Post-Secular Tourism

A Study of Pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela

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Abstract

This thesis takes its starting-point in the post-secular changes in society and how these interplay with tourism. In spite of the intensive academic debate on and theorisation of the post-secular and post-secularism, the role of tourism in this change, called the return of religion, has not been studied. Conversely, neither has the role of post-secularism in tourism been addressed. The overall aim of this thesis is to describe and understand the relation between post-secularism and tourism. Specifically, the aim is to clarify and understand the relation between religious faith, place and tourism in our time on the basis of a case study of pilgrimage in the area of Santiago de Compostela. In other words, the thesis highlights the role of tourism in the emergence of what is now called the post-secular condition.

Santiago de Compostela is a Catholic Church instituted holy city, which has increase in number of visitors. The growing number of pilgrimages and their significance lend vitality to the return of religion phenomenon. The empirical material derives primarily from individual interviews as narratives are considered to be a vital dimension to constitute and construct human realities and modes of being.

This thesis shows that contemporary pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela is a post-secular performative and place-creating phenomenon. Post-secular tourist places are subjective and spiritually meaningful destinations. Unlike traditional pilgrimage destinations a key attribute is that neither traditional religious faith nor loyalty to institutionalised faith are (pre)ordained. Rather, place is constructed by the narratives and experiences of post-secular tourists.

Acknowledgement

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Preface

I trace my research interest in sacred places to a specific event that took place in the autumn of 1999 when I was visiting Scotland and the quaint little village of Fort Augustus on Lake Loch Ness. On the first morning, I was looking out over the lake and realised that simply being there fascinated me immensely. The feeling can be described as a sense of experiencing the uniqueness of temporarily being on the shore of the famous lake, there and then, and being part of its surroundings. I was taken aback because Loch Ness did not really differ from any other lake I had visited. Yet, there was a difference, which affected and coloured my experience: my knowledge of the myth of the Loch Ness monster. This experience triggered my curiosity of the role of myth narratives in our understanding of places and so my academic studies in Human Geography came early on to centre on mythical places and their significance and roles in tourism contexts, place myths in particular that are open to interpretation, and therefore can shape individual understanding of a place and by extension the tourist destination.

In more recent years, I have paid greater attention to place in relation to an historical religious story combined with current expressions of individual religiosity. In this study, the religious attraction of place is tied to one particular religious denomination, in this case the Catholic religion. At present, however, we have to consider the possibility that other claims to religiosity are increasingly being made. In this respect, it is of interest to investigate permanent in the seemingly fleeting and conversely the fleeting in the permanent and how these bear on place identity and the meaning of traditional religious destinations/places. This thesis was conceived and written in that spirit.

1. Introduction

In recent years, religious journeys in the form of pilgrimages have been one of the most rapidly growing tourism niches (Gatrell and Collins-Kreiner, 2006; Shinde, 2007; Santos-Solla and Lois-Gonzalez, 2014). Santiago de Compostela is one of the most significant pilgrimage destinations in Europe. In the past decades it has undergone great changes, not least in terms of the tremendous growth of pilgrimages to the area. Pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela have, for example, grown 25 fold in the last three decades, from ca. one thousand (1985) to hundreds of thousands undertaking the pilgrimage today (2013).[1] The statistics, however, only include the pilgrim whose journey is formalised, that is, registered and thus official.[2] The increase in pilgrimages has taken place concurrently with changes in Western European societies that have bearing on the place identity of Santiago de Compostela as a pilgrimage destination. The changed context has, among other things, to do with the role of religiosity in present day society and refers to the shift in the understanding and role of religion in present day Western societies. Research in religious studies shows that religious pluralism is prevalent and that *new* religious subject-oriented philosophies emerge and become part of public life in different ways than previously (Sointu and Woodhead, 2008; Gallagher and Newton, 2009; Grimshaw, 2013). The discipline of Human Geography has to give greater attention to the new expressions of religiosity and how these affect place identities, meaning and construction of tourism spaces. How should we understand tourist journeys to traditionally religious places in relation to the new manifestations of religiosity in contemporary life?

Reflections on contemporary society in relation to religion and religiosity are available in the academic debate of the post-secular and the ideology of post-secularism (Habermas, 2006, 2008). Ever since Habermas's initiation, the debate on the existence or non-existence of

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[1] http://peregrinossantiago.es/eng/pilgrimage/the-credencial.

[2] Since there are individuals who choose not to formalise their journey by registering as pilgrims, there is an unrecorded number of 'pilgrims' and the responsible bodies are aware of this.

the post-secular has intensified (McLennan, 2010; Bader, 2012; Beckford, 2012; Gorski et al., 2012). It is interesting to note that, the relatively rapid increase in the number of pilgrimages occurs parallel to the post-secular debate gaining ground in academic research.[3] Although the concepts of the post-secular and post-secularism are generally established in several disciplines, there is a lack of research into the interplays between tourism and the post-secular. This is ironic in view of the fact that tourism as such has been described in terms of religion (MacCannell, 1976). The post-secular debate and research on post-secularism is more or less absent in tourism studies, as is the importance of tourism in and to the understanding of post-secular society. Research on the post-secular should attend to the manifold interplays between tourism and post-secularism.

Research on pilgrimage tourism has emphasised the need to extend and broaden the understanding of the phenomenon (Reader, 2007). Scott's definition perhaps best captures the essence of both past and present pilgrimages when he claims that they should not be seen as static, but rather as a social phenomenon in constant change (Urry et al., 2007). Pilgrimage, in other words, is in constant change which is why its meaning cannot be taken for granted. Pilgrimages need to be conceived from the standpoint of ontogenesis, i.e., as being and becoming – as something that is and is in the making over time and space/place. The days when we assumed that pilgrimages were uniform and clearly defined phenomena are passé, according to Reader (2007). Again, given the fact that religiosity is at the centre of the post-secular debate, it is strange that the post-secular is largely ignored in tourism studies in general and even more so in studies of tourism to pilgrimage destinations.

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[3] I am aware of the critique and problematic nature of the prefix *post*. The problem is that the prefix *post* implies that something is over and replaced with something new (Harvey, 1989; Lyon, 1998). The controversies of the academic debate concern among other things: 1) the criteria selected to denote the new; 2) the degree to which the differences between what was and what is are decisive; 3) whether or not these are to be seen as universal or not; and 4) the time limit set to separate two epochs. In my opinion, it is above all a question of who has the power to denote and define. Despite possible objections, concepts with the prefix post will be used in this thesis.

The present age can be described as one that does not take identities for granted and presumably this applies to the identity of sacred places as well. It is no longer the dogma of institutionalized religion, its narratives of the religious attributes of places that define the meaning and identity of sacred places. In addition, there is reason to assume that contemporary pilgrims influence and shape the meaning and identity of a previously established sacred place. This means that it is relevant to study how religious places are constructed in the present day post-secular society. Irrespective of research concerns, the return of religion or the growing role of religion in society, it is important to understand the contemporary relation between religious faith, tourism and place.

1.1 Religious faith, tourism and place in our time

Post-secularism has, relatively speaking, not informed the human geography discourse to any great extent, and even less so in tourism studies. Considering that the post-secular emerges in the wake of the subjective turn (e.g. Taylor, 1991; Heelas and Woodhead, 2005), the content and significance of tourism and its role in the construction of places ought to be of greater research interest than before.

In human geography, the sub-discipline of religious geography is not relatively well developed (Kong, 2010; Tse, 2014), so much so that Yorgason and della Dora state that religion and religiosity is the "*terra incognita*" (2009, p. 629) of human geography. The term elicits a clear wish for a greater research interest in religion and religiosity in human geography. Admittedly, the field *religiogeography* has developed in recent years with a focus on the relationships between religious faith/religion and place/space as well as how place/space are central to the creation of religious communities and identities (Wilford, 2010; Orsi, 2010). Although, religiogeography is an indication of the growing interest, still there are many unexplored areas when it comes to the study of geography and religion. Yorgason and della Dora (2009, p. 630) go as far as calling for an increased *colonialization of* the field of religious studies. In his survey of research into religion by human geography, Kong

(2010) notes firstly that a substantial part of the research deals with religious extremism and secondly with how migration has led to the growth of complex landscapes of religion in several countries. One of Kong' conclusion is that we are witnessing increased differentiation of places, religious practices, denominations and religious beliefs. Even if human geography research of religion has increased in the past decade, Tse (2014, p. 201) remarks that more often than not, "religion remains an undefined 'black box'…" in the discipline. What is needed, according to Kong, is research on the theological and philosophical foundations of faith. Tse (2014) calls for human geography research that addresses issues of how theology and ontology are related to questions of subject formation, place and religious faith. In addition, Kong (2010) stresses the need for human geography research into post-secularism. Some human geographers have started to engage in the study of the post-secular and the ideology of post-secularism with a focus on political institutions and the public sphere (e.g. Kong, 2010; Beaumont and Baker, 2011). The present study is a contribution to human geography research of religion, specifically post-secularism, tourism and place.

Tourism is no longer a phenomenon taking place apart from everyday life but is rather a part of everyday life in the West (Wang, 2000; Edensor, 2000; Franklin and Crang, 2001; Holloway and Valins, 2002). In a research survey of research on tourism, religion and spirituality, Sharpley (2009, p. 250) makes the following observation:

> The tourism-as-religion discourse has explored the conceptual links among tourism, pilgrimage, and spirituality, few attempts have been made either to locate the debate within the content of contemporary theological perspectives on religion and spirituality or, more specifically, to undertake empirical research into this issue. Consequently, little account has, to date, been taken of the shifting role of religion/spirituality in contemporary societies and the subsequent ways in which tourist journeys, sites and places may be experienced by apparently secular or nonreligious tourists.

If it is true that studies of tourism and religion are more or less separate spheres/subjects, as Stausberg (2011) claims, then the same can be claimed about the relationship between tourism and the post-secular. Just as tourism research has neglected the post-secular debate so has tourism been neglected in the post-secular debate. This means that we lack knowledge about of several issues in this context.

Firstly, although we have long known that tourism is characterised by inherent religiosity (MacCannell, 1976), at the same time, we lack wider knowledge of how changes in religiosity affect tourism. Secondly, as tourism today constitutes an integral part of Western life, it is justifiable to examine tourism as a part and parcel of post-secular tendencies. However, we lack knowledge in which ways tourism is an agent of post-secularism. Thirdly, given the growth in the numbers of pilgrimages to religious places the religiosity of tourism has become even more apparent, which in turn gives rise to questions of the resurgence of religion. However, we still lack concepts to clarify the relationship between tourism, post-secularism and religiosity, and how these affect places.

1.2 Aim and research questions

The objective of the thesis is to redress in part the lack of knowledge of the relation between post-secularism and tourism by empirically describing and interpreting the pilgrimage phenomenon in the context of a tourist-religious place. Santiago de Compostela is an historic and sacred place, which has attracted pilgrims for a long time. The sacredness of the city has been established and firmly grounded in the doctrine of the Catholic Church since the 9th Century. It is, however, no longer obvious that the pilgrims belong to the *right* faith in relation to the Catholic history of the place. There is no certainty either that the pilgrims have a religious conviction at all. The multifaceted motivation behind the pilgrims' journeys is confirmed by the statistics collected by Xacobeo and the Pilgrims' Office.[4]

This thesis takes its starting-point in the post-secular changes in society and how these interplay with tourism. In spite of the intensive debate on and theorisation of the post-secular and post-secularism, the role of tourism in the return of matters religious, has not been given its proper due. Neither has the role of post-secularism in

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[4] The Pilgrims' Office is the Catholic Church institution that keeps statistics and issues the certificate that the pilgrims receive at the end destination Santiago de Compostela. Xacobeo is a public company owned by the Galician regional government for the purpose of promoting cultural tourism.

tourism. In other words, the thesis highlights the role of tourism in the emergence of what is now called the post-secular condition (Sigurdson, 2009).

Moreover, there is also reason to pay attention to the post-secular condition in society and the impact of post-secularism at tourist destinations. Studying the post-secular in general terms is not my primary concern. Rather, my objective is to highlight the complex nature of pilgrimages today. Not least, in terms of its destination in a tourist context. The re-working of sacred places and the role of individuals (tourists/pilgrims) in these transformations are central to an understanding of how places can be interpreted and understood in contemporary society. Places are repositories of meaning and identity, and as such contribute to our ability to see, get to know and understand the world (Cresswell, 2004). In this regard, it is relevant to examine the various meanings that individuals' attach to sacred places and in turn how these shape places. This study takes Santiago de Compostela as its case in order to draw out the manifold re-workings of place, identity and meaning. Its aim is to map the various ways in which the post-secular is manifested.

With reference to the above, the aim is to describe and understand the relations between post-secularism and tourism. Specifically, the aim is to clarify and understand the relation between religious faith, place and tourism in the contemporary based on empirical studies of pilgrimages in Santiago de Compostela and its environs. Figure 1 captures the main focus and research problem of the thesis.

Figure 1: Schematic presentation of the research problem of the thesis

To fulfil the aim, the following research questions have been identified:

1) What are the relations between post-secularism and tourism?
2) How does post-secularism manifest itself in and through tourism?

The thesis has a focus on the contemporary interplays between religious faith, tourism and place from a Human Geography perspective. Pilgrimages provide a fruitful empirical entry to study and analyse the multiple relations between post-secularism and tourism, not least since pilgrimages have historically embodied both tourism and religion. The implication being that changes in religious practice would be reflected in pilgrimages to sacred places and vice-versa. It is impossible to ignore the fact that Santiago de Compostela is still a Catholic sacred city. However, representation of Santiago de Compostela in a number of cultural media such as film, documentaries and books, pilgrimages and the place itself are portrayed in ways that do not correspond with the Catholic dogma.

