recollect the uncivilised behaviour of early Victorian England; the rough games and leisure pursuits, the drunkenness and lewd behaviour, the lack of elementary education.[60]

Catholics and Jews were not merely passive recipients of fortunate trends in society, or beneficiaries of toleration, they also moved into the mainstream through their own efforts. As society moved from laissez-faire voluntary agencies, towards state intervention in economic and social policy, there were various Civil Service local government posts to be filled. The Catholic schools on Lancashire made a point of training pupils for Civil Service Entrance exams and for the armed services. In Manchester, Jerome Caminada (1844-1914), of Italian Catholic descent, rose to the rank of chief inspector and became known as the 'Garibaldi of detectives'.[61]

Which impact had those new Christian values of respectability for the shaping of everyday life in communal terms? One of the most striking examples of changing Christian perception of social issues and responsibilities during the third quarter of the century was the development, especially among Nonconformists, and preeminently in mid-Victorian Birmingham, of the ideal of the 'civic gospel'. It applies to Manchester as well as to Lodz, where those ideas have been practised, but given that Lodz suffered more hardship, still somehow with limited success. The combination of concepts and principles involved first developed and then triumphed in Birmingham during the 1850s, 60s and early 70s, and by the late 1870s and early 1880s had turned Birmingham from a somewhat backward borough into a model of what progressive and efficient local municipal government could be.[62]

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[59] E. Alan Rose, *Church and Chapel*, p. 204.

[60] C.S. Ford, *Pastors and Polemicists*, p.172/173.

[61] C.S. Ford, *Pastors and Polemicists*, p.183/184.

[62] An example for Nonconformist local power can be seen in Manchester. The militant Nonconformists came largely from Unitarian and Congregationalist backgrounds who had the necessary wealth and self-confidence to

In practical terms the civic gospel meant the conviction that local government that was efficient, public-spirited and directed to the well-being of the community as a whole could bring immense benefit to municipal life. Specifically, in the Birmingham of the 1870s and 80s, it meant new provision for sewage disposal, new action on public health, municipal ownership of gas and water companies, a major scheme of town improvement and slum clearance, and the provision of improved educational and cultural facilities, including a municipal museum and art gallery. It was, in short, a variety of civic 'gas and water socialism'. The civic gospel of mid-Victorian Birmingham was, of course, the product of a number of influences, not least among them the wider ambitions of local radical and liberal politicians. Much of the energy and vitality, zeal and idealism of the civic gospel in mid-Victorian Birmingham came specifically from its powerful and influential middle-class Nonconformist community. In the formative years of the ideal, the leading Nonconformist advocate of municipal duty and its potential was George Dawson, who had come to Birmingham in 1844 as minister of Mount Zion Baptist chapel. His liberal theological opinions quickly led to a break with his Baptist congregation, however, and in 1847 he opened his own church, the Church of the Saviour. From the pulpit of this church Dawson addressed an influential congregation which included many of the leaders of Birmingham's civic, cultural and political life. Dawson remained minister of the church until his death in 1876, proclaiming a message which was theologically liberal and socially and politically centred on a vision of civic brotherhood and of the city as a community in which a common municipal purpose transcended the interests of individual classes and groups.[63]

After Dawson, a second leading figure emerged: R.W. Dale, a Congregational minister. Dale had come to Carrs Lane Chapel, Birmingham, as assistant pastor in 1853 and remained pastor there until his death in 1895. He listened to much of Dawson's preaching, came to admire both the man and the preaching, and in the 1860s began to formulate his own version of the civic gospel. After Dawson's death it was Dale who assumed the role of leading Nonconformist spokesman for the civic gospel. His finest statement of its principles came in a collection of sermons entitled 'The Laws of Christ for the Common Life'. At the centre of the collection was the assertion of the relevance of Christian morality to everyday life and of the sacredness of commercial, municipal and political activities. The first sermon in the collection set out these themes in its title 'Everyday Business a Divine Calling'.

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challenge the town's Tory establishment in the 1830s. The Liberals dominated the City Council for twenty years after 1838 and the statistic that ten of the first 28 mayors came from Cross Street chapel speaks for itself. See E. Alan Rose, *Church and Chapel in Manchester*, p.198.
[63] Gerald Parsons, *Religion in Victorian Britain*, p.46/47.

The civic gospel itself was addressed directly in the sermon on 'Political and Municipal Duty'. Dale proclaimed his conviction that municipalities might sometimes do more for people than Parliament. With even their existing powers, he argued, they could do much to improve health and morality, diminish disease and premature death, and 'redress in many ways the inequalities of human conditions'. The churches, he asserted, would never be able to remedy the evils of urban social conditions without the additional actions of municipal authorities: medicine and municipal action, and not the gospel alone, were necessary to cure the sick and improve the homes of the poor.[64] The determination with which the evangelicals sought to build the Jerusalem of municipal welfare and moral and social reformation from the elements of industrial society derived its fire from exactly their same confident orthodox supernaturalism, their faith.

