Religion and Mass Electoral Behaviour in Europe

Edited by David Broughton and
Hans-Martien ten Napel

London and New York

Religion and Mass Electoral Behaviour in Europe

The onset of a New Millennium gives renewed impetus to assessments of religion and its place in the secular world. *Religion and Mass Electoral Behaviour in Europe* is an innovative, cutting-edge study which focuses on the question of whether – and how – religion continues to influence and shape mass electoral behaviour in an impressively wide number of Eastern and Western European countries.

With exceptional detail, this book draws on empirical data based on a range of country case-studies to provide examples of different religious experiences and relationships. Areas covered include:

- the Lutheran traditions linking the Scandinavian countries
- the mix of Catholics and Protestants in Britain, Germany and the Netherlands
- the Catholic heartlands of France, Spain and Italy
- the emergence of Hungary and Poland from the state-imposed atheism of the Cold War.

Contributors include highly respected specialists in the field; they question current popular notions such as the idea of the triumph of 'secular city' and the 'death of God' and ask if these are necessarily permanent features of the mass politics of modern Europe. Their conclusion is that to assume Europe is the exception to the rule of a 'desecularisation of the world' may in fact be both erroneous and empirically unjustifiable. Written for those studying politics, comparative politics, religious studies, and the sociology of religion, this is an important contribution to this previously neglected field of research.

David Broughton is a Lecturer in Politics in the School of European Studies at Cardiff University. His most recent edited volume is *Changing Party Systems in Western Europe*. **Hans-Martien ten Napel** is a Lecturer in the Department of Public Law at Leiden University, the Netherlands. He has published widely, including *Regulating Morality: A Comparison of the Role of the State in Mastering the Mores in the Netherlands and the United States* (co-edited with J. L. Krabbendam, 2000).

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London and New York

First published 2000
by Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Religion and mass electoral behaviour in Europe / edited by David Broughton and Hans-Martien ten Napel.
p. cm. – (Routledge/ECPR studies in European political science ; 19)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Religion and politics–Europe. 2. Voting–Europe. 3. Religion–Influence. 4. Europe–Religion–20th century. 5. Europe–Politics and government–20th century. I. Broughton, David. II. Napel, H.-M. T. D. ten. III. Series.

BL695 .R4 2001
324.94'055'088–dc21
00–062572

ISBN 0-203-99183-4 (Adobe eReader Format)

ISBN 0–415–20129–2 (Print Edition)

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Abbreviations

France

CDS	Social Democratic Centre
MRP	Mouvement Republicain Populaire (Christian Democrats)
PCF	Parti Communiste Français (Communist Party)
PS	Parti Socialiste (Socialist Party)
RPR	Rassemblement pour la Republic (Gaullists)
UDF	Union for French Democracy

Germany

CDU	Christian Democratic Union
CSU	Christian Social Union
FDP	Free Democratic Party
PDS	Party of Democratic Socialism
SED	Socialist Unit Party
SPD	Social Democratic Party

Hungary

Fidesz	Alliance of Young Democrats
Fidesz-MPP	Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party
FKGP	Independent Smallholders' Party
KDNP	Christian Democratic People's Party
MDF	Hungarian Democratic Forum
MIÉP	Party of Hungarian Justice and Life
MSZP	Hungarian Socialist Party
SZDSZ	Alliance of Free Democrats

Italy

AN	National Alliance
CCD	Christian Centre Democrats

CDU	United Christian Democrats
DC	Christian Democratic Party
DS	Left Democrats
EPP	European People's Party
FI	Forza Italia
LN	Northern League
PDS	Democratic Party of the Left
PP	Italian Popular Party
PSI	Socialist Party
UDEUR	European Democratic Union
UDR	Democratic Union for the Republic

Netherlands

ARP	Anti-Revolutionary Party
CDA	Christian Democratic Appeal
CHU	Christian Historical Union
GPV	Reformed Political League
KVP	Catholic People's Party
PvdA	Labour Party
RKSP	Roman Catholic State Party
RPF	Reformed Political Federation
SGP	Political Reformed Party
VVD	Liberal Party

Poland

AWS	Solidarity Electoral Action
KKW	Catholic Electoral Committee
KLD	Congress of Liberal Democrats
PC	Central Alliance
PL	Peasant Alliance
PSL	Polish Peasant Party
SdRP	Social Democracy of Poland
SLD	Democratic Left Alliance
UD	Democratic Union
UP	Labour Union
UW	Freedom Union
WAK	Catholic Election Action
ZChN	Christian National Union

Scandinavia

CPP	Christian People's Party
SKL	Suomen Kristillinen Liitto (Finland's Christian League)

Scotland

SNP	Scottish National Party

Spain

AP	Alianza Popular (Popular Alliance)
CDS	Centro Democrático y Social (Social and Democratic Centre)
IU	Izquierda Unida (United Left)
PCE	Partido Comunista de España (Communist Party)
PDC/CiU	Pacte Democràtic par Catalunya/Convèrgencia i Unió (Catalan Democratic Pact/Convergence and Union)
PNV	Partido Nacionalista Vasco (Basque Nationalist Party)
PP	Partido Popular (Popular Party)
PSOE	Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party)
UCD	Unión de Centro Democrático (Union of the Democratic Centre)

Contributors

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Series editor's preface

Common wisdom suggests that we are observing the rapid disappearance of religion as a relevant aspect of social and political life in advanced societies. People no longer accept the rules of established churches and they question the truth of age-old articles of faith and religious principles. Metaphysical beliefs – if relevant at all – are considered to be a private and strictly personal matter, which can be attuned to private desires and needs in a simple way. The emancipated citizen selects specific ideas *à la carte*, creating his or her own private *bricolage* or patchwork of religious beliefs. Religion as a consistent set of beliefs and rules as well as a powerful social force disappears from the public and political realms. 'Nothing is so fatal to religion as indifference' noted Edmund Burke 200 years ago, and the social developments in the last decades seem to confirm this warning in a striking way.

