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"Directiveness" as a Predictor of Religious Attitudes

Abstract: This paper examines the relation between "directiveness" and levels of religiosity (conceptualized as the three dimensions of "closing–opening," "clericalization–secularization," and "dogmatism–permissiveness"). The model used has been empirically verified and is a consequence of previous studies proving that religiosity in itself generates both pro-social attitudes (especially in regard to an individual's own religious group) and attitudes of aggression toward "outgroups." Researchers have also demonstrated that religion can be a factor that inhibits actual aggression through values such as self-control of negative emotions or impulsive acts. This study finds that the model presented is statistically significant in terms of dimensions such as "closing–opening" and clericalization–secularization: higher directiveness makes it possible to predict higher "closing" and clericalization. This finding makes it possible to discuss directiveness as a foundation for real aggression and attitudes of discrimination against individuals or groups that pose a symbolic or real threat to the unity of the Roman Catholic community.

Keywords: directiveness, religious attitudes, Catholics, Directiveness Scale, Ray's scale, Ray's personality approach.

Directiveness consists of numerous discriminative or aggressive attitudes and behaviors, such as the inclination to force one's will upon others, aggressive dominance, or prejudice. Some authors claim that religiosity is associated with pro-social attitudes and behaviors, and the values or emotions that support such behaviors (Norenzayan and Shariff 2008; Preston et al. 2013), thus negating the occurrence of directive qualities in believers actively involved in religion. However, many authors also point out that this is mere theory, and there is no convincing evidence to prove that religiosity actually includes a pro-social component (e.g., Blogowska et al. 2013, Galen 2012, Saraglou 2012). This thesis has provided the basis for the emerging trend in which researchers not only point to behaviors inside the religious group but reveal the members' aggression toward "outgroups," especially those that really or symbolically threaten religious and moral values. As emphasized by Joanna Blogowska, Catherine Lambert, and Vassilis Saroglou (2013), most of the above evidence is based on explicit paper-and-pencil measures of prejudice, although some studies have also included implicit measures of prejudice (often using the Implicit Association Test). The evidence includes the discriminatory treatment of outgroups relative to ingroups (e.g., Batson et al. 1999), unwillingness to help (e.g., Jackson and Esses 1997), the legitimization of prejudice (e.g., Pichon and Saroglou 2009), and the expression of negative beliefs, emotions, attitudes, and judgments (e.g., Rowatt et al. 2009, Whitley 2009). The authors also suggest that despite negative attitudes toward outgroups, religion can be a factor preventing

actual aggression through values such as the self-control of negative emotions or impulsive acts (McCullough and Willoughby 2009).

Specific Polish Religiosity

The role of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland is associated not only with over a thousand years' history of community between religion and the state but also with contemporary events. The Catholic Church's history in Poland includes more than fifty years of communism in the twentieth century, when the totalitarian system imposed by the USSR eliminated religion from the public domain. Despite various repressions, the Catholic Church was then a bearer of the idea of freedom and resistance to totalitarianism. The election of Cardinal Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II) as pope in 1978 was another event that strengthened the position of the Catholic Church in Poland. It occurred at a moment when the communist regime—and the Cold War—were flourishing. The pope's official visits to Poland stimulated large demonstrations against the communist authorities and support for the expression of nationalistic ideas, for the Solidarity movement, and for Lech Wałęsa. The Church also played a significant role in Poland's systemic transformation, at the moment when the country was peacefully transitioning from communism to democracy. The Church supported the democratic opposition and was an active mediator in negotiating the phases and course of democratization. The systemic transformation itself had some consequences for the Church—Polish society was exposed to Western trends, including laicization and secularization (Norris and Inglehart 2011). This caused some cracks in the previously coherent religious structure of Polish Catholic society, sometimes revealing an extreme stratification of attitudes.

Poland's history and natural social interactions in the period of state formation produced a relatively homogeneous religious and social structure. According to a study carried out by the Social Opinion Research Center (CBOS) in January, 2012, 93.1% of the respondents identified themselves as members of the Roman Catholic Church (Mariański 2013, CBOS 2012). The most recent study (2015) shows that as many as 56% of Poles have unfailing faith in God (CBOS 2015). Only 4% of the respondents are unable to decide whether God exists or not and do not believe it is possible to verify the matter. Only 3% of respondents say they do not believe in God at all. Despite the high homogeneity of Polish society regarding its declared religiosity, in-depth studies show many inconsistencies. For instance, one fifth (20%) of those who believe in God and have no doubts about God's existence either do not practice their religion or do so only occasionally. On the other hand, two fifths of those who "sometimes have doubts about the existence of God" (44%), one fourth of those who "sometimes believe in God and sometimes do not" (26%), and every tenth person "not believing in a personal God but in a supreme force" (10%) declare that they engage in religious practices at least once a week.