Altogether religion inspired in many respects urban life and indeed shaped modernity. The cities were left into urban mission fields. Some of the Churches' commitment derived from denominational competitiveness, and some from a concern about the moral health and general stability of the new industrial society. Its compulsive force, however, derived mainly from the evangelical concern of many individuals and church fellowships to share with their neighbours the felt benefits, both moral and spiritual, of a personal relationship with God, and thus to secure their eternal destiny.

Summary

Summing up, one could speak of a 'half-secular society', in which the social role of the churches was more restricted than in earlier times, and it was possible in principle to live one's life without any reference to religion, but where in practice the churches entered people's lives at many points, and few people had a wholly secular view of the world. In predominantly Protestant cities, there were fewer visible signs of people's religion, and so where churchgoing was low, it was easier to assume that simple indifference had taken its place. But appearances could be deceptive.[65]

An essential precondition for this change was the gradual emergence of religious toleration from the later seventeenth century onward. The pioneers were England, the Netherlands and some of the British colonies in North America. But gradually, in the course of the 18th century effective toleration spread to most other parts of Western Europe. The crucial significance of this development was that unorthodox religion, or irreligion, or simply

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[64] Gerald Parson, *Religion in Victorian Britain*, p.47/48.
[65] Hugh McLeod, *Working Class and Piety*, p.177.

religious non-practice, became legally permitted alternatives. It is hardly surprising that at least some people took advantage of these new opportunities. All three forms of religious dissent showed some growth in the 18th century, when generally religious practice was declining both at the upper and the lower end of the social hierarchy: at the upper end for intellectual, and at the lower end for demographic reasons, notably the growth of poor suburbs with little religious provision in the major towns, and of isolated weaving and mining communities in the countryside. Unreformed established churches were ill-equipped to respond to challenges of the latter kind, and at this stage the state tended to give a low priority to support for religion. Indeed, enlightened monarchs saw the church and popular religiosity as obstacles in the path of their modernising programmes. On the other hand, the weaknesses of the established churches provided a stimulus, at least in Protestant countries, to evangelical movements, often led predominantly by laymen, and appealing strongly to craftsmen and small farmers.[66]

The emergence of industrialisation and urbanisation in a free market in the late 18th and early 19th centuries marks the most fundamental transformation of human communities in recorded history. The movement from traditional to modern society affected all areas of life, including organised religion. For the Church it represented the greatest challenge in its long history. But the response of the Churches to urbanisation was more plural and creative than quantitative measurements suggested. Their cumulative effect meant that the age of mature industrial capitalism was imbued with a powerful and comprehensive religious and moral dimension. The onset of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, beginning in Britain, was also two-edged in its religious implications. On the one hand, the massive shifts of population from rural areas to towns and industrial regions presented the churches with major logistical problems which, at least in the short term, most were unable to solve. On the other hand, in Britain and the United States the new industrial communities were often strongholds of Protestant sectarianism. Furthermore, the great mixing of populations from different religious and ethnic backgrounds in many of the new industrial regions often led to a close intertwining of ethnic and religious identity, which enhanced people's religious awareness, and sometimes led to bitter sectarian conflict.[67]

For long there was a consensus among historians that in most parts of Europe the working class was extensively secularised in the 19th century, and controversy focused mainly on the reasons for that secularisation; but more recently, many historians, especially in Britain, have challenged this view. Hugh McLeod suggests higher levels of working-class

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[66] Hugh McLeod, *Working-Class and Piety*, p.201.
[67] Hugh McLeod, *Working-Class and Piety*, p.202.

participation in church and chapel than had previously been recognised, and Callum Brown and Mark Smith have gone considerably further in revising upward the estimated levels of working-class churchgoing and church membership. Meanwhile Jeff Cox and Sarah Williams have argued that non-churchgoing working-class people were not less religious than middle-class churchgoers, but religious in different ways.[68]

Apart from an undoubtedly existing religious crisis, a theoretical approach of modernisation has certainly to acknowledge a religious revival. There is structural ambivalence of decline and crisis, change and revival. More strongly structural changes and the cultural transformation of religion and church have to be underlined. This means, research has to focus on religious environments.

Religion dominated as a constitutive element the personal lives and served as orientation power in times of fundamental changes. It also provided with its social functions important reassurance in times of crisis. Lodz and Manchester were probation fields of pastoral initiatives and at the same time focus of dechristianisation and secularisation. Meanwhile they display the failure of the established churches and the rise of new religious movements. The latter succeeded in addressing the new religious and social needs of a new class, the industrial labourer and the businessmen. In the second half the 19th century, industrial society looked for social and mental reactions to the challenges of the modern world and tried to offer mental communication spaces. For religion this meant to describe the density of social relations, which constitute mentalities. Religion gained new cultural spheres and social spaces in the process of a more and more differentiated civil society. This religiously motivated new spirit and the economic dynamism contributed to the myth, which is connected with Manchester and Lodz alike.