The approach adopted here is based on humanistic geography perspectives on place, in which the experiences and perceptions of individuals and groups are central. This means that sense of place, identity and the construction of place meaning are essential in the study of place (Tuan, 1974). The individuals' own perceptions of and

stories about places are decisive factors. In this study, I employ a constructivist perspective, which means that I rely on a more-than-human approach (Whatmore, 2002). This means that I do not have the romanticised and dichotomous view that characterises essentialist perspectives in the humanistic geography tradition (e.g. Cresswell, 2004). Place is a complex phenomenon, malleable and ambiguous phenomenon, whose meanings and identities are continuously (re)created relationally at different scales that traverse the local and the global continuum (e.g. Massey, 1994; Casey, 1997; Harvey, 2006).

The thesis has a relational perspective on place and space, which means that these are not given *a priori*, but rather are constructed and in constant becoming. A relational perspective implies that phenomena should not be regarded as being in themselves, but rather as beings in the making in relation to something else (Massey, 2005). Phenomena become and take place relationally, i.e.,"*not just 'being', but 'being-with'* (Massey in Urry et al., 2007, p. 100). Unlike Massey, my approach is not *social* constructivistic as I, in the manner of Whatmore (2002) and Law (2004), argue that objects are also co-creators of place. Therefore the thesis adopts an ontology and epistemology of becoming. The central concepts – religious faith, tourism and place as well as post-secularism – are understood as phenomena that are contextual, changeable and constructed by human beings in interaction with objects and *are* not givens, but *become* (Whatmore, 2002; Thrift, 2007). In this perspective, religion is seen as a place-creating and place changing force. In this sense, religion is not given in advance (e.g. Reader, 2007; Collins-Kreiner, 2010; della Dora, 2012). All in all, tourism is central to both place and religion in our time.

Before we *wander* further, it is worth noting that a society that can be described as post-secular can perhaps only be found in the Western world. To avoid the epistemological Eurocentrism, I would like to underline that this thesis does not make universal claims but rests on a specific European place context. In Europe it is common to view modernity and the traditional as a dichotomy, which creates problems in a global perspective. European dichotomous conceptions of modernity and the traditional can, for example, not be used as a template to account for how other parts of the world can succeed in

modernising society without marginalising religion. It follows that modernisation is not contingent on a secularisation process.

1.3 Thesis outline

This compilation thesis comprises an overarching part consisting of five sections followed by four articles, published or accepted for publication. The five sections are: a general introduction, a theoretical framework, method and empirical material, a summary of each article included, a concluding discussion and results. The introduction is prefaced by a personal reflection and followed by the thesis problem area, aim and research questions. The second section deals with the theoretical framework, the concepts used and the meanings that are central in terms of the thesis focus area. For the purpose of providing understanding of the social phenomena that the thesis addresses, the theoretical framework is based on a relational perspective. The third section presents methods and materials. The overarching part provides a meta-narrative, which places the articles in a wider subject-theoretical, research and societal context.

This is followed by an account and summary of the articles included. The articles should be viewed as narratives from different perspectives, which together provide answers to the aim and research questions of this study. The focus and the findings in the articles can thus be said to define the content of the main narrative of the thesis. The purpose of the outline is to describe how each part contributes to the whole. That is, the overarching part and the articles make clear the logic of the process towards an understanding of the research questions and the thesis aim. A discussion of the results and the conclusions to be drawn based on the articles wraps up the first part, which is followed by the separate articles.

Figure 2: Summary of the outline

Finally, the four articles are included in the following order:

I. Blom, T., Nilsson, M., and Santos Solla, X. (2008). Pilgrimage or Sacred Tourism? – A Modern Phenomenon with Historical Roots, with Examples from Fatima and Santiago de Compostela. *Revista Turismo & Desenvolvimento,* nr. 9, 63-78.

II. Nilsson, M. (Accepted with revision). Wanderers in the shadow of the sacred myth – pilgrims in the 21st Century. *Social and Cultural Geography.*

III. Nilsson, M. and Tesfahuney, M. (2016). Performing the "Post-Secular" in Santiago de Compostela. *Annals of Tourism Research* vol. 57, 18-30.

IV. Blom, T., Nilsson, M., and Santos Solla, X. (2016). The way to Santiago beyond Santiago. Fisterra and the pilgrimage's post-secular meaning. *European Journal of Tourism Research,* vol 12*.*

Authors´contributions

The overall work on paper **I** was done in collaboration by all authors (Blom, Nilsson and Santos Solla). All three authors were involved throughout the write up of the paper. Paper **III** was done in collaboration between the first author (Nilsson) and the second author (Tesfahuney). The empirical data for paper III was collected by the first author. The analysis and write up of the final paper was a collaborative effort. Paper **IV** was a collaborative work by all three authors´ (Blom, Nilsson and Santos Solla). Mats Nilsson collected and analysed the empirical data. All co-authored papers were read and approved by the authors before submission.

2. Religious faith, tourism and place in our time

This thesis addresses the complex relationships between post-secularism and tourism by specifically exploring the relations between religious faith, tourism and place in our time. This includes a consideration of the spatiality of post-secularism, that is, how post-secularism is manifested in place and the significance of place in post-secularism. In what follows, I provide a theoretical discussion of religious faith, tourism and place.

2.1 Pilgrimage and tourism

> Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.' (Mark 8:34, NIV)

The quotation above is considered to be the very foundation of the Christian motivation to undertake a pilgrimage. Pilgrimages are, however, not unique to Christianity. Pilgrimages today are a popular form of travel. However, pilgrimages have a long history with religious as well as cultural motivations (Digance, 2003; Collins-Kreiner, 2010). According to Barbers (1993), pilgrimages should be understood in terms of two dimensions: an external journey to a sacred place and an inward journey towards inner understanding. Basically, pilgrimages as phenomena are journeys to a sacred place.

Pilgrimages resemble tourism in as much as these involve the elements of motivation, destination and travel (Shinde, 2007). A classic interpretation of a pilgrimage is that the destination constitutes an assumed religious world centre where the pilgrim can come closer to God (Cohen, 2008). The religious function of pilgrimages has been described as twofold: confirming faith and reinforcing the sacredness of the place in relation to a religious system – the denominational dogma, and confirming faith in relation to the individual (Eck, 1981). The actual journey should involve ordeals, suffering and penance for the purpose of being closer to God, thus purging body and soul. All these elements have historically been

important ingredients of pilgrimages alongside religious faith (Jebb 1986; Cavanaugh, 2008).

Salazar (2012) argues that tourism is a child of the pilgrim tradition (e.g. Rinschede, 1992; Smith, 1992; Cavanaugh, 2008), that is to say, religion and tourism are linked historically. Turnball (1981), on the other hand, advocates the need to make a distinction between pilgrimage and tourism because tourism, in his opinion, is not primarily characterised by the religious, but rather by the cultural. The problem with Turnball's idea is the division as such, that is, whether the pilgrimage takes place in the realm of the secular or the sacred. Instead of making a distinction, we can note the signs indicating a common ground, for example, that the tourist and the pilgrim both *escape* from something and/or to something. Historically, the pilgrim escapes from the *ungodly* everyday life and the tourist escapes from mundane, everyday life. In this sense, the pilgrim and tourist alike are persons escaping the ordinary in search of the extraordinary.

In addition, several tourism researchers claim that tourism is inherently religious. As early as 1976, MacCannel argued that a tourist should be perceived as a modern pilgrim in the sense that experience of the journey has religious connotations. Tourism has also been elevated to and considered as the *new religion* of modernity (Poria et al., 2003b; Sharpley and Sundaram, 2005; Salazar, 2012). This conception of tourism can be traced back to Durkheim's (1965/1915) distinction between non-ordinary *sacred* and ordinary *profane* experiences. In my view, Durkheim's distinction between the ordinary and the non-ordinary is comparable to the conventional distinction between the everyday and the touristy. In Durkheim's footsteps, tourism has been defined as a non-ordinary experience and thus in a sense a sacred event. Seeing tourism and everyday life as opposites is also found in Eliade's (1959) and Graburn's (1989) distinction between the profane and the sacred.

Further arguments linking tourism and pilgrimages are the features that have long been used to analyse the meaning of the journey itself. These features are the symbolic, the embodied and the meaningful, that characterise the motivation of journey, choice of destination, and

form of travel for both tourism and pilgrimages. A common feature is also the ritualistic essence: invariance, the journey as such, itinerary and return (MacCannell, 1976; Turner and Turner, 1978; Graburn, 1989; Nolan and Nolan, 1992; Nash, 1996). In similar manner, pilgrimages honour the traditional and tourism honours the genuine and authentic. Hence, MacCannel`s (1976) well known description: pilgrims are sacred tourists and tourists are secular pilgrims.

The fact that more and more people are tempted to undertake a tourist journey to a sacred place can also be seen as a sign of the close relationship between the two. If pilgrimages used to be more or less integrated with rituals of a religious church, the contemporary pilgrimage, according to Shinde (2007), is primarily an individually motivated journey embedded in an individual religious faith. Digance (2003) takes a further step, suggesting that there is reason to redefine pilgrimage as meaningful journeys rather than religious journeys based on faith and devotion.

Overall, this implies that there are new conditions suggesting that contemporary pilgrimages should be associated with change rather than continuity (Sharpley and Sundaram, 2005; Reader, 2007; Colins-Kreiner, 2010; della Dora, 2012; Lois-Gonzalez and Santos Solla, 2014). The changes in religiosity affect the role and significance of the sacred which in turn can be seen as an effect of the post-secular.

2.2 Contextualising the post-secular

In the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century Marx (1818-1883), Weber (1864-1920), Durkheim (1858-1917) and Simmel (1858-1918) presented the classic descriptions of modernity in terms of functional differentiation, cultural rationalisation, instrumentalisation, commodification and individualisation (Liedman, 1997). The concept of modernity has several meanings, but is perhaps primarily associated with *progress*, that is, a strong belief in the future. In a historical perspective, modernity has been interpreted as a radical break from the traditional continuity. Modernity and the traditional have therefore usually been and still are presented as opposites, a disputed dichotomisation. One of the

opponents, Latour (1993), argues that we have never been modern since the traditional is still present. In contrast to the modernist view, traditionalists see society as a permanent, place-dependent and collective institution where organised religions constitute strong powerful factors in public as well as private life. According to Flere and Kirbis (2009, p. 162), traditional society is a set of values idealising history:

> ... a value complex that idealizes the past, which is a socially constructed depiction of the past, although there is also some objective connection with inherited patterns of behavior and thought, particularly patterns that can be considered irrational and patriarchal in substance.

In modernity, the break from the traditional is emphasised in general and in the realm of religion in particular as a key feature. The consequence is a divorce between the spheres of the state and religion and religion and beliefs are confined to the private sphere. This is the ground for modernity's claim to secularity.

To frame the post-secular, I take my starting-point in the broader post-modern debate, and this is followed by a discussion of the post-secular. Studying traditionality, modernity and secularism is necessary to clarify post-secularism.

2.2.1 Post-modern ontology and epistemology

Post-modernism questions the truth claims of science, rationality and the subject. Modernity centres on the *Truth* as universal or rather transcendental, that is, valid beyond time and space. The human being is regarded as the 'measure of all things', equipped with the common sense to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong. God, in other words, is no longer the 'measure of all things'. Modern science thus rests on an anthropocentric worldview. The postmodern critique questions, among other things, the anthropocentric view on which modern science rests and claims that the human being alone is not, and cannot be, the measure of all things.

The proponents of the modernity perspective also claimed that science represents the world (objects and people) in a faithful and objective way. This is the representational claim of modern science. In addition, the modern view of science is built on a linear conception of time and the future, privileging time before space. Paradoxically, the belief in universal truth is a-historical, which goes against modernity´s claim to truth since history has an end goal and a fixed course. In contrast to modernity's linear conceptions of time, whose rejection of history and tradition is central, post-modern thinkers argue that time is not linear but consists of many different temporalities and multiple spatialities (Soja, 1989), meaning that the past is not gone but always present and has a value in relation to our understanding of society. Likewise, in modernity, space is absolute and seen only as an arena for the course of history, while space is central to post-modernism. The post-modern view of science, however, claims that knowledge is incomplete, place-dependent and contextual. Knowledge is partial and situated (Pred, 1984; Lyon, 1998) and can at the most make limited and local knowledge claims. Knowledge is, for example, coloured by gender, class, ethnicity, and therefore never universally valid.

Modernity´s knowledge claims are problematic, not least because these claims rest on the idea of an omniscient rational subject. In post-modernism questioning and doubting are central. The French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard queried the modernity impulse towards consensus. In the report *La Condition Postmoderne* (1979), he expresses doubts about the metanarratives of modernity and suggests that consensus constrains and aggravates the emergence of new ideas. Instead, he advocates an agnostic approach with several mini narratives. It was not only the faith in the metanarratives that postmodernists objected to, but also to the view that society could be captured in a few axioms. Other critics of the discourse of modernity (Said, 1978; Harvey, 1989; Latour, 1993) point out that its metanarratives have led to a loss of the meaningfulness of life for the average individual. The metanarratives of modernity and its claims of universality, objectivity and knowledge are thus highly problematic

from a post-modern ontology.[5] In the post-modern ontology, the minor narratives such as disagreements, playfulness and feasibility are central. A post-modern view of society involves a core of ongoing debate on its truths.

The main objection to post-modernism has been that it ends in knowledge relativism and eclecticism.[6]

2.2.2 Post-modern society

Post-modern society is strongly linked to globalisation, which means a weakening of the nation states, deregulation of financial markets, increased transnational flows of goods, services, information and people, not to mention a world-wide ICT development, whose processes are characteristic of the major societal changes (Castells, 1998). Other features of the post-modern are increased mobility, new transnational communities, body and identity policies, increased awareness and self-reflexivity, all important elements of ordinary and social life. In addition, multiculturalism and the blurring of the social and cultural boundaries which are considered to be central dimensions of the transition from the modern to the post-modern society are central features (Harvey, 1989; Sassen, 1991; Rojek, 1995).