The relation between morality and religiosity also adds to the specific character of Polish Catholicism. Individuals' declarations concerning their religiosity and morality suggest that Polish Catholics more often think of themselves as moral (a mean of 7.29 out of 10 points) than religious people (6.40). In addition, although the level of declared morality

has not significantly changed over time, the level of declared religiosity has considerably decreased (Boguszewski 2014). This tendency may result not only from the process of society's laicization but also from the slow replacement of the sphere of religious axiology by values connected with the democratization and pluralization of social life (Wojtasik 2013). For example, according to 73% of the respondents, moral imperatives need not be justified by religion, although religion does justify those imperatives in the lives of many of them (34%). Only 18% of the respondents strongly believe that religion alone can be the foundation of proper morality, while 39% do not feel it is necessary to justify morality with religion: for them, their own conscience is enough (Boguszewski 2014). This seems to be evidence of the somewhat superficial influence of religious values on the lives of Catholics in Poland.

What is especially characteristic of Polish religiosity is its popular nature and the lack of intensive laicization processes in comparison to many other European countries (Stawrowski 2004, Burke 2009). It is "popular" because it is dominated by non-liturgical elements. Popular religiosity involves anything that in classic theology was called paraliturgy or services. In other words, popular religiosity entails the religious feelings and behaviors that Christians from a certain culture exhibit in connection with God, Mary, or the saints (Prusowski 2008). Popular religiosity, although frequently considered to be immature, ensures a sense of meaning and helps form identities. In Poland, its fundamental features are its mass character (the intensity of religious practices) and ceremonial character (observance of holidays and customs). Another expression of popular religiosity is the fact that it is closely connected with local and regional customs and traditions. It is not individual but set in a particular community. Thus studying the importance of the directive element in a strong community formed in this manner is interesting. On the one hand, the internal strength of a community united by religion can intensify its aggression toward threatening groups, i.e., non-Catholics. On the other hand, those cherished Catholic values may act as an important disincentive to such behaviors. A study by Mark Musick and John Wilson (2008: 279) shows that religion motivates social activity and determines ways and degrees of involvement. In research on social motivations, scholars do not agree about the impact of religion. Some hold the view that religion is an important motivation to action (Putnam 2000) and connect the sphere of religious axiology with social values (Leege 1993, Harris 1994) and the socialization functions of religious institutions (Greenberg 2000; Jones-Correa and Leal 2001). The opposite view stresses the possible reduction of social activity due to religious activity (Wuthnow 1999), the competitive nature of citizens' trust in their own religious group at the expense of the general social capital (Uslaner 2000), and even the limiting of citizens' knowledge and social competence by religious activity (Scheufele et al. 2003).

Directiveness as a Personality Trait

John J. Ray developed his concept of directiveness in critiquing the authoritarianism theory of Theodor Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford, whose work *The Authoritarian Personality* played a significant role in social psychology's

approach to the subject. These authors produced the concept of the authoritarian personality. They identified nine fundamental attributes of authoritarianism: conventionalism, authoritarian subordination, authoritarian aggression, anti-intraception, belief in superstitions and stereotypes, belief in strength and toughness, destructiveness, projection of one's own negative feelings, and attributing excessive importance to sex (Adorno et al. 1950: 228, also: Jakubowska 1999, Mika 1981). Other characteristics of authoritarianism are the inclination toward external expressions of power, hostility, repression of one's hostility and its projection onto others, egocentrism, discipline, and an excessive inclination to punish others. The syndrome of authoritarian personality traits is the result of being raised in strict discipline or in a strict social system, both of which develop needs or tendencies in the individual (Adorno 2010). These traits, combined with respect for, and submission to, authority, make a person susceptible to the influences of that authority. Individuals often unthinkingly accept the views and ideology of the authority and manifest their agreement with those views by their behavior and expressed opinions.