Nonetheless, there were no homogeneous political, social and religious boundaries. The Manchester Unitarians experienced a long history of discrimination and saw many rich and educated Radicals among their members. Surely their contribution as nonconformist businessmen as genuinely progressive entrepreneurs was highly overrated. But: their communities gave many decisive impulses on the entrepreneurial climate. Parallels to German textile centres and their religious backgrounds are clearly noticeable. Church attendance, whether by force or voluntarily, granted many people of the 19th century a new respectability, which built a stark contrast to the light-hearted and partially church-estranged vulgarity of the previous generation. Religion has provided a sense of community, even though the hatred

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[68] Hugh McLeod, *Working-Class and Piety*, p.206.

among the many competing guardians of the truth was merciless and limited, church attendance and piety contributed remarkably to civilising and disciplining society.

Idleness and alcoholism were ousted as anti-virtues and church attendance on Sundays was sometimes more important than a visit to a pub. Also within the working class various differentiation processes took place: income, qualification and ethnic origin. Practically, the case study of Lodz and Manchester focused on religious associations, professions and parish structures as well as the social, religious and political context of urban societies. So far, historiography has neglected the multidimensional function of ideas, religious persuasions and theological shaping as orientation and guidance in everyday life. Urban societies faced a mental disposition of which a new socio-cultural identity constituted an integral part. Religion had to cope with new tendencies in education and sciences. As a substantial result of secularisation a new pluralism, individuality and self-determination threatened the churches' positions to which an answer was essentially required.

Case studies of both cities have hardly ever focused on the fascinating dimension of religion as a vital factor of everyday life. When waves of new immigrants moved to those "Promised Lands", they experienced disorientation, even deprivation, since most inhabitants had no kin within the city. Religion provided a social framework, which eased social hardships and offered support in a familiar, religious environment. As a consequence, it boosted urban integration and granted social recognition and acceptance. In many respects, religion and piety boosted modernity in urban spaces. It was, for instance, when we look at the "Civic Gospel" movement, the thriving force to modernise the industrial society, at least to provide it with more a more human nature. Not surprisingly, an English hymn has summarised exactly the ambitions and desires of 19th century religiously-motivated people and asked: *And Was Jerusalem Builded Here Among Those Dark Satanic Mills*?

Not self-pity, but engaging in communal activities was required. For building the *New Jerusalem* many people were essential. The development of a multitude of voluntary bodies serves as one example. They promoted the great 'Victorian' virtue of self-help, providing major opportunities for civic service, as a backbone of Victorian urban society. Predating the Welfare State, they provided much needed mutual aid and support. They also provided leisure and cultural opportunities. Importantly, too, they offered a way to achieve reform through pressure group activities. Which is quite clear for Victorian Manchester, and, even though more research needs to be done, for Lodz, religious values exercised considerable influence on those urban societies. Many people people did go to Church, even more attended Sunday School, supported by the emergence of stable urban communities, often surrounding the

cotton mills, and strong extended families. It was a place for members who contributed to the development of such mutual and voluntary bodies as the trade unions, friendly societies, and co-operatives, sponsored by and in turn resourcing such communities. It was a place for the development of the continuities of communities, families and values, as industrial districts became more settled.

In considering the role of religion in the 19th century city my emphasis has also been on establishing a framework within which the considerable diversity can be explained. Conventional wisdom associates the 19th century city with rapid secularisation. But this in several respects an over-simplification. First, the contrast drawn at the time between 'religious countryside' and 'irreligious city' is misleading. The salient feature of the urban religious life was not secularism but pluralism: certainly, the extremes of collective non-practice were found in rural areas; and of course there were many rural areas where the religious situation was more mixed. So the range of different types of religious situation obtaining in the rural regions of any country could be enormous. The degree of variation between the cities of any country was usually much less, but there was generally a great deal of religious diversity within any city.[69]

Christian rites were part of the taken-for-granted daily experience even of those who did not regard themselves as religious, *fromm*, *kirchlich* or *devot*. Churches continued to preside over private rites of passage, maintaining an easy superiority of appeal over the secular alternatives. The popular culture of European countries in the second half of the 19th century was saturated with symbols, rituals, beliefs, drawn ultimately from Christianity. They coloured the day-to-day habits of pious and impious alike, as well as shaping much of the environment within which even the declared unbeliever had to live.[70]

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[69] Hugh McLeod, *Working-Class and Piety*, p.208.
[70] Hugh McLeod, *Secularization in Western Europe*, 1848-1914, p.251.