In terms of the economic dimension, the age of post-modernism coincides with the transition from the industrial to the post-industrial era or expressed as a change from organised to de-organised capitalism (Lash and Urry, 1987). Unlike the mass production of modernity, the post-modern economy is distinguished by a flexible, just-in-time and tailored production and consumption of goods and services (Harvey, 1989).

Regarding the cultural dimension, the emergence of an immaterial economy where culture as well as knowledge and services are

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[5] Speaking in terms of postmodern ontology may seem paradoxical as the postmodern represents ongoing changeability and thus is in a constant process of becoming, but it is an accepted concept (Lyon, 1998).

[6] See, for example, Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2008 for an overview.

important parts of the economy is a distinguishing feature. The cultural economy covers, for example, design, art, symbolism, lifestyle, and architecture, and the aesthetic is assigned a clear function in the production and consumption of goods and services in ways partly new to modernity (Harvey, 1989). Post-modernism celebrates hybridity, diversity and difference and their contributions to the formation of new subjectivities and subcultures (Pieterse, 2007). Modernity, on the other hand, rests on the assumption that culture and identity are self-evident which in post-modernism has been replaced with subjective and negotiable realities. This development has contributed to the contemporary general sense of insecurity and transience, according Hartmut (2014). In this context it is reasonable to assume that religiosity re-emerges as the answer to individual quests. This is the basic assumption of the post-secular idea.

2.3 From the secular to the post-secular

One of the grand narratives of modernity is the story of the secular. The assumption of the secular narrative is that religion and religiosity are expected to lose importance and gradually disappear in modernity (Hagevi, 2005). The post-secular thesis challenges the secularisation claim and argues for a post-secular understanding of our time. There is, thus, every reason to question modernity´s self image as the opposite of traditional society in this context.

Traditional society is characterised by people's dependency on and taking recourse to the belief system and practice of institutional religion. Modern proponents considered the interpretative prerogative of the church as a hinder to societial and individual progress. The reason was that the interpretative and explanatory models of European Christianity were based on one narrative, namely the Bible. Somewhat exaggeratedly, we might say that people were deprived of the right to draw their own conclusions and concede to the church.

With the arrival of modernity, the interpretative prerogative of the church was revoked. Individuals were expected to have the ability to think and were allowed to think freely. The monopoly of the church to decide in matters of right and wrong at all levels was curtailed. The power of religion was reduced and the understanding of society was that *the more religion was curtailed, the more modern a society would become*. Opposing modernity and the secular to the traditional and religion is a common way to create understanding of modern society. Casanova (1994), for example, claims that the more modern a society is, the less religious are its people. Casanova is not alone in this claim as he draws on Kristeva's (1986) view of religion as the opposite of modernity (e.g. Grinell and Strandberg, 2012). In the secular modernity narrative there is thus an alleged truth that the spread of secularism is manifested in the dissolution of religion. Logically, this would mean that when the process of secularisation is complete, religion is wiped out. Lenski (1961, p. 3) describes this in rather drastic terms, saying, "religion in the modern world is merely a survival from man's primitive past, and doomed to disappear in an era of science and general enlightenment".

One of the grand narratives of modernity is the narrative of secular society where we have cast off the burden of religion. This would be a society built on rationality and science, having discarded transcendental doctrines of the world, life and existence. In this context, it is rather ironic that modernity is said to be free of myths while it is in fact based on a myth, namely the myth of the death of religion. However, few if any believe that secularisation has reached the conceived final stage.

In the secular era, we have witnessed a number of political perspectives and ideologies aiming to eliminate or at least restrict religiosity, religious faith and the institutional denominations. There is reason to maintain that the secular replaced the clerical and thus became *the new* religion (e.g. Horkheimer and Adorno, 2012). The secular religion was presented as an objective narrative with considerable truth-value. This secular religion shouldered the role as the crusader against the clerical religion.

Among the secular believers there are proponents of a wider view of secularism beyond the unilateral assertion on the elimination of religion in modernity and secularism. A case in point is the advocate of secularism, Charles Taylor (2007), who suggests that secularisation should not be reduced to diminishing religious faith and its practices but should bring about a change in the conditions of faith and the practice of religiosity. This is probably the best example of the need of modifying the relation between the canons of religion and secularism. Taylor (2007) demonstrates a wish to make room for the religious in the contemporary world.

2.4 Upgrading religion

There is an understanding of the disintegration of the early secular hegemonic tenets, indicating that secular society is being challenged anew and that the proponents of the post-secular society are willing to accept the challenge. Berger (1999) was quick to address the importance of religion and its renewed role in society. Berger (1999, p. 2) had no intention, however, to depart from the secular track. Rather, he suggested that the return of religion in itself can be explained and understood *within* the secular sphere as a process of *de-secularization*:

> The assumption that we live in a secular world is false. The world today, with some exceptions [...] is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more than ever.

Berger chooses not to ignore the sacred but points out that the secular obviously creates room for the sacred. Also others have objections to the sacred/secular dichotomy as a basis for modernity (e.g. Zijderveld, 1972; Taylor, 2007). They claim instead that the sacred is a prerequisite for the secular and that the secularisation thesis has always been misguided. The secularisation thesis needs to be revised and even discarded. Beck (2010, p. 23) even thinks that it is a lie: "what the secularisation theory has to say is, in a general sense, not true".

Interestingly, Nietzsche (1987/1882) drew similar conclusions to those of Beck more than a hundred years ago, when he proclaimed

that *God is dead*. Nietzsche's critique was launched at Christian morality, which he thought was the basis of science and modern society. His message was that Europe has never settled accounts with the Christian legacy, which is why it was meaningless to debate whether society is secularised or not. We have never been secular argues Nietzsche. Kristeva (1986), on her part, sees modernity as the time in history where European communities have had the *intention* to live without religion. By emphasising the intentional, Kristeva underlines a clear shift from a focus on the absence of religion to the intention to achieve its absence. Similarly, Lillas (2007) stresses the experimental nature of secularism. He thinks that secularism is a parenthesis in history and should be regarded as an experiment.

Habermas (2006, 2008), like Berger (1999) to some extent, Casanova (2006) and Taylor (2007), is critical of secular society's erroneous and therefore reductive picture of the role of religion in modernity. Habermas maintains that there is reason to revise the prevalent modernity view of religion. But, in contrast to Berger, Casanova and Taylor, Habermas thinks that contemporary religion and religiosity are signs of something radically new. This is the subject of the post-secular debate.

2.5 The post-secular debate

The secularisation of modernity has been the dominant issue in social studies for a long time. Not until recently has the questioning of the alleged death of religion led to the insight that religion has always been a part of modernity and that religion is no longer in the periphery of social life. It is, in fact, no longer in the corner where secularism placed it. Some claim that the situation now suggests that the role of religion has become so important that there is reason to define the present cultural condition as post-secular (Habermas, 2006; Vries, 2013). The post-secular proponents aim to understand and capture the new religiosity and the religious resurgence in social life. For example, Said explained as early as 1983 that religion had returned. Rorty and Vattimo (2005) have somewhat ironically described this religious revival as the return of religion after religion.

According to them, it is, in other words, meaningless to speak of a non-religious state of affairs at all. The discussion is not new. Already in 1989, van Peursen (1989) described the post-secular era. Religiosity was also a central part of Huntington's (1996) in his thesis on the clash of civilisations, the politicisation of religion and the emergence of fundamentalist movements. In the 2000s, the discussion on the importance of religion in our time has continued. But it was not until Habermas (2006) argued that we have entered the post-secular age that the discussion took off.

The post-secular development has not been taken for granted; on the contrary, it has been the subject of an intense academic debate. Three issues have been at the centre of the debate on the post-secular. Whether it can be proven empirically; what explanation potential it holds; what normative values the post-secular and post-secularism bring about (Bader, 2012; Gorski et al, 2012; Beckford, 2012; McGhee 2013).

Two clear positions are discernible in the debate.[7] The first is that we have entered a post-secular age where the return of religion is central (e.g. Habermas, 2006/2008; Sigurdson, 2010; Beaumont and Baker, 2011; Moberg and Granholm, 2012; McGhee, 2013). The second position is that we are still in a secular age, but with the agenda to revise and include religion. This position does not concede that Western societies are in a post-secular age (e.g. Berger, 1999; Taylor, 2007; Harrington, 2007; McLennan, 2010; Beckford, 2012). The views of whether religion and religiosity should be ascribed a prominent role or not differ. But the two positions are united in the idea that some form of revision of the secularisation notion is necessary. So, the earlier belief in the death of religion – the secularisation thesis – is under revision. This is a change insofar as religion and religiosity regain a role in areas that were previously defined as non-religious by secular society.

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[7] There is a third position involving a wish to stop thinking in terms of secularism and post-secularism and instead start using terms such as free democracy (Bader, 2012).

Concerning the content of the post-secular debate, the key issue is whether religion has re-entered the public domain or not and the importance that should be attributed to it in that case. Whether a perspectual shift has occurred or not, it is more fruitful to adopt the position that post-secular narratives should be seen as expressions of a beginning disintegration of the hegemonic role of the secular narrative at the very least. Consequently, there is reason to refer to a current post-secular perspective, the attributes of which, according to Sigurdson (2009), can be summed up in the following three postulates:

1) challenging the meta narratives of secularism
2) upgrading the explanatory value of religiosity in understanding social events and phenomena
3) liberalising and individualising religious faith and religiosity.

2.6 Post-secular religiosity

Tuan (1974, p. 246) defines human needs of and pursuit of existential meaning in terms of our ability to see things that are not apparent to us:

> The Individual transcends the pervasive influence of culture. All humans share common perspectives and attitudes, and yet each person's worldview is unique and that not in any trivial sense.../.../...Culture can influence perception to the degree that people will see things that do not exist.

Post-secular religiosity is an expression of such a pursuit in a non-institutionalised form. The debate on the return of religion is a societal condition in which religiosity has regained a prominent position in different social spheres such as politics, economy, culture and social life. In addition, religion and religiosity have had a revival on the individual level, which is partly related to the post-material condition.

In the 1970s, Inglehart (1977) argued that people in Western Europe had entered the post-material society, which is a society where issues of self-fulfilment are central to the formation of individual as well as group identities. Post-secular religiosity is seen as a step in the post-material culture in which existential issues are important. We can also refer to Giddens's (1991) discussion of post-material society. He thinks that pluralism and by extension the feasibility of the individualisation project lead to increased existential concerns and insecurity, aggravated by the erosion of traditional authority. According to Giddens, present day individuals have "no choice but to choose" (Giddens, 1991, p. 81). In a religious context, this means that even religiosity becomes the object of individual choice and religiosity is not contingent on authoritarian decrees. The earlier absence of choices, which characterised religious denominations (faith as axiomatic), is replaced by religious pluralism. Religious faith is no longer axiomatic; there are options (Rowe, 1999; Sigurdson, 2009). The core of post-secular religiosity is therefore the non-a priori nature of religious faith.

Even Heidegger (e.g. Crowe, 2006; Metcalf, 2010) thought along the same lines when he analysed religion from the perspective of phenomenology. According to him, religious faith can be equated with rebirth. Religious faith is a part of human existence in the world – the spiritual dimension of *Dasein*. In this sense, post-secular religiosity can be perceived as a rebirth, which, unlike traditional faith, is neither hierarchical, nor axiomatic (Taylor, 1989). Rather, faith is very individual and freely chosen. The traditional religious narratives, rituals, myths, symbols and attributes constitute a background but are not hegemonic or determining for post-secular religiosity in Western cultures (e.g. Gökariksel, 2009). Post-secular religion is historical and material but it is *non-committal*. Viewing religion as a continuous becoming, rebirth and thus creating anew, is a typical feature of post-secular religiosity. Faith, in other words, is not given and complete but in the process of becoming, coloured by openness, curiosity and a pursuit of answers not already given. Such religiosity extends beyond the traditional religious spaces and cannot be confined to the so-called world religions. It means leaving a societal condition where belonging to a religious denomination is straightforward.

The openness, curiosity and pursuit of post-secular religiosity challenge the narratives and doctrines of the major religious communities. Religion and religiosity are growing more complex at the pace of the rejection of universally valid religious explanations of all kinds of phenomena. The abandonment is an indication that the hegemony of the major religious narratives is over, at least in Western Europe, as post-secular religiosity is relative, individual and plural. A consequence of post-secular religiosity is that the religious sphere has widened, with repercussions on the level of society as well as the individual through new cultural and personal spiritual expressions (Holloway, 2006).

2.6.1 Re-sacralisation processes

The post-secular is expressed in strong terms such as *God returns* or the *return of God*, which alludes to a return to something in the past. But there is something ambiguous about the return. On the one hand, we see a diminishing religious sphere in terms of denomination membership and on the other, religiosity has assumed a place in the public sphere in Western Europe in new ways. The ambiguity of the return of religion lies in the concurrent existence of a deepening secularisation process and increasing signs of re-sacralisation. The ambiguity can thus be explained as a result of the chosen approaches, what is valued and what phenomena are in focus. It is still unclear how the new religiosity should be understood. It is not a return to tradition religion but is rather a new kind of religiosity with its own flexible framework of belief. I suggest that it involves a combination of two forms of denomination: the spiritual and the secular. The spiritual rests on the *traditional* religious belief in the transcendental, while the secular rests on the *secular* denominational beliefs in individual reason.

The self-perception of modernity is sacred in nature, but the discussion of the victory of secularism requires qualification. It is true that religion and religiosity in the public sphere have been marginalised, but religiosity has always been a part of private life in modernity. It is only the public sphere, then, that presents a reason for speaking about the death of religion. The secular also has sacred connotations as Science has replaced God, that is, the kingdom of

civilisation and reason has replaced Paradise. In modernity, the human being appears as the measure of all things, which at the same time implies that the secular and the sacred are not as different as the proponents of secularism would like us to believe. God is not dead in the same way that secularism would claim; rather, science has imperceptibly usurped the place of God.