John J. Ray, seeing that authoritarian behavior does not always result from submission to authoritarian ideologies, criticized the concept developed by Adorno et al. He made a clear separation between the authoritarianism of attitude (which is connected with respect for an authority) and the authoritarianism of personality (involving the inclination to dominate) In Ray's approach, the authoritarianism of personality is called directiveness. According to Ray, directiveness is a personality trait involving the imposition of one's will on others and leading to aggressive domination, regardless of one's attitude toward the authorities. Directiveness is associated with qualities such as aggression, achievement motivation, assertiveness, discrimination, prejudice, and power. The core of directiveness is the desire to aggressively force others to do what one wants. Importantly, it has been empirically proven that unlike authoritarianism, directiveness does not correlate with factors mentioned by Adorno: ethnocentricm, conservatism, political views, religious beliefs, or morality (Ray 1976: 317).

In the process of verifying Poland's directiveness scale, as well as in Australian studies, there was a negative correlation between directiveness and the scales of social approval and socialization. Although these correlations are relatively low, they show that directive people have reduced levels of socialization. On the other hand, positive correlations were found between directiveness and positive feelings, and negative correlations between directiveness and negative feelings. If fundamental dominance, as part of directiveness, was associated with self-confidence and higher self-esteem, this could imply quite frequent positive feelings. In Scheler's Scale of Values, the scale correlates negatively with moral and sacral values and positively with hedonistic ones (Brzozowski 1997: 59–60). Directiveness is related to dominance, leadership, achievement motivation, assertiveness, prejudice, or power (Ibidem: 7).

Methodology

The study was carried out in the period between September and December 2015 on a sample of 422 adult Poles (227 women, 195 men). It was performed by trained interviewers

using a survey questionnaire. The sample was selected using quota stratified sampling. The population was divided completely and disjointly into strata, which reflected voivodeships. Then, the quota procedure was applied to sex (*women*: N = 227; *men*: N = 195), age (*18–24*: N = 97; *25–34*: N = 81; *35–44*: N = 85; *45–54*: N = 68; *55–64*: N = 55; *> 65*: N = 36) and place of residence (*town*: N = 280; *village*: N = 142).
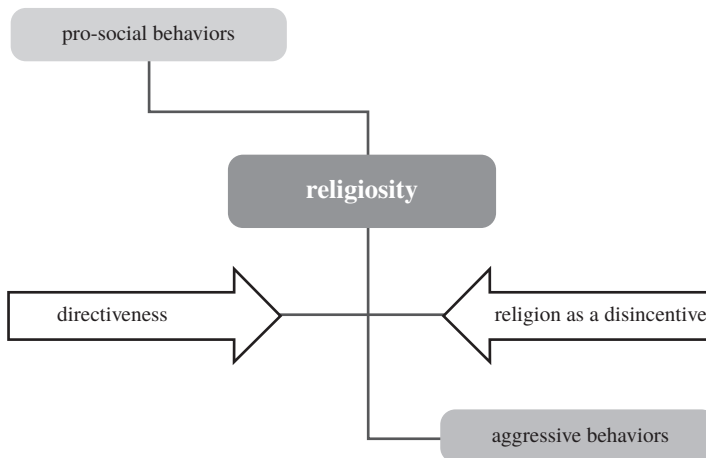
John J. Ray's Directiveness Scale, which was adapted into Polish by Piotr Brzozowski (1997), was used in the present study to diagnose levels of directiveness. The scale was developed in the middle 1970s. Originally, it had 14 items (D-14), but as a result of the process of verification and improvement, its final version had 26 questions (D-26) (e.g., "Do you like to have everything in order?," "Do you usually let others make the final decision?," "Do you like it when others serve you?"). The respondents choose the answers from a three-item list: "yes," "no," and "don't know."

The other tool applied was the original Religiosity Scale. It is made up of 27 questions on the role of religion in the respondents' lives and their engagement in religious practices. The respondents used a Likert scale with five possible answers: "strongly agree," "agree," "hard to say," "disagree," "strongly disagree." The scale includes three subscales, referring to autonomous factors. The first factor involves statements referring to the "closing-opening" dimension. This division concerns the original function of religion: whether Roman Catholicism should be the religion of a chosen few (e.g., races, nations, or countries) or conversely, it should be egalitarian and available to everyone. Individuals whose opinions are situated on the first extreme are convinced of the highly exclusive nature of religion, which in turn produces attitudes based on claims that an individual must have special characteristics to be a Roman Catholic. Roman Catholics at the other extreme consider that the Roman Catholic religion is open to all. The Church should treat everyone equally, in accordance with its guiding principles, regardless of the denomination, beliefs, or attitudes of others. The other factor refers to the level at which Roman Catholicism is embedded in the political system. Its basic dimension is the clericalization-secularization diad. People who support the first extreme represent the clerical formation. They would like to popularize religion in the secular sphere, which is regulated by non-religious law, in order to guarantee the favorable position of believers over atheists. Those inclined toward the other approach would welcome the institutional separation of the religious sphere in the public domain and the religious neutrality of state institutions. The third factor identified takes into account the perception of Roman Catholicism by the faithful. The spectrum is one of dogmatism–permissiveness. The dogmatic approach declares the need for a world order that would accord with the literally interpreted canons of Roman Catholicism. In the dogmatic point of view, the fundamentalist approach is dominant, demanding strict observance of the principles of faith and imposing them on people who do not share them. The stance on the other extreme proposes a critical attitude to the social teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and the dogmas of faith. The permissive point of view questions religious values and all norms that impose them on citizens.

Research Model

The research model proposed in the present study derives from trends in the literature on analyzing the relations between directiveness and religiosity. They prove that religiosity generates pro-social attitudes (Norenzayan and Shariff 2008; Preston et al. 2013)—mainly directed at members of an individual's own religious group—and also aggression toward "outgroups," especially those that really or symbolically threaten religious and moral values (Batson et al. 1999). At the same time, in the case of negative attitudes toward outgroups, some data shows that religion can be a factor preventing actual aggression by promoting values such as the self-control of negative emotions or impulsive acts (McCullough and Willoughby 2009). High levels of directiveness, including elements of imposing one's will on others, aggressive dominance, discrimination, or prejudice, could be a factor overcoming the disincentives generated by religion. The aim of this study has been to find answers to the following questions: *Is directiveness a significant predictor of a person's position on the closing-opening scale? Is directiveness a significant predictor of a person's position on the clericalization-secularization scale? Is directiveness a significant predictor of a person's position on the dogmatism-permissiveness scale?* In answering these questions, the authors indirectly question the strength of directiveness and religion as a factor inhibiting aggression in itself (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Research Model

Source: own research.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Preliminary analysis showed that the scales used are satisfactorily reliable. The following values of Cronbach's alpha were obtained: for the closing-opening dimension, .655;

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Analyzed Variables with Division into the Respondents' Sex

	Sex	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean
Directiveness	Woman	227	54.7137	7.40736	.49164
	Man	195	57.2769	8.22776	.58920
closing–opening	Woman	227	34.7357	4.63735	.30779
	Man	195	32.3026	5.79955	.41531
clericalization–secularization	Woman	227	15.6784	2.77435	.18414
	Man	195	15.0256	3.18896	.22837
dogmatism–permissiveness	Woman	227	27.9207	9.17060	.60867
	Man	195	29.5179	9.13323	.65404

Source: own research.

for the clericalization-secularization dimension, .381; for the dogmatism-permissiveness, .865; and for directiveness, .693.

Table 1 presents the level of the obtained variables depending on sex. The t-Student test confirmed the differences in variable levels depending on sex for all the cases except the dogmatism–permissiveness dimension. Men represent a significantly higher level of directiveness: $t(420) = -3.367$; $p < .001$. Women, in turn, had higher scores in dimensions such as closing–opening, $t(369.854) = 4.707$, and clericalization-secularization, $t(387.621) = 2.225$; $p = .027$.

The result indicating greater closing and clericalization of men confirms the conclusions drawn by Miller and Hoffmann (1995) and Miller and Stark (2002), who are of the opinion that the decision of faith, mainly due to its long-term consequences, is a hazardous behavior and is more often taken by men. Hence the authors conclude that men should display higher religiosity. This, however, is not fully confirmed in the literature on the subject. For example, Azzi and Ehrenberg (1975) and Deaton (2009) prove a higher level of religiosity in women. This can be explained by women's greater responsibility for raising children, in the context of which religiosity sets clear boundaries (Smith 1985); higher frequency of guilt feelings, which are reduced by one of the fundamental goals of Christianity, i.e., forgiveness (Argyle and Beit-Hallahmi 1975: 77, Cox 1967, Simmons and Walter 1988); and a higher level of anxiety (Gray 1971; Garai and Scheinfeld 1968), which is reduced by the promise of everlasting life.