There is a point in describing the secular as a religious denomination since we have lived in an age marked by a virtual sacralised faith in a secular society (Hadden, 1987), a faith which represents a divorce from religion as well as a belief in the decline of religion (denominations). Secular society also builds on a cultural (religious) canon, which is presented and interpreted by scientists (the new clergy), whereby the academic texts (the Bible) become the new dogma. Casanova (1994), who is one of the most prominent spokesmen of this view, sees the relationship between religion and religiosity in terms of a process comprising three components. Firstly, religion is an autonomous sphere, differentiated from the spheres of politics, economy and academia. Secondly, there is a marked decline in the influence of denominational church in society. Thirdly, religion is privatised. Ironically, theories of secularism have (un)consciously chosen not to include the private sphere as part of modernity.

In Asad's (1993) and Wilford's (2010) view, religion has been de-institutionalised and consists of a bricolage,[8] in itself an expression of the postmodern and by extension the post-secular. To Gökariksel (2009), post-secular religiosity represents a reorganisation and redefinition of religion and religiosity thus the religion of the past and the ecumenical sphere of religion and the claims of secularism. The logic of this argument is that we have left the traditional imperative and mandatory membership in religious denominations, on the one hand, and dissolved the free citizenship of the secular, on the other. Instead we have a societal condition of voluntary religiosity, multifaceted attitude to religion and a multitude of religious faiths, which to a great extent are individualised and where the

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[8] This bricolage is a violation of the previous views of religion as denoted with an active encoding of boundaries, created in an historical process and the corresponding geographic dimension.

reorganisation, revision and religiosity are matters of personal concern (Gallagher and Newton, 2009).

2.6.2 Individualisation – the subjective turn

Individualisation, autonomy, pluralism and reduced trust in authorities are considered key attributes of our time. The way traditions and social networks used to be a joint religious concern, shaping individual identity and socialising individuals into religious cultures is no longer self-evident. There is an ongoing de-traditionalisation of society in the sense that established values and the ways to create meaning and to define community have been revised. The revision has taken place in favour of new more or less individualised lifestyles, thought patterns and communities (Sigurdson, 2009). For the established religious denominations, the de-traditionalisation means that religion today is a dialogue rather than a monologue. Religious faith is to a greater extent something to be chosen rather than something to be born and socialised into. Individual salvation can be attained through pluralism, which means that the established denominations have transformed into one of many ways to reach God. In recent years, studies show that pluralism has impacted on religiosity in the sense that there is a focus on the individual, the private, faith and practice and that the practice of religiosity is individual (Kong, 2010). It can be described as a down-to-the-subject mentality. Identity is under continuous challenge and nothing is taken for granted. Religious identity is instead a relationship in constant flux. The individual perspective should be understood against the backdrop of the individualised society, which encourages individual approaches to existential issues. According to Hagevi (2005), it is increasingly common for individuals to question their religious faith – individuals are instead in a constant state of seeking. Religiosity has thus been assigned the new function of contributing to an understanding and meaning of life in terms of individuality. The traditional religions' unilateral claim to religiosity is now highly debated.

Another sign of religion and its transformed religiosity is evident in the emergence of spiritualism and renewed spirituality towards the end of the 20th century. New Age has been an umbrella term for the

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new religiosity, which later came to be supplemented or replaced by the broader term spiritualism. Spiritualism is a key concept of post-secularism and is considered to be a better overarching term for the multitude of new expressions or forms of contemporary religiosity (Sointu and Woodhead, 2008; Otterloo et al., 2012). Spiritualism also represents a non-hierarchical and non-institutionalised form of religiosity, which is more geared to issues of individualised religious faith than denominational membership. Davie (2000) calls this change in religiosity *believing without belonging.* Even if Davie captures the essence of the new situation, the meaning is not new. Already in 1902, James (1977/1902) suggested that the denominations and their attributes were secondary in religious practice. Unlike Davie, James emphasises that an individual religious experience is crucial to having a true religion. According to him, true religion is based on individual religious experience, as religion in his view consists of an individual's feelings, actions and experiences. Admittedly, James does not refer to spirituality, but there is a clear message in his emphasis on the role of the individual in religiosity. Irrespective of the origin of religious growth, one of the characteristic features of spiritualism is that religiosity and spirituality are not dependent on a community, which is voluntary.

In the last decades, the discussion of spiritualism has come to be associated with the subjective turn (Taylor, 1991). Taylor shows that a great shift, centring the individual has taken place in the Western culture, a shift involving the need to understand our time from the subjective perspective. In terms of religion, Casanova (1994, 2004) describes this shift as the privatisation of religion. Also Davie (2002) highlights the privatisation of religion when she speaks of Euro-religiosity to stress that the privatisation is confined to Europe and is not a universal phenomenon. It is also important to historicise and contextualise the post-secular condition, not least to avoid epistemological Eurocentrism.

Although Heelas and Woodhead (2005) agree with Taylor's (1991) arguments on the subjective turn and its impact on religiosity, they also regard this turn in the sphere of religion to be so radical that it is tantamount to a spiritual revolution. They show that traditional

religiosity is being replaced by self-experienced spirituality. A conclusion drawn from their studies is that the contemporary understanding of religiosity should abandon the traditional religious view of religiosity. The traditional and authoritarian view has receded as an effect of the subjective turn and has created a space for a subjectively experienced spirituality based on inner-life spirituality. In contrast to traditional religions' doctrines on how individuals should be and live, the spiritual revolution's religiosity is based on subjectivity and lived experience, individual seeking and experimenting far from obedience, and hierarchical structures. The standpoint of this spiritual revolution centers on the uniqueness of an individual´s life and whose religiosity is respected as such.

The freedom associated with the individualisation of religiosity has entailed a form of *kleptomania,* an eclectic construction of individual life philosophy (Sigurdson, 2009). Today, there is no longer one religion, if ever there was, but a myriad of individually organised religions in the religious sphere. Lambert (2004) argues that the new religion established in Europe is a religious mutation. For Taylor (2007) this is a sign that religion has left its body (the denomination) and relocated to the head (the subject) and that it involves a lived religiosity without a religious authority. The subjectification in the sign of religion includes a quest for experiences that affect the individual (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005). It follows that today religion cannot be seen as a sphere with clear demarcation between the sacred and the profane, believers and non-believers, but as a process taking place and is articulated in a fragmented social context.

Irrespective of how contemporary society is conceptualised, it is evident that our age is characterised by flux, mobility and placelessness, which are all central attributes in and for tourism (Ek and Hultman, 2007; Tesfahuney and Schough, 2010). Tourism also involves a religious aspect of the quest for meaning (MacCannell, 1976). In this sense, tourism is associated with religiosity.

2.7 Tourism and the post-secular

The relation of tourism to both the secular and the post-secular is ambiguous in the sense that tourism is Janus-faced (Wang, 2000). On the one hand, tourism is a modern phenomenon and as such a reflection of modernity and the secular (freedom, individualism, self-fulfilment, curiosity etc.). Although mobility is not new in the history of humankind, it was not until modern tourism that travelling became an end in itself (Enzensberger, 1996/1958), which makes tourism a child of modernity. On the other hand, tourism was also a counter-reaction to the artificial, meaningless and dull reality that many experienced in modern society. This is evident in the romantic view of place and the search for the genuine, idyllic and peaceful that emerged in the 18th Century. Tourism is a child of modernity but also its negation in as much as it is a longing for something else than what modernity offers. Historically tourism took place predominantly in specific periods (vacation) and places and as such has been a marginal phenomenon in day-to-day life. Tourism has, in other words, been perceived as an exception to everyday life. Löfgren (1989) defines tourism as an individual longing for the never-never land. The tourist pursues the extraordinary experience. Religiosity and tourism thus share the search for a meaning beyond modern life (Ahlin, 2005).

Insofar as tourism and religiosity represent a move away from modernity, this means that both exhibit post-modern traits such as questioning the tenets of modernity and a rejection of the artificial life where the individual becomes a cog in the machinery. Like post-modernism, tourism elevates the unique, the different and the extraordinary (memorable) and values a mixture of places, cultures and destinations, a *pastiche* of subjective experiences. In this sense, tourism heralded the post-modern, hence the term post-tourism[9] in our time (Feifer, 1985; Ritzer and Liska, 1997; Cohen 2008). Cohen suggests that the typical post-tourist pursues subjective unicity rather than objective unicity and defines subjective unicity in terms of the tourist's own experiences. A central aspect of the individual experience is existential, reminiscent of a religious experience. It is not the place as such that needs to be unique; it is the subjective

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[9] Feifer, M. (1985) introduced the concept post-tourist in the book *Going Places.*

experience that makes it unique. A further trend that reinforces the subjective is that tourists are attracted to places that in various ways generate personal engagement and are therefore expected to provide a deeper meaning beyond what can be seen and done (Baerenholdt, 2003).

Like post-modernism, tourism celebrates sense experiences. Tourism combines logos and eros, as Wang put it (2000). Modernity expects individuals to be reasonable, to curb their feelings and not to act in a state of affect, but to act after careful planning, while tourism primarily privileges pleasure, enjoyment, embodied and sense experiences. In this sense, tourism is an *anti-modern* phenomenon. Despite its alleged anti-modernity, tourism is still a modern world phenomenon, as the tourist cannot avoid being a representative of it. As the tourist is also dependent on the modern world to be a tourist, it is a prerequisite for touristy experiences; at least the way tourism is defined today.

So, what is the relation between tourism and the post-secular? Tourism represents the post-secular in several ways. Firstly, tourism is inherently religious and the tourist is like a pilgrim (MacCannell, 1976; Turner and Turner, 1978). Secondly, the tourist is in pursuit of a meaning beyond modernity, something genuine compared to the artificiality of the modern world. Tourism values the meaningful and does not neglect human spiritual needs. In this sense, tourism has protected the sacred from the slaughterhouse of modernity, which is evident in the pilgrimage phenomenon. Thirdly, it is the escape from the modern world that has been the companion of tourism throughout modernity. These are the properties that make tourism into a movement consisting of both transcendence and preservation, affording the chance to test and find ourselves and our identities in new ways (Löfgren, 1989). Post-secular faith has similarities with the ontology of tourism in the sense of *faith in non-faith*. The tourist's never-ending search for meaningful places and experiences mirrors the post-secular pursuit of answers to the major existential questions through an individualised, subjective *faith in God*.

We dislike classifying ourselves as tourists when we travel as tourist, but see ourselves as anti-tourists as opposed to others that we can regard as tourists (Löfgren, 1989). This is a dichotomy all the more clear in the context of pilgrimage where the pilgrim is de facto a tourist. As Stausberg (2011) points out, we must not forget that tourism today represents a considerable part of the societal religious context. He does not refer to Turner and Turner's (1978, p. 20) classic conditional definition that " *[a] tourist is half a pilgrim, if the pilgrim is half a tourist*", but wants to draw our attention to the way religiosity in contemporary Western societies to a great extent is integrated with tourism.

2.8 The spatialisation of the post-secular

> If the social is inextricably spatial and the spatial impossible to divorce from its social construction and content, it follows not only that social processes should be analyzed as taking place spatially but also that what have been thought of as spatial patterns can be conceptualized in terms of social processes. (Massey, 1984, p. 67)

In the following section I briefly discuss different human geography perspectives on place. This is followed by a discussion of how the post-secular is spatialised. In the human geography discourse it is customary to distinguish between absolute and relational conceptions (perspectives) of place and space (Casey, 1997; Cresswell, 2004; Harvey, 2006).

In absolute conceptions of space, space is taken as a given, as a passive background, a *container*, where events unfold. Space is conceived as an arena, as something necessary but not contingent and as such does not exert its influence on phenomena (e.g. Sayer, 1985). Likewise, absolute conceptions of place view it as something static and deny its relevance for understanding or explaining social processes (Casey, 1997; Cresswell, 2004). As Castree (2003) puts it, absolute conceptions of space reduces place to a mere position on earth, making place no more than *a frozen scene*. Pred (1984) argued along similar lines already in the 1980s. This view of space and place is often associated with the positivist approach in human geography,

although absolute space conceptions go further back in time (Casey, 1997). Place is *a-priori* given, unchangeable and inert, and thus an object in its own right (Cresswell, 2004; Harvey, 2006). This is the Euclidean conception of place.

If the modern absolute conception of space builds on Newtonian ideas, the relational conception is based on Leibniz and Einstein's conceptions of space (Harvey, 1996; Casey, 1997). Space is relational in a double sense because it is multidimensional, and it is contextually defined. Moreover, it is relative to the observer, is dynamic and is a field made up of flows, energies and forces (Massey, 2005).

Similarly, relational conceptions of place view it as constructed, contextual and formed in relation to a variety of phenomena and objects. Place is anything but inert and impacts on different courses of events. Place is also important in power relations (Rose, 1993; Massey, 1994; Harvey, 2006). A place *is* not but becomes and acquires its identity and meaning through social relations. According to the relational conception of space, place is consequently not given in advance. Likewise, time is neither linear nor theological but rather relationally constituted (Harvey, 1996). The relational perspective of place implies that the individual emerges as an active agent of placemaking, identity and meaning.

2.8.1 Post-secular place

In the humanistic geography perspective place and placenessness are, among other things, related to mobility and mass communication. A key attribute of the mobility turn is the metaphysics of flow – a relational conception – rather than the metaphysics of fixity and the rooted, which has been characteristic of both Western science as well as territorial order in modernity (Sheller and Urry, 2006; Cresswell, 2006). In the mobility paradigm, flows and becomings are central to the construction of places, meanings and identities, as well as power relations (Koffmann, 2002; Hannam et al., 2006). There are several resemblances with Massey's (1994) notion of power geometries and her relational conceptions of sense of place, identity and power (gender and class). A recurring observation is that places have been homogenised not least due to modernity's tendencies to standardise

time-space/place, not least in order to facilitate, mobility and mass communication. Relph (1976) takes a step further and argues that modernity leads to places being denied their uniqueness and made anonymous. In this view, modern secularised spaces have been associated with artificiality, meaninglessness, placelessness. Modernity tends to create non-places (Relph, 1976; Augé, 1995; Virilio, 1996). According to de Certeau (1984, p. 106-107), modernity is the creator of abstract space and anonymous places where the specific place story in the sense of places as constituted by, among other things, a "*body of legends*" has disappeared. Augé (1995) equates non-places with mobility characterised by ephemerality, large-scale circulation, flows and impermanence. These questions are central to the mobility turn (Cresswell, 2004; Hannam et al., 2006). For Norberg-Schulz (1980) is the fundamental experience of modernity *the loss of place* (c.f. Wallenstein, 2004, p. 100). The above perspective of place has not gone unchallenged. For example, Massey (2002), like Ek and Hultman (2007), argues that if a certain sense of place or place identity is lost, new meanings of place and place identities are created. Places are in constant becoming rather than being given.

Sacred and religious places are filled with meanings, identities and a sense of authenticity. In this regard, religious places can, therefore, be seen as an antipode to the homogenizing tendencies of modernity and as such preserver of the spirit of a place (*genius loci*) in a double sense. Both as perseveres of the religious place spirit in general and the unique or place-specific sacred attributes. In a sense, sacred and religious places are islands in the sea of modernity. Religious places, in other words, have withered the storms of disenchantment that according to Benjamin (1969) come in the wake of modernity. To Benjamin, the sense of wander and enchantment that is associated with non-modern places is supplanted by the rational, instrumental and functional in modernity. Religious places represent, in other words, "*an organized world of meaning*" (Tuan, 1977, p. 179).

To the extent that the significance and role of religion have been revitalised in the post-secular, transcending its attributes as a mere preserver of place identities and meanings, religion emerges as an

agent of place making. Religion is no longer reactive, rather an active force in the construction of places and is one dimension of the *body of legends*, i.e., stories or narratives that shape the construction of places in the contemporary (Johnston, 1990; Collie, 2011). Religious studies scholar Sheldrake (2001) indicates a similar relational understanding of place when he highlights place as a cultural category, that is, a subject that is the bearer of several interpretations and conceptions. He also points out that places are assigned meanings that are embodied by individuals. [10]

Religious denominational places have become more and more popular tourist destinations, attracting growing numbers of visitors and are also increasingly drawing "outsiders" to their fold. This may seem paradoxical in view of the decreasing number of church members in Europe.[11] What is driving the development of increasing pilgrimages to the sacred places? There are three differing but interrelated interpretations of the phenomenon. For example, it might involve recovering the meaning of a place that was "lost" in modernity; growing commodification of religious places; that the influx of tourists is an expression of the "return of religion". In what follows, I argue that the concept of post-secular tourism can function as an umbrella notion that subsumes all three interpretations.

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[10] I have not studied religious places in terms of Lefebreve's (1991) spatial triad of the material, the lived and the conceived. Briefly, material spaces - the physical attributes associated with the place and through which religiosity is materialised, such as routes, churches/cathedrals, the religious places etc.; Lived spaces - the routines and rituals, stories of the place embodied and place-specific experiences embodying the religious meaning and feeling of the place; Conceived space - the imaginary geographies, beliefs and myths, ideologies and spiritualties, expectations and ideas associated with the religious places.

[11] In the age of secularisation, the decreasing membership of institutional denominations is largely a Western phenomenon, in contrast to the global situation where membership of traditional religious denominations is higher than ever (Norris and Ingelhardt, 2004).

2.8.2 Post-secular tourism

As mentioned earlier, tourism is characterised by ambivalence or a double-bind. On the one hand, as a child of modernity tourism is a co-creator of anonymous places and abstract spaces, and in this sense a force of secularisation and dis-enchantment and thereby contributing to the expansion of non-places (Relph, 1976; Augé, 1995). On the other hand, tourism as the search for the pristine, natural and primitive is and a force of counter-modernity and therefore an agent of sacralisation, the preservation and protection of traditional places, mores life-styles and customs. Tourism is thus both the preserver and transformer of places. Tourism has at least two specific roles when it comes to place, namely, affirming and recreating. This reinforces the twofold character of tourism (Löfgren, 2001), not least since the typical feature of tourist experiencescapes is that these to a great extent must be produced and consumed *in situ* – tourism is a *positional good* (c.f. Urry, 2002).

Preservation and recreation are key features in understanding post-secular tourism. The post-secular tourist has no intention of establishing a new religious faith, places or rituals. Instead, existing religious places are still legitimate as providers of answers to existential question or as places of self-fulfilment. The post-secular tourist does not primarily travel to a place as a member of a particular denomination and is therefore not bound by rules and rituals that define a specific denominational faith. In contrast to the traditional pilgrim, the post-secular tourist is not bound by time either in regard to religious celebrations and need not observe standard rituals and routines. One effect of which is that it becomes difficult to distinguish religious from tourist places, partly because several religious places are also well-known tourist attractions (e.g. Cohen, 1998; Poria et al., 2003a), partly because of the new forms of religiosity.

In addition, post-secular tourism is primarily characterized by three of the five typologies identified by Cohen (1979, p. 183), namely, the experiential, experimental and existential.[12] The experiential attribute

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[12] The three approaches draw on Cohen's (1979, p. 183) five typologies of tourism experiences – *recreational, diversionary, experiential, experimental and existential*. The first two are constants in all tourism.

of post-secular tourism refers to the spiritual aspect which is a central part of *being-in-the-world* (Heidegger, 1958). The post-secular tourist seeks a more meaningful and enriching mode of being in the world, something which the secular life-world of modernity does not provide. The experience of being in a spiritual landscape is in harmony with such as quest. Being in a spiritual landscape is supposed to involve all senses and as such a source of new self-understanding and self-insight (Dewsbury and Cloke, 2009).

The experimental attitude means that the post-secular tourist does not follow or conform to a given dogma. There are no *a-priori* answers which entails that there is wide latitude for or a high degree of individuality, subjective experiences and interpretations are possible. The aim of the journey is thus not to confirm religious faith but to feel their way, tentatively. The existential attitude relates to the very purpose of the journey, which is to seek answers to individual existential issues. It is noteworthy that there is a theological/instrumental element at play here, that is, there are both traditional and secular influences in post-secular tourism.

Admittedly, all three attitudes can, in varying degrees, also colour conventional pilgrimages, with the important difference that post-secular tourism rests on individualism as opposed to the collectivity of traditional denominations. Moreover, it is neither institutionalised, nor hierarchical - attributes, which are also typical of the subjective turn in the contemporary sphere. The post-secular tourist does not always follow strict conventions; instead it is one's own inner journey and subjective experiences that are central. Post-secular tourists also affect sacred place in the sense that the significance and meaning of the religious place story lies with the individual. This is in line with Massey's (2005) idea that places are open and interwoven with ongoing narratives. So too, post-secular places. It is not the veracity or falsehood of the sacred story that is important, rather it is the awareness it engenders.

The post-secular tourist takes the liberty to interpret and assimilate the sacred place, its narratives, meanings and its spirit (e.g Levi-Strauss, 1973). One implication of the relativisation of religious faith is that the post-secular tourist is no longer in a sacred place but at a holy bazar, which Olsen and Timothy (2006) prefer to call a spiritual

supermarket. In this sense, the post-secular tourist is a spiritual consumer and a spiritual shoplifter.

The ontology of becoming is the common ground of the experiential, experimental and existential attitude, that is, the post-secular tourist proceeds from the world as it appears. Post-secular tourism is performative. The post-secular tourist is open-minded, given the quest for existential answers which are not given in advance and therefore require an attitude that differs from that of traditional pilgrims. The post-secular tourist is in this sense a kind of religious *tester of faith and collector of faith*, is not dogmatic and is thus open to find answers from various sources for his/her own religious construction of faith.

Here I would like to return the question of how the post-secular becomes spatialised in tourism. The nature of tourism as place-dependent consumption and production also colours the post-secular tourism place. The fact that there are only a few established religious pilgrim destinations in Western Europe paradoxically strengthens the place-dependence of post-secular tourism. In turn, this implies that post-secular tourism contributes to the commodification of these places. The Janus-face of tourism appears in post-secular tourism as a simultaneous sacralising and secularising force. The sense of rebirth ascribed to the journey is perhaps the most evident sign of its sacralising and post-secular tourism as a place preserving force. Concurrently - in the wake of the post-secular– there follows a process of wide and deep commodification of places, or, as it were, secularisation of places. The traditional pilgrimage destination is transformed through post-secular tourism.

2.9 Operationalising the theoretical frame

In the matrix below, the theoretical and analytical frame of the study discussed so far is presented in its ideal-typical form, showing how travel has been manifested in different epochs. Namely, traditional, modern and postmodern, each epoch with its specific ontologies,

attributes (faith and doctrine) and spatialities (time, place/spaces and imaginationation), and the typical traveller – the mobile subject. Moreover, the central features of religiosity, place creation and tourism of the respective epochs are also specified in the matrix below (see table 1).

Table 1: *Religious faith, place and tourism: ideal typical features*

Epoch	Traditional	Modern	Postmodern
World view (Ontology)	Sacral/religious (transcendental: metaphysical, spiritual) Divine ontology	Secular (immanent and material) Anthropocentric ontology	Post-secular (immanent and spiritual) Spiritual ontology
Hegemonic attribute (religious faith/ doctrine)	Monotheism: canonical Religious doctrines and myths God is the Truth Faith in God, no doubts, God is omiscient Ontological certainty on divine grounds: I know why I'm here, what to do, and what will happen (security)	Scientism: canonical Secular doctrines and myths Science is the Truth Faith in science, no doubts, science is omiscient Ontological certainty on scientific grounds: faith in reason, knowledge and the future (security).	Pluralism: non-canonical, Post-secular doctrines and myths If truth exists, it is relative and individual Faith not prescribed, individualised faith Ontological uncertainty: tentative and an ontology of quest; subjectivism and relativism (security)
Denomination Belonging	Formally hierarchical Institutionalised/organised religion Hegemonic denomination Membership: assumed, binding (imperative)	Formally hierarchical Institutionalised/organised science Marginalised denomination Membership: prescribed (conditional) or enforced (citizenship, class, gender and ethnicity etc.)	"Informally" hierarchical Loosely composed groups, unorganised religion "Bricolage" denomination Membership: voluntary and a-territorial
Place/space	Institutionalised/organised religious places: sacral spatial order	Secularised places: secularised spatial order	Place/space for spirituality: de-territorialised spatial order

	"Place fetishism": religious places as materialisations of the divine/transcendental	Modern and public space vs. marginalised religious, cultural and historic places	Hybrid places: places/space of becoming
	Authentic religious places/ spaces vehicles of religious meaning	Artificial enacted places/ spaces, non-places lacking content	Meaningful places: spiritual: subjective places/spaces.
	Place as absolute	Place is a both absolute and relational	Place is relational
Traveller – mobile subject (typical/ representative)	Pilgrim: sacral traveller	Tourist: the "new pilgrim" /secular travelling	Post-secular tourist/tourism: "the nomad"
	Religious faith as incentive	Experience as incentive	Spirituality as incentive: quest for individual answers to attain a higher state (harmony)
	Child of the traditional	Child of the modern	Child of the postmodern: reaction to the "disenchantment"
Travel motive	Confirmation of religious faith	Confirmation of social mobility: sign of success	Confirmation of quest for answers beyond the secular
	Submission to religious dogma	Travelling is an end in itself	Submission to the quest: travel as a way of reaching understanding of existential conditions.
	Mobility as part of religious identity: external journey for self-confirmation	Mobility as part of modern identity: external journey for confirming status as a modern and successful person	"The nomad": mobility as part of the inner journey – external journey for answers, finding oneself and place in the world

The analytical frame is clarified below with regard to religious faith, tourism and place in a postmodern-post-secular ontology.

Religious faith

The post-secular is characterised by what I choose to call a spiritual ontology, which unlike the divine or anthropocentric ontology is relative in the sense of being pronouncedly subjective (individualist) in its world view – each religious faith has equal value. The most important aim of the individual is to attain spiritual harmony and find answers to existential questions, which is why the attributes regarding religious faith/dogma are non-canonical and plural, which Charles Taylor expressed as "Belief in God is no longer axiomatic" (Taylor 2007, p. 3), also suggesting that there are alternatives. The post-

secular dogma is a bricolage, which is related to religious faith being individualised and coupled with an attitude of doubt. Unlike the sacral and the secular, the post-secular is distinguished by an absence of denomination. Further, its forms of belonging are non-hierarchical and take the form of loosely composed groups, which build voluntary membership. As Sigurdson (2009) points out, the attraction of the post-secular lies in keeping the core of religion while leaving its institutional shell.

Tourism

The driving force of post-secular tourism is quest that is primarily made up of doubt, and where the inner journey at the destination carries more weight than the journey to the destination. Being a tourist is rather a means of attaining a higher state of consciousness, that is, understanding the existential condition and one's place in it, basically: Who am I? What do I want out of life? What will happen in my life?

Travelling has a long tradition of being a vehicle for self-actualization and realization (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006). However, what characterises post-secular tourism is that the purpose of the journey is a thorough scrutiny and revaluation of life in the hope of attaining a meaningful change by journeying to a place that is spiritually loaded.

Place

A post-secular place is relational in the sense that it is filled with meaning created relationally. Post-secular religious places are spaces in becoming rather than having a once and for all given place identity and fixed meaning. In this sense, the post-secular tourist, unlike the traditional pilgrim, is not place-loyal. Instead, loyalty to place is instead tied to existential questions and answers. In the creation of a subjective religious identity, the post-secular tourist uses places and conventions associated with traditional pilgrimage destinations. Yet, the post-secular tourist partially de-links place from its historic tradition and meaning. Thus, it is not the canon of traditional institutionalised religion that is the incentive for the post-secular pilgrim's choice of holy destination; rather, the choice and reason are voluntary and individual. Place should be seen as a medium for an

inner journey, that is, a place for seeking answers to existential issues that will enable the realisation of a self-revival of sorts.