The place of residence did not affect the participants' scores in the closing–opening scale or in directiveness. However, town residents had significantly higher scores in dimensions such as clericalization–secularization, $t(340.423) = 2.920$; $p < .001$, and dogmatism–permissiveness, $t(420) = 3.252$; $p < .001$.

Our results confirm the findings of other researchers. Many analyses prove the greater religiosity of rural residents, which seems to be in accord with their higher rate of clericalization and dogmatism. In Poland, a study by CBOS (BS/3/2014) shows that rural residents much more often than town residents have complete faith in God (70% vs. 55%), more often declare that they pray daily (47% vs. 38%), and more often maintain Christmas religious customs, especially participation in Midnight Mass (84% vs. 61%).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Analyzed Variables with Division into the Respondents' Place of Residence

	Place of residence	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean
Directiveness	village	142	33.2887	5.00295	.41984
	town	280	33.7750	5.50491	.32898
closing–opening	village	142	15.9296	2.55340	.21428
	town	280	15.0964	3.15229	.18839
clericalization–secularization	village	142	30.6761	9.18722	.77097
	town	280	27.6357	9.01708	.53887
dogmatism–permissiveness	village	142	55.3169	8.08849	.67877
	town	280	56.1929	7.78879	.46547

Source: own research.

Empirical Findings

Further investigation involved univariate regression analysis to verify the role of directiveness as a predictor of dimensions of religiosity in the scales analyzed. The analysis of Pearson's correlation coefficients also showed significant relations between the scales. They are presented in the table below.

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Analyzed Variables

	closing–opening	clericalization–secularization	dogmatism–permissiveness	directiveness
closing–opening	1	.281*	.215*	−.197*
clericalization–secularization	.281*	1	.425*	−.156*
dogmatism–permissiveness	.215*	.425*	1	−.080
directiveness	−.197*	−.156*	−.080	1

＊Correlation significant at the level of .01 (bilaterally).

The lack of relations between the independent variable of directiveness and the dependent dogmatism–permissiveness scale excludes the analyzed variables from further exploration, which was carried out for the cause-and-effect relations between directiveness and the dimensions of closing–opening and clericalization–secularization.

The R-square value of the closing–opening dimension was .39, which means that directiveness explains 3.9% of the variance. The model is statistically significant, the F-value is $F(1.420) = 16.879$, $p < .001$.

In the case of the clericalization-secularization scale, the R-square value was .024, which means that directiveness explains 2.4% of the variance. The model is statistically significant, the F-value is $F(1.419) = 10.495$, $p < .001$.

Table 4

Regression Coefficient for *Directiveness* (*closing–opening*)

Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Standard error	Beta		
(Constant)	41.046	1.828		22.460	.000
directiveness	−.133	.032	−.197	−4.108	.000

Source: own research.

Table 5

Regression Coefficient for *Directiveness* (*Clericalization–Secularization*)

Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Standard error	Beta		
(Constant)	18.680	1.030		18.139	.000
directiveness	−.059	.018	−.156	−3.240	.001

Source: own research.

Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of the study was to diagnose the relation between directiveness and levels of religiosity, conceptualized as three dimensions: closing–opening, clericalization–secularization, and dogmatism–permissiveness. In the models, directiveness (regarded as a personality trait) was presented as the independent variable, and the dimensions of religiosity as the dependent variable. The univariate regression analysis showed that the model presented is statistically significant in terms of dimensions such as closing–opening and clericalization–secularization: higher directiveness makes it possible to predict higher closing and clericalization. The obtained R-square coefficients had significant but quite low values, so directiveness can be treated as a predictor at the level of certain tendencies, which need to be empirically confirmed. For the dogmatism-permissiveness dimension, the model did not prove to be significant. Our study seems to fit the trend proving that "loving thy neighbor" and "hating the sinner" are attitudes that coexist among religious people and translate into behavior (Glogowska et al. 2013). The directiveness element, which was diagnosed as a significant predictor of clericalization and closing, can be a foundation for real aggression and attitudes of discrimination against individuals or groups that pose a symbolic or real threat to the unity of the Catholic community.