3. Context, research approach and method

The empirical material of the study was collected in the area of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, to which Fisterra belongs. For various reasons, the pilgrimage destination Fatima in Portugal is also included in the study to enhance contextualising the development in Santiago de Compostela. The articles are based on material from the places in the following way: Santiago de Compostela, Spain (articles 1-4), Fatima, Portugal (article 1) and Fisterra, Spain (article 4).

From a tourism perspective, the places are mainly related to religious tourism. A place cannot of course be reduced to one tradition, but the places chosen are, in terms of tourism, to a great extent centred on an attraction based on one or several religious legends. Santiago de Compostela and Fatima have been declared and instituted as *holy cities* by the Catholic Church. Fisterra differs from the two in that it is not consecrated by any denomination, but rather is an effect of the development in Santiago de Compostela and hence related to my research problem.

The legendary places of Santiago de Compostela, Fatima and Fisterra represent what Edensor (2000) would consider to be (tourist) enclaves, that is, being in the world and yet regarded as *being beyond it.* Places are ascribed meaning in relation to the core of legendary stories and as interpreted by the conceptions and attitudes of individuals.

3.1 In the sign of sanctity

The city of Santiago de Compostela was early a holy city in the Catholic world. The reason for the city name and its sanctity is a pilgrimage legend, which the Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho recounts in his novel *The Pilgrimage* (2005) in the following way:

> Just as the Muslin tradition requires that all members of the faith, at least once in their life, make the same pilgrimage that Muhammad made from Mecca to Medina, so Christians in the first millennium considered three routes to be sacred. Each of them offered a series of blessings and indulgences to those who traveled its length. The first led to the tomb of

Saint Peter in Rome; its travelers, who were called wanderers, took the cross as their symbol. The second led to the Holy Sepulcher of Christ in Jerusalem; those who took this road were called Palmists, since they had as their symbol the palm branches with which Jesus was greeted when he entered that city. There was a third road, which led to the mortal remains of the apostle, San Tiago – Saint James in English, Jacques in French, Giacomo in Italian, Jacob in Latin. He was buried at a place on the Iberian Peninsula where, one night, a shepherd had seen a brilliant star above a field. The legend says that not only San Tiago but also the Virgin Mary went there shortly after the death of Christ, carrying the word of the Evangelist and exhorting the people to convert. The site came to be known as Compostela – the star field – and there a city had arisen that drew travelers from every part of the Christian world. These travelers were called pilgrims, and their symbol was the scallop shell. (Coelho, 2005, p. 12-13)

Three significant events underlie the 20th century increase of pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela. Firstly, the UNESCO recognised the city of Santiago de Compostela as part of the world heritage in 1985. Secondly, Pope John Paul II made an official visit to the city in 1989, Thirdly, Il Camino, the route of 900 km from Saint Jean Pied de Port in the Pyrenées to Santiago de Compostela was declared a world heritage in year 1993.[13] Figure 3 shows the development of the number of official pilgrims arriving to Santiago de Compostela in the period 1985 – 2013.
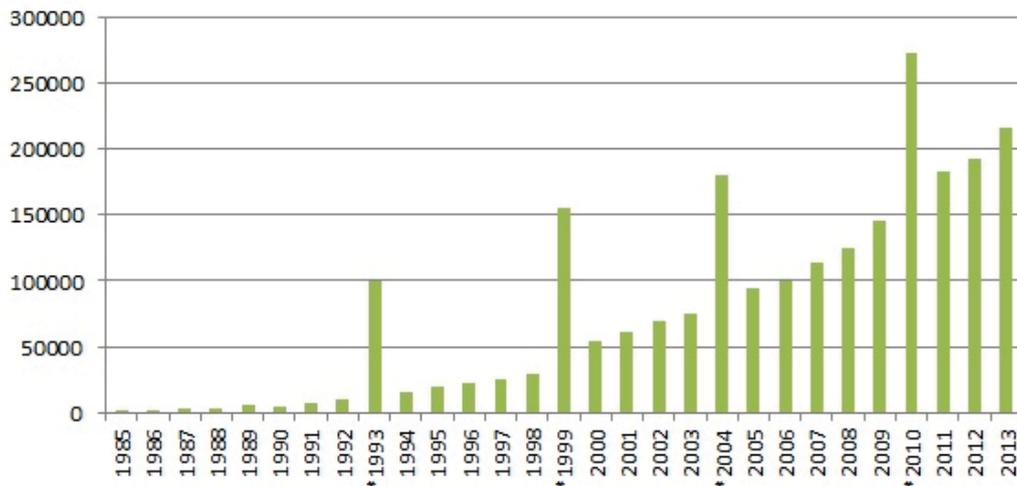
Figure 3: Pilgrim arrivals to Santiago de Compostela 1985-2013[14]

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[13] http://www.xacobeo.es/en 2014-11-12.

[14] All the high points in the figure (1993, 1999, 2004 and 2010), coincide with the 5th, 6th and 11th year cycles, i.e., when the 25th of July falls on a Sunday, a Holy Date in the Catholic calendar. http://www.caminoteca.com/index.php/statistics.html[accessed 2014-06-10.

The statistics in Figure 3 are based on the number of certificates – proof of completed pilgrimage of at least 100 km on the Il Camino – issued by the Pilgrims' Office in Santiago de Compostela. The Catholic Church in Santiago has decided that pilgrims must verify their journey. The verification is made throughout the pilgrimage as the pilgrims stamp their passports (credential) along the walk, and present it to the Pilgrims' Office on arrival to get the *Compostela* certificate, issued by the local Catholic Church to those who have walked at least 100 km.[15] As noted in Figure 3 above, the number of certificates issued has risen significantly in the past decades. On average, the number of pilgrims arriving in the city has grown with 7 700 persons each year, if I chose 1985 as a baseline and 2013 as the latest statistical year. In the years when 25 July is a Sunday, the year is proclaimed a Holy Year. The highest number of pilgrim arrivals was reached in 2010 when 272 703 official pilgrims reached the city.

3.2 Research approach

> . . . there is no place without self; and no self without place (Casey, 2001, p. 406)

The starting-point of my thesis is the study of the extent to which the post-secular is manifested in tourism and the inverse, that is, the significance of tourism to the post-secular. In addition, the aim is also to study how the post-secular takes place and is spatialised in pilgrimage. This chapter clarifies the key perspectives and standpoints of relevance to the research problem.

My approach is interdisciplinary, combining the subjects Human Geography and Tourism Studies, and including Religious Studies, because social phenomena are need to be studied from several perspectives as the nature of social phenomena is constantly changing. New aspects are added in the research process and often require drawing on other disciplines to better understand the object of study. As mentioned, I agree with Massey's (in Urry et al, 2007)

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[15] There are other options: biking 200 kilometres or covering 100 kilometres on horseback.

view of social phenomena and the claim that nothing can be studied in isolation but only in relation to something else, also in interdisciplinary research.

Since the problem studied centres on quest, meaning and feelings, the focus is on the individual, and principally on the idea that individual consciousness is the premise of the subject's *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) (Buttimer, 1976; Seamon, 1979, 2007). I base my understanding of perceptions, feelings and emotions on what the individuals themselves express. My approach is therefore phenomenological and is based on a humanistic geography. The aim is to portray the individual`s experiences while performing the journey/pilgrimage to a sacred place. The focus is on their *Lebenswelts*, such as the walk (*Il Camino*), which is difficult to capture via statistics or numbers.

The problem cannot be reduced to conventional religious faith with a given answer but embraces how an individual subject relates to and interprets the religious *in situ* (in place). It also involves finding one's own truth, a truth tied to consciousness of something sacred. Heidegger (1958) coined the concept *being-in-the-world*, claiming that consciousness does not exist without consciousness of something, something other than ones-self and in relation to this something else and that is dependent on existence – *Dasein* or *Da sein,* being there. Place, in other words, is a meaningful spatial entity, always in a process of becoming (Malpas, 2012).

Research on pilgrimage has lately opened-up for various interpretations and competing discourses have emerged (Reader, 2007; Collins-Kreiner, 2010). In studies that strive for understanding the life-world, truth is neither absolute nor unitary over time and space. All truth claims are seen as contextual, incomplete and thus time-bound, situational and provisional, place and culturally specific. Like other social phenomena, pilgrimages should also be studied as in constant change (Urry et al., 2007). Hence, my choice of narrative and biographical approaches in my study.

3.2.1 Knowledge through narration

> Place, like time, is among the most universal of cultural categories although it clearly operates in different ways in each specific context/.../place has a determining influence on the way people behave, the way they think, the rhythm of their lives and their relationship/.../embodying (literally and metaphorically) emotions, memories and associations derived from personal and interpersonal shared experience. (Sheldrake, 2001, p. 4)

As mentioned, there is previous research on the post-secular and on pilgrimages, but these have been studied separately and have neither attempt to situate the post-secular in tourism generally, nor specifically in the pilgrimage niche. There have been studies that are mainly concerned with the post-secular as a phenomenon, or pilgrimage in terms of its religious content (e.g. Mikaelsson, 2012; Gorski et al., 2012).

In later years we have witnessed a subjective turn involving the study of subjective narratives. As early as 1979 Lyotard spoke of a subjective turn and the ambition to place the micro narratives and the local (here pilgrims) in focus. Chamberlayne and King (2000) choose to denote this change in social studies as the "*biographical narrative turn*", entailing increased awareness that individual life stories constitute important dimensions for understanding the social, which is a view that I share.

The empirical material derives primarily from individual interviews as narratives are considered to be a vital dimension to constitute and construct human realities and modes of being. The narrative format allows for a deeper understanding of what is important to the individual because individuals choose what to narrate, how and its meaning themselves. This is the main reason for choosing the interview method as my focus is on individual experiences and the picture they present (e.g. Pernecky, 2010; Andriotis, 2011). An additional reason for choosing the interview method is that studies involving religion and religiosity usually apply qualitative methods and then mostly interviews, which is an established and tested method to explore religious issues (Tedlock, 1995). A third reason is

to collect narratives and quotations that will make it is easier for the reader to understand the text and reflect on it (Wuthnow, 2011).

At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that the narrative format is based on a number of assumptions such as that individual are created to be narrating subjects (Taylor, 1989), and that human aspects can be reflected in the narrative format (Somers, 1994). There are reasons to question the view of all individuals as narrative creatures and that what is human can be captured in narratives. Despite the objections, I believe that it is relevant to start from the interview narratives based on the personal narration to fulfil the aim of the thesis. I chose the interview method because a narrative is part of the attraction for choosing the pilgrimage, because narratives colour the experiences of the pilgrim, and because, during my observations of pilgrims for Article 1, I became aware that the pilgrim walk largely consists of relating one's life and experiences to others. These reasons indicate that the tradition of narration is an established practice among pilgrims, worth paying attention to and utilising for research purposes.

3.3 Methods for collecting data

The authors of the articles have chosen to use the Catholic Church definition of a pilgrim, that is, a person who has walked at least 100 km to Santiago de Compostela and formalised the journey through the system of Credential stamps along the road. Pilgrims are thus defined on the basis of a procedure rather than faith. Even if the walk to Fisterra is not recognised by the Church, the absence of institutional recognition has no bearing on the study since the informants were interviewed on basis of the same definition, that is, walked a distance of 100 km to Santiago de Compostela[16] and formalised their walk. The reason for the choice of pilgrims is that they can be regarded as *members* of a community (Frey, 1998) with a special perspective and with a unique insight into and a special position in the place.

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[16] If, however, they had walked in the opposite direction from Fisterra to Santiago de Compostela, they would have been recognised as official pilgrims, according to the Catholic Church.

The interviews took place in Santiago de Compostela (Articles 2 and 3) and at Fisterra (Article 4). The place of the interviews was chosen on the basis of four criteria: 1) a place close to the pilgrimage destination; 2) a place at which the Credential (the pilgrim passport) are stamped; 3) a place where the pilgrims stay overnight; 4) a place where pilgrims gather. Criteria 3 and 4 are primarily to be seen as opportunities t0 obtain informants in terms convenience in time and also in terms of numbers. Two places met these criteria, namely the last official hostel, Monte do Gozo, situated just before arriving in Santiago de Compostela, and the official hostel Fisterra in Fisterra. The dates of the interviews in Santiago de Compostela were: February 2011, September and December 2012; in Fisterra: September 2014. The reason for the three points in time in Santiago de Compostela was to include the three seasonal flows of low, high and mid-season. At Fisterra the interviews were conducted in high season only, because when people choose Fisterra as their end destination, this strongly corresponds to the high season in Santiago de Compostela.

Informants were interviewed in self-defined groups. Most of them defined themselves as a travel group *in situ*, but while some had decided to travel together in advance, many groups had formed during the walk along *the Way*. The selection of informants are based on the criteria that they had completed the journey or were close to (place criterion 1), had formalised their pilgrimage (place criterion 2), were international visitors and could speak English. Identifying and recruiting informants was no problem as they were following the procedures of stamping along the road. The informants were selected on a random basis at the stamping venues. The total population of informants includes fifty-three pilgrims in Santiago de Compostela and twenty-six in Fisterra.[17] Each interview was recorded and lasted between 15-60 minutes, and the interviews continued until a level of saturation was reached.

Secondary data were primarily used to contextualise the studies. The official data used in the study were made available via Xacobeo whose

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[17] Age distribution ranged from a 7-year-old girl to a 71-year-old man. The girl was part of an interviewed family.

task is to pursue research.[18] Xacobeo is a public company owned by the Galician regional government for the purpose of promoting cultural tourism. Data also derive from the Pilgrims' Office in Santiago de Compostela and the Pilgrim Centre in Santiago de Compostela. In addition, data were generated by studies made by the University in Santiago de Compostela. Secondary sources, such as documents, have been used to describe the historical and conceptual backgrounds to Santiago de Compostela, Fatima and Fisterra (Articles 1-4). I chose to use several sources to increase reliability.