At the same time, the results obtained are interesting and inspiring in the context of further interpretations and thus open new research areas in the context of relations between directiveness and three religious attitudes: orthodoxy, fundamentalism, and dogmatism (Hunsberger et al. 1996). While the reasons for these attitudes may be similar, they differ in the way they are expressed. The mechanism of their development and occurrence is based on the role of the religious factor in the lives of individuals.

The study did not prove the significance of the dogmatism-permissiveness dimension, which shows that directiveness is not a predictor of dogmatic attitudes. Religiosity serves

as a mechanism that confirms control over reality, and dogmatism is the means to maintain the expected order—both internally, within individuals, and in their relations with the surrounding world (Jost et al. 2003). The most important characteristic of dogmatism is that it directs the individual's cognitive mechanism at a closed set of sources and rejects anything from outside. Milton Rokeach (1960) based the concept of a closed mind on dogmatism. Thus dogmatism in the religious dimension is expressed in the dominant role of faith and its rules as a cognitive mechanism to explain the complexity of the surrounding reality. Religious dogmas play the role of milestones, determining conduct conforming to religious guidelines. Some scholars perceive dogmatism as a source of social and political conflicts. "We see dogmatism, and proceeding from dogmatism, we see wars and inquisitions and persecutions. We see hypocrisy: people professing the brotherhood of man killing their fellows in the name of faith, lining their pockets at the expense of others, and practicing all manner of brutality" (Peck 2006: 184).

The statistical significance of the closing-opening dimension revealed in the study makes the impact of directiveness on orthodox attitudes plausible. Religious orthodoxy is an attitude characterized by the observance of the doctrine and truths of the faith and focusing on religion as the key element in life (Allport 1966). Typical of it is a literal understanding and observance of religious dogmas and the overlooking (or even contesting) of principles from sources other than religion. Thus if dogmatism is a cognitive-rationalizing factor, orthodoxy may be an adaptation mechanism for religious attitudes in a lay environment. Thanks to orthodoxy, individuals can observe a system of values and attitudes resulting from religious orders, and at the same time function in a secular environment not respecting religious values. Directiveness will help minimize the impact of the increasingly secular environment and the focus on experiencing religion internally (George 2014: 47). Contrary to dogmatism, which always fosters extreme attitudes, orthodoxy may occur separately, without producing a radical attitude toward the surroundings. This results from the fact that orthodoxy concentrates on the content of beliefs, not on ways of manifesting them (although it does not exclude the occurrence of such an association). However, if orthodoxy involves manifestation, it is connected with the assumption of preaching the truths of the faith in an environment that does not respect them to a proper degree. Then, for those who preach it, the orthodox attitude is not only the external reflection but also an internally constituted mechanism of dividing the environment into the spheres of the sacred and the profane.

The statistical significance of the clericalization-secularization dimension revealed in the study may prove the impact of directiveness on fundamentalist attitudes. Religious fundamentalism is an attitude characterized by the need to transfer religion to other dimensions of life so as to ensure coherence and a unifying philosophy for life (Hill and Williamson 2005). Fundamentalism is "the belief that there is one set of religious teachings that clearly contains the fundamental, basic, intrinsic, essential, inerrant truth about humanity and deity" (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992: 119). Allport (1950) observes that religious fundamentalism prevents individuals from being flexible and open-minded. People displaying religious fundamentalism were characterized by attaching a higher value to obedience and a lesser one to autonomy (Danso et al. 1997). It is hard to say how much religious fundamentalism is a new phenomenon and to what degree it has historical grounds. Observation

of the transformation of religiosity toward fundamentalist attitudes leads to the question of whether this is a feature of contemporaneity or whether such attitudes have occurred at every stage. The historical background of fundamentalism is worth noting: for example, in order to show the role it has played (Alford 2009: 57). In this context, three historical forms of religious fundamentalism can be identified. The first, oldest, form was gnostic fundamentalism, which involved building a main religious message and contesting opposing interpretations. The second type of fundamentalism was the political model, which connected religion with the existing type of socio-political relations. The third type, which is most characteristic of our times, can be referred to as deprivatizational fundamentalism; it originates in objection to secularization processes. In future research, it would be interesting to find out which type of fundamentalism is most influenced by directiveness.

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