3.3.1 Interview method

The interview technique used draws on the Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM), as BNIM is used in life narrative studies in relation to something, in my case pilgrimages. BNIM is mainly an interview format that builds on an open process in which the individual narrative is the object in focus. The technique aims to highlight and define the informants' own stories, uncensored. The interviews proceeded from one single question (Wengraf, 2001). The informants were expected to tell their stories in any way they liked. The narrative content was expected to be linked to their experiences in relation to the framing of the initial prompt question. The method is a technique without interruption. In Articles 2 and 3, the informants were asked to recall and retell the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. My initial question was: "*I would like you to tell me the story of your pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela – thoughts, ideas, plans and experiences*". In Article 4, the same question was asked with a change of place name – *to Fisterra*.

When there was a need to elicit more information from the narratives of relevance to my study, follow-up questions were asked after the first part of the interview, that is, the narrative part. The primary thing was questions related to the content of the narrative. Above all, I used follow-up questions when the narrative ended in silence, a so-called *false* ending, as opposed to a *real* ending, which is expressed in words such as, "that's all" or "that's my story". The reason for

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[18] University of Santiago de Compostela is associated with Xacobeo.

following up a false ending was to ensure that they considered their story to be finished. After each interview I noted down any technical problems and a direct comment on the story to remember the first impression of it. The reason for using the BNIM was to avoid potential semi-structured and structured *pitfalls*, that is, getting the answer I as a researcher was looking for instead of letting the informants give their own answers (e.g. Bryman, 2008).

There are objections to self-experienced narratives since they can be more or less incomplete, existing as they do in a constant state of being reformulated and transformed every time they are told. However, regarding the interview material in the articles, there is also reason to view these as potentially strong in the sense that the narration took place and was constructed in close contact, spatially and temporally, with the actual events, physically and mentally (memory).

I am also aware that stories of experience can be related to other stories and be inspired by a network of what Somers (1994, p. 613-614) refers to as "a repertoire of emplotted stories" that are available to make sense in a certain context of happenings. If this is the case, it does not in any way invalidate my study as I am not primarily interested in the *truth* of the individual story but in how the pilgrimage stories reflect the relation between religiosity, tourism, place and the post-secular.

3.3.2 Analysis of data

The analysis of the data in this thesis combines inductive and deductive. The inductive analysis builds on identifying common themes in the interviews material. The aim has been to capture informants' place experiences and meanings during their pilgrimages. I am inspired by Glaser and Strauss, and thus I looked for narratives and stories that illustrate pilgrimage experiences in relation to the place (e.g. Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The process of analysing the empirical material began by transcribing the interviews in full. In the

analysis of each pilgrim's narrative[19] the emerging categories were compared with the narratives of other informants to identify recurrent themes. This procedure entails inducing the general from the particular. To reduce the risk of creating *false* or ad hoc themes in the analysis of the narratives, each category was broadly defined. This is a procedure that highlights certain features and downplays others, and is based on Glaser and Strauss' suggestion to establish categories with a higher explanatory value by emphasising similarity or dissimilarity between the categories. In their own words, "*by comparing where the facts are similar or different, we can generate properties of categories that increase the categories generality and explanatory power*" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 24). The various themes identified from the empirical material of this thesis are discussed in more detailed in articles 2, 3 and 4. Moreover, each article also includes further accounts of the specific methods, sources and analysis used.[20]

The deductive analyses were based on tourism theory, theories of the post-secular and religion and theories of place and space. Moreover, I have relied on theories in social science that highlight the post-modern condition, the subjective-turn and theories of modernity.

3.3.3 Ethical considerations

All participants in the empirical material of the studies were informed of the purpose of my research before consenting to participate. Before each interview, they were further informed of the context in which the material would be used. All gave their consent that their narratives could be used verbatim for research purposes and related contexts, and all declined to be anonymised. Still, I have chosen to anonymise

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[19] I do not study how post-secular tourism is related to age, class, gender or ethnicity, as this is not the aim of this thesis. For this reason I do not make any intersectional analyses of post-secular tourism. However, I believe that intersectional studies would be a fruitful avenue for further research, but here my focus is on the impact of post-secularism on tourism, religiosity and place and therefore chosen to see pilgrims in general.

[20] I have chosen to include non-European informants, as place is central to my study. I have not been able to identify any divergences in statements made by Europeans and non-Europeans in my material.

the identity of the informants to some degree (for example, age, gender and nationality). The informants were also provided with my contact information if they should wish to contact me.

4. Contribution of the articles

The study starts with an inductive approach in the sense that I was on location studying the chosen problem, letting the pilgrimage phenomenon speak for itself. Gradually, especially after the first article, a fleeting sense of a change in pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela grew. It dawned on me that contemporary pilgrimages should be seen as more multifaceted in religiosity as well as the reasons for undertaking the journey than as simple acts of conforming to the Catholic Church dogma. Spirituality was one reason for undertaking the pilgrimage identified in Article 1. I am aware that time has passed since the first article (2008), but as the purpose here is to conceptualise and place the phenomenon of pilgrim tourism in a contemporary context, the time lapse may even strengthen the post-secular argument.

Article 1 serves as a springboard for the further studies of the phenomenon in articles 2, 3 and 4. In Article 2, I choose to focus on the role and importance that place may have in the actualisation of post-secular forms of religiosity by individual pilgrims. This was the point when I started to read the inductive material specifically in relation to the post-secular debate.

In Article 2, which is primarily inductive in its approach, and basing on the analysis of the data from the interviews in 2011 and 2012, I claim that place making and pilgrimage should now be conceived as an individually driven post-secular practice. Article 3 has a deductive approach and is to a greater extent theory-inspired. Article 3 develops and highlights theoretically and methodologically the results of Article 2, and places pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela in the wider discussion of post-secularism. This is done through analysis of research on pilgrimage and post-secularism as well as interviews of pilgrims and of key tourism actors in Santiago de Compostela in 2012.

Article 4 builds on the results of articles 1-3, and tries to map and analyse the effects of the post-secularisation processes in Santiago de Compostela. A key finding is the emergence of an alternative end destination to Santiago de Compostela, namely Fisterra. The article

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shows that post-secular pilgrims/tourists tend more and more to choose Fisterra as their end destination of their journey rather than Santiago de Compostela. The empirical material for Article 4 consists of mainly interviews with pilgrims in Fisterra, 2014, official statistics and previous pilgrimage research.

Table 2 below presents the respective articles, specifies the aim, method and result/contribution of each, and winds up by brief accounts of each article.

Table 2: Description of the aim, methodological approach, year of collection and findings of the articles.

Article	Aim	Method/Data/Collection	Result
Pilgrimage or Sacred Tourism? – A Modern Phenomenon with Historical Roots, with Examples from Fatima and Santiago de Compostela	To study the phenomenon of pilgrim tourism from a post-modern perspective characterised by an increasing secularisation.	Inductive Qualitative: explorative and comparative literature study 2008	Currently, the places attracting pilgrims are multifaceted. The two examples in the article should be seen as diametrically opposed in relation to tourism. Fatima is clearly seen as a link with the historical pilgrimages of the past whereas Santiago de Compostela is more multi-faceted today and is rather a postmodern tourist destination. Santiago de Compostela may be seen as a post-modern tourist place of pilgrimage, where individual spirituality is important.
Wanderers in the shadow of the sacred myth – pilgrims in the 21th Century	To gain a deeper understanding of how sacred places are perceived by contemporary pilgrims	Inductive Qualitative: Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM). International pilgrims in Santiago de Compostela. 2011-2012	Santiago de Compostela has become a sacred space mostly for individual spirituality. Yet, it is still the historical 'script' of sacredness that still affects the pilgrim's practice, motivations and experience.
Performing the "Post-Secular" in Santiago de Compostela	To study pilgrimage tourism as an instance of "post-secular" performativity, an arena where "post-secular praxis and discourse fuse" and to interrogate current claims that we are experiencing a "post-secular turn" and living in a "post-secular era".	Deductive Explorative and comparative literature study about post-secular debate. Qualitative: Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM). International pilgrims in Santiago de Compostela. 2012	The study identifies tourism as one of the key dimensions of the 'post-secular' condition and debates and critiques theorisations of the post-secular for failing to acknowledge the role of pilgrimage tourism in this context. The paper identifies the multiple ways in which the post-secular is articulated in pilgrimage tourism, based on empirical studies of Il Camino, in Santiago de Compostela
The way to Santiago beyond Santiago. Fisterra and the pilgrimage's post-secular meaning	To introduce new aspects of who are "doing" the road of Fisterra. To shed light on and create understanding about the Fisterra destination, and the role and meaning that the pilgrims ascribe to the journey destination.	Inductive Explorative and comparative literature and statistics study about Fisterra and Santiago de Compostela. Qualitative: Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM). International pilgrims in Fisterra. 2014	This study shows that contemporary Fisterra should be understood both as an effect of the post-secular trend of individual religiosity and as a response to the negative trend (in this context) of increasingly commercialised mass tourism invading the historical destination of Santiago de Compostela. As yet, Fisterra is not, however, an independent pilgrimage destination, although it is on the rise both as a pilgrimage end and as a tourist destination for the pilgrims who finish their pilgrimage in Santiago de Compostela.

The common feature of the articles is that they all point to the preserving as well as undoing character of tourism, both in the conventional pilgrim tourism and post-secular tourism in the area of Santiago de Compostela. More specifically, the articles deal with how the preserving/undoing dialectic in tourism takes place in terms of the religious and symbolic dimensions of the destination. This dialectic is manifested in different ways as described in the respective articles.

Article 1. Pilgrimage or Sacred Tourism? - A Modern Phenomenon with Historical Roots, with Examples from Fatima and Santiago de Compostela

Thomas Blom, Mats Nilsson, Xosé Santos Solla

Revista Turismo & Desenvolvimento, 2008, nr. 9, 63-78.

The first article is a kind of pilot study, a situational description paving the way to pursue several issues and questions raised by the study in the later articles. The article deals with a specific tourism niche – the pilgrimage – which, when the article was written, was already a commercial product but has recently become even more so. The article identifies the changes in the traditional meaning and content of pilgrimages due to commercialisation. A fact that became even more evident in my later studies. These changes began earlier, more specifically in 1993, a year which saw a dramatic increase of the number of pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela.

The article has two overriding aims. The first is to study the increased secularisations of pilgrimages since the 1990s. The second aim is to conduct comparative analyses of how growing secularisation is reflected in two pilgrimage destinations: Santiago de Compostela, Spain and Fatima, Portugal.

Based on their motivation for undertaking the pilgrimages, two categories of pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela and Fatima can be discerned: the traditional religious pilgrims and the pilgrims without a traditional motivation for the journey. The study showed that the first category was more typical of Fatima, while the second category was more prevalent in Santiago de Compostela. However, both categories are characterised by a *seeking attitude* and that the religiosity is and/or becomes part of the experience. Specifically, the pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela and to Fatima involve experiencing religious historic places. A difference between the destinations is that the Fatima pilgrims make the journey a communal concern, while Santiago de

Compostela pilgrims are mostly individually motivated. Already then, in 2008, Santiago de Compostela showed signs of post-secular tourism.

The article shows that Santiago de Compostela was a prototype for what is now regarded as typical of pilgrim destinations – a place of manifold attractions. While pilgrimages to Fatima have preserved the idea of *roots,* that is*,* are faithful to the historical religious tradition. Pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela should, therefore, be regarded as more open, protean and tentative in character.

Article 1 maps out the major changes in pilgrimage that have taken place since the 1990s in Santiago de Compostela, and tries to identify aspects that have bearing on religious faith, subjectivity and place identity. These are issues addressed in Article 2.

Article 2. Wanderers in the shadow of the sacred myth – pilgrims in the 21th Century

Mats Nilsson

Social and Cultural Geography, (Accepted with revision)

Article 2 is an empirical study consisting of interviews and field observations in Santiago de Compostela, aiming to clarify and interpret the changes taking place regarding pilgrimages to this destination. The role and meaning of place in and for changes in contemporary pilgrimage are addressed along with their bearing on pilgrimage studies. Analyses of pilgrims' stories show that contemporary pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela differ from the traditional motivations and reasons for the journey and its meaning for individual existential issues. The study shows that a *typical* pilgrim is a seeker, one who tries to find him/herself in and through the pilgrimage. To the pilgrim, Santiago de Compostela constituted a parallel world to the modern materialistic world. The narratives show that, the destination offered the opportunity to make an inner journey full of meaning in the context of a sacred place.

The study shows that Santiago de Compostela attracts the pilgrims because they consider the place to be sacred. Even so, the sacredness serves as a kind of religious background lending legitimacy to their quest and to their individual religious practice. What drives the pilgrims is not to claim Santiago de Compostela as their own, but rather to find a place for seeking and finding

answers to their existential questions. In other words, it is not primarily the historical myth, or the legend, that maintains the sacredness of the place identity, but rather the fact that so many have walked the road for so long, and this awareness lends the place an aura of holy identity and spirituality, that transcends its traditional religious identity. A consequence of these pilgrimages is that a partly different place identity is emerging. In other words, a competing, alternative place narrative is in the making.

The article claims that contemporary pilgrimages are to be understood as a post-secular practice where journeys are driven primarily by individual motivations and experiences – often spiritual – rather than generated by membership to a religious denomination. Yet, the identity of the place rests on the historical layers of religiosity, but whose religiosity can be transformed into a space for the affirmation of individual religiosity or spirituality.

Article 3. Performing the "Post-Secular" in Santiago de Compostela

Mats Nilsson, Mekonnen Tesfahuney

Annals of Tourism Research, 2016, vol. 57, 18-30.

If the previous articles have a pronounced inductive approach, Article 3 is clearly deductive. The material and result of the previous articles provide the basis for further problematisation and for placing contemporary pilgrimages in broader social context. The theoretical reasoning in Article 3 shows that: 1) the post-secular debate has not paid attention to the key role of pilgrimages and hence tourism in "the return of religion"; 2) tourism studies research has not paid attention to the importance of the post-secular debate in and to tourism.

Santiago de Compostela appears as the arena where the post-secular is performed, one of the spaces where the re-sacralisation processes that distinguish our age are manifested and legitimised. Article 3 thus fills a gap in research, namely how the post-secular is performed, which Beaumont and Cloke (2011) have noted. By combining the discourse of and the performing of the post-secular, the article provides a nuanced understanding of how the post-secular is spatially manifested in and through pilgrimages.

Tourism has a double-bind relationship with (post)modernity and the pilgrim tourist is its foremost indication. The article shows that tourism in general and the pilgrimage in particular have a contradictory relation to the (post)modern as the simultaneous preserver and undoer of the secular and the sacral. It is, in

other words, a force of sacralisation and secularisation and this negotiation takes place in Santiago de Compostela. The article also deals with the different routes where the post-secular is evident and performed in Santiago de Compostela, namely in and through: 1) mobile performativities, 2) mobile becomings, 3) mobile place-creating processes, which together transform the identity and meaning of place and produce post-secular experiential space. The post-secular processes indicate that Santiago de Compostela's original meaning is wearing, not least because of the mass pilgrimages presently taking place, causing more and more people to flee from Santiago de Compostela. This is the background to the rise of Fisterra as a new attractive destination for post-secular pilgrimages, which is the topic of Article 4.

Article 4. The way to Santiago beyond Santiago. Fisterra and the pilgrimage`s post-secular meaning

Thomas Blom, Mats Nilsson, Xosé Santos Solla

European Journal of Tourism Research, 2016, vol. 12.

If the first article sketched a burgeoning process, this article depicts *its fulfilment*. The pilgrimages to Fisterra are in some sense a product of the mass pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela. The increasing tourism-based commodification erodes the traditional religious place identity and meaning of Santiago de Compostela.

Like conventional tourism, post-secular pilgrimage is haunted by the tourism paradox, or the so-called double-bind. The quest for the genuine and the extraordinary makes the place artificial and ordinary. The article shows that tourism to Fisterra is a kind of anti-movement, an anti-tourism, and an escape from Santiago de Compostela rather than choosing Fisterra due to its attractiveness. Fisterra can be seen as a product of the continuous quest for the new, the genuine and the different experiences and new destinations. Not even the post-secular pilgrimage shows loyalty to the formerly sought after sacred place of Santiago de Compostela. Place disloyalty to the historic pilgrim destination is what the findings of Article 4 indicate. There is no doubt about the revival of Fisterra's religious importance and its reinstallation as an alternative destination for the post-secular pilgrimages.

Like the two first articles, Article 4 has an inductive approach and the conclusions drawn are based on qualitative interviews made in Fisterra. The findings of the study should be understood vis-a-vi the post-secular. The

reason for Fisterra's rise is twofold. First, to serve as an authentic end destination for pilgrimages, given that Santiago de Compostela seen as too touristy. Secondly, as a tourist destination proper for those pilgrims who have fullfilled their pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela and now want to be tourists.

5. Concluding discussion

> Geography and all widely practiced forms of religion, in the final analysis, attempt at establishing places that answer human needs/.../an important difference/.../religions add another layer to them through powers of symbolization, such the stone is more than a stone/.../an extra meaning/.../They still lie in the compass of geography. (Tuan, 2009, p. 15)

The aim of this thesis is to describe and understand the relation between postsecularism and tourism, specifically the relation between religious faith, place and tourism in our time based on a case study of pilgrimages in the area of Santiago de Compostela. In this concluding chapter, I return to questions posed initially:

- o What are the relations between post-secularism and tourism?
- o How does post-secularism manifest itself in and through tourism?

Santiago de Compostela is a Catholic Church instituted holy city, which has become more evidently an object of commercialisation in our time because of the increase in number of visitors. The new private religiosity, characteristic of Europe, I argue, is clearly discernable in the post-secular tourism to Santiago de Compostela, where individuals use traditional religious symbols, rituals and practices for their own purposes. The Janus face of tourism is also evident in the post-secular. As MacCannell (1976), pointed out tourism is inherently religious. In as much as tourism has maintained the "sanctity" of religious places it has been a force of desacralisation, not least through pilgrimage, where tourism has preserved the religious dimension. Historically, tourism to sacred places can be regarded as a journey to geographically isolated religious islands. This situation was maintained for a long time as the islands resisted the influence of society and time. The growing number of pilgrimages and their significance lend vitality to the return of religion phenomenon. This means that tourism is an important factor in the ongoing religious vitalisation of society (e.g. Holloway and Valins, 2002; Santos-Solla and Lois-Gonzalez, 2014).

Santiago de Compostela is, and has been for a long time, a religious place created by the Catholic Church. Contemporary pilgrims, i.e., post-secular tourists, undertake their journey based on religious convictions regardless of religious affiliation. In Santiago de Compostela, the significance of both place and journey is marked by the pilgrim's subjective and individual values. This is

in contrast to the traditional pilgrim for whom the Catholic Church provided the understanding of the place and the meaning of the pilgrimage. The formal domain (eccumene) is still owned and governed by the Catholic Church as well as the accreditations to be a pilgrim, such as the length completed (100 km) and the pilgrim´s certificate. The informal domain is, on the other hand, marked by individual religiosity. The Church has the power over the formalities of the journey but not its content, meaning and motivation. In other words, the Church owns the body, but not the soul of pilgrims. The Catholic dogma, for example, is preserved in the place narrative of James and the religious attributes. The contemporary pilgrims' narratives indicate that historical legend of Santiago de Compostela has partly lost its meaning and role and is thus emancipated from the Catholic fold. Instead, the legend lives on as a symbol related to the sacredness of the experience, but the sense and meaning of the place as well as its sacredness are being re-worked in and through post-secular tourism. From the perspective of tourist attraction, it is important that the body of the Catholic myths is there - the history and meaning of the road, sanctioned and holy pilgrimage - because otherwise the site would be drained of religiosity and become like any other tourist destination. What we have is a destination marked by post-secular tourism yet framed by the institutional religious history and Catholic dogma.

Another finding is that the religious place is recreated and renewed through the practices of the presentday pilgrims. Seen through the lenses of the mobility turn (Cresswell, 2004; Hannam et al., 2006), post-secular tourism has its own forms of mobility capital, which is not dependent on traditional religious values and the capacity to move in space and appropriate different spaces. Being a post-secular tourist requires a certain ego investment, which can boost the individual's social and cultural capital in the identity-creation on the return home. As early as 1994, Lash and Urry argued that conventional mass tourism was being replaced by post-tourism and greater differentiation in terms of destinations, motives, temporalities and spatialities as well as tourists. In post-tourism, the distinction between the touristy and the ordinary is blurred, a feature that is also characteristic of post-secular tourism.

The social, cultural and place-dependent processes described above have rendered a number of claims as well as reflections. The existence of sacred places instituted by a denomination and where the distinction between religious and profane places is closely connected to the religious narrative of a local religious denominational community is not new. There is nothing new

either in members choosing to confirm their religious faith and their membership through visiting the ordained places. But in a post-secular understanding of tourism, the visitor to the religious place situates the sacred place in a subjective context, which neither aims to confirm denominational faith, nor a membership.

Religious places function as a springboard for the resacralisation processes in our time. The post-secular tourist is also an agent in the revival of existing religious practices and places in line with the new spirituality that characterises post-secular resacralisation processes. In the context of this study, MacCannell's oft quoted saying, "What is an expenditionary force without guns? Tourists." (1989, p. 18), can be rephrased as "What is a religious army without priests? Post-secular tourists." With this paraphrase I want to emphasise the significance of religious places being re-created and re-vitalised in the post-secular present. In Relph's (1976) understanding this can be interpreted as the erosion of place meaning. But, just like Massey (2002) and Ek and Hultman (2007), I argue that when a place is changed, new meanings and belongings are added. Post-seular tourism is not so much about placelessness as the re-working of place meaning and identity. It is this sense that we should rather speak of post-secular places.

The pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela may better be conceived as a hybridised tourist phenomenon, one that fuses traditional Catholic doctrine, rituals and practices with individual religiosity in place. The sacred meaning and significance of the place is constantly re-worked, in relation to new values, life styles and trends.

Who is a pilgrim, and who is a (post)secular tourist? On the basis of my studies of religious faith, place and tourism in the area of Santiago de Compostela, I can identify the following distinguishing features:
- The pilgrim undertakes a journey to a certain destination to fulfil a canonical obligation, thus confirming institutionalised religious faith.
- The secular tourist is a pilgrim without traditional religious faith.
- The post-secular tourist is a pilgrim in search of a personal religious faith without obligations to religious or secular canon.

In addition, the post-secular tourist is disloyal and unfaithful to place. My study bridges a research gap between the post-secular debate on the one hand and tourism studies on the other. I bring the post-secular debate into tourism studies and conversely tourism into the studies of the post-secular. My

research indicates the importance of the post-secular to tourism and the importance of tourism to the post-secular. I have minted the concept of post-secular tourism in this spirit (see figure 4).

Articles 2, 3 and 4 describe post-secular tourism and its expressions in more detail. Tourism research in Human Geography and Tourism Studies should no longer view religion as *terra incognita* as has been the case in general, nor should these disciplines ignore the post-secular.
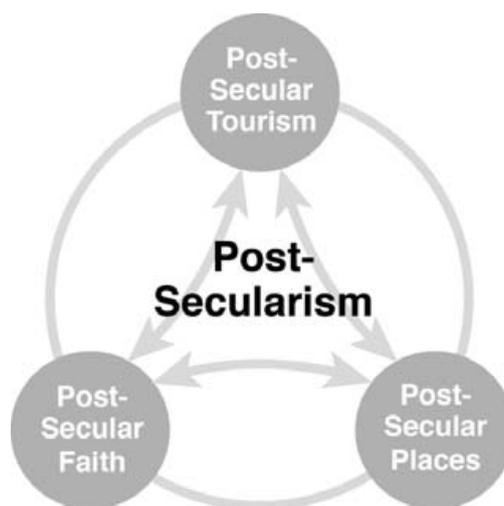

Figure 4: A Relational Model of Post-Secularism – Post-Secular Faith, Post-Secular Places and Post-Secular Tourism

Santiago de Compostela has been a religious symbol and destination but is undergoing change. A development tied to the post-secular in which the privatisation of religiosity is a cornerstone. In regard to religious faith, tourism and place in our age, there is reason to claim that the contemporary pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela is a post-secular performative and place-creating phenomenon. Post-secular tourism strives to attain a subjectively lived, spiritual and meaningful experience such that neither religious faith nor loyalty is ordained. Post-secular places are destinations whose significance is constantly affirmed and performed by post-secular tourists through their own subjectively experiences and constructed narratives. What Bremer (2004, p. 144) so aptly summed up in his claim that "for many people, religion slips imperceptibly into touristic practice" applies inversely to Santiago de Compostela. Therefore, I note that for many pilgrims the touristic "slips imperceptibly" into religiosity as the place interweaves the journey with a religious and spiritual theme even if this was not an initial aim. A further attribute of the post-secular is thereby revealed, namely the porosity of its

boundaries with is in stark contrast to traditional religiosity. Judging by the case of Santiago de Compostela, there is reason to regard the religious arena in Europe as a *spiritual supermarket* (cf. Digance 2003; Olsen and Timothy, 2006). A religious inspired but tourist-driven destination development has emerged, which interprets and reinterprets the value of place. Let us not forget that what can be labelled the blessings of tourism can also be the fatal kiss, not least the commodification of religious places and the erosion of original religious meaning (Enzensberger, 1958; Krippendorf, 1987).

This thesis has been partly inspired by Tuan's (1977) discussions of the malleability of place on the basis of individual understanding and meaning. A contemporary pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela is unique in his/her narrative and experience, but journeys in the shadow of religious tradition, where the inner journey largely frame the spiritual and spatial experience. The contemporary pilgrims find their own way in the quest for existential meaning in "borrowed" rather that newly created sacred places. The holy route to Santiago de Compostela has functioned as a space for completing a quest. The paradox this study showed is that the unicity so desired is not to be found in Santiago de Compostela since it has become ordinary. Instead, Fisterra is showing signs of re-placing Santiago de Compostela. A fact that also goes to show the Janus face of post-secular tourism.

In post-secular tourism we see a renaissance of pilgrimages, as it were. I interpret post-secular tourism as a combination of sacral and secular travel. Whether the sacral will displace the sacred, or if it is just a sign that we have never been secular, let the future have it say.

Picture 1. Stamp at Fisterra. Photo: Mats Nilsson

……. or a new beginning!

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Post-Secular Tourism

This thesis takes its starting-point in the post-secular changes in society and how these interplay with tourism. In spite of the intensive academic debate on and theorisation of the post-secular and post-secularism, the role of tourism in this change, called the return of religion, has not been studied. Conversely, neither has the role of post-secularism in tourism been addressed. The overall aim of this thesis is to describe and understand the relation between post-secularism and tourism. Specifically, the aim is to clarify and understand the relation between religious faith, place and tourism in our time on the basis of a case study of pilgrimage in the area of Santiago de Compostela. In other words, the thesis highlights the role of tourism in the emergence of what is now called the post-secular condition.

This thesis shows that contemporary pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela is a post-secular performative and place-creating phenomenon. Post-secular tourist places are subjective and spiritually meaningful destinations. Unlike traditional pilgrimage destinations a key attribute is that neither traditional religious faith nor loyalty to institutionalised faith are (pre)ordained. Rather, place is constructed by the narratives and experiences of post-secular tourists.