Common wisdom should be distrusted. In 1998 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to a Protestant and a Catholic politician who tried to end a virtually endless and bloody civil war in Western Europe based on religious cleavages. A decade earlier, Communist regimes in Central Europe were successfully attacked by a variety of popular movements which had their main roots in church organisations. Christian democratic parties remain a major political factor in many countries. The list of examples can be easily enlarged: the British Queen still heads the Church of England, the 'religious right' is an important element of American politics, churches still enjoy protection and specific rights (tax exemption) in many countries, a wide variety of religious sects flourishes, the war in Kosovo and the position of immigrants in Europe make clear that differences between Muslims and other groups cannot be neglected. In short, conventional wisdom about the triumph of secularisation might simply be another variant of modern superstition, based on selective observations and intellectual laziness. The impact of religious beliefs on political orientations and behaviour might be waning, but religion still seems to present a remarkable cultural and institutional force in political processes at the turn of the century.

In the collection of essays presented in this volume the authors deal with the question how and why the impact of religion on mass electoral behaviour has changed in the last few decades. Social cleavages based on differences in language, class, and religion have shaped the political landscape in Europe since

the early twentieth century. In almost each and every country, the party system clearly shows the legacy of the emancipation of the labour movement and of Christian organisations: Social-democratic and Christian-democratic parties usually occupy the large electoral middle-field. Yet in the last few decades, academic debates about the 'dealignment' of party loyalties have been heavily dominated by the question about the impact of class and social status on voting behaviour. This is even more astonishing with respect to the fact that religion – and not class or status – traditionally appears to be the most important socio-structural determinant of electoral behaviour in Europe. It is for this reason that the editors of this volume make an extensive effort in their introductory chapter to discuss the various ways religion and religious beliefs can have an impact on voting behaviour. They decided to focus upon two main questions: first, in which ways can the consequences of secularisation for electoral behaviour be studied, and second, to what extent is a decline in the impact of religious cleavages observable in different countries?

In order to answer these two questions, the contributors to this volume analyse thoroughly the empirical evidence available for twelve different European countries. Before these country-specific analyses are presented, Brian Girvin discusses the arguments for a 'political culture of secularisation' from a broad longitudinal and comparative perspective. His general conclusion, that 'European politics have become secularised over the past fifty years', does not imply a more or less similar development in each and every country. The empirical analyses of specific countries in the remaining chapters unambiguously underline this point. The countries selected reflect a wide range of religious experiences and relationships. The findings for the predominantly Lutheran countries are evaluated by John Madeley in his chapter on the developments in the Scandinavian countries. Next, the complicated religious experiences in 'mixed' countries like Britain (chapter by David Seawright), Germany (chapter by Geoffrey Roberts), and the Netherlands (chapter by Joop van Holsteyn and Galen Irwin) are analysed from various perspectives. The three chapters on the developments in more or less homogeneous Catholic countries show once more that the impact of religion is not a privilege of divided societies. While Pierre Bréchon shows that religious voting plays a role in secular France, José Montero and Kerman Calvo underline its irrelevance in Spain. Dealing with the complicated Italian case, Mark Donovan concludes that the idea of a 'Catholic vote' has to be abandoned. The set of country-specific analyses is completed by drawing attention to the developments in post-communist societies of Central and Eastern Europe. The question of religious and clerical polarisation in Hungary is discussed by Zsolt Enyedi, and Kenneth Ka-Lok Chan deals with the religious base of politics in Poland. In their concluding chapter, David Broughton and Hans-Martien ten Napel return to their initial pair of questions and conclude that the empirical record shows a much more divergent picture than common wisdom suggests, with examples ranging from the dramatic consequences of secularisation in the Netherlands to the virtual irrelevance of this process in Spain.

European politics has been shaped by religious experiences and the main

features of this characterisation can still be traced easily in the political processes in many countries. Signs of secularisation are equally obvious, but that development does not imply that religion has lost its impact on voting behaviour among mass publics. The changing position of religious beliefs and institutions in our society is a very complex and diversified process which cannot have simple political consequences. In an area where common wisdom seems to prevail, it is the attempt to present the much needed empirical underpinning of the available explanations of the impact of secularisation in several countries which makes this collection of essays so valuable. Indifference, indeed, is fatal to religion – just as it is to the serious study of electoral behaviour.

Jan W. van Deth, Series Editor
Mannheim, June 2000

Acknowledgements

The degree of collaboration and co-operation required for the successful completion of any edited volume such as this inevitably incurs many debts from many people. The original ECPR workshop in Bern in 1997, where many of these chapters were first presented, was a particularly productive week, achieving a fine balance between very serious work and sustained good humour. Since that initial workshop, we have returned to the contributors on various occasions asking them to add, delete, narrow, broaden, refine and indeed re-write sections of their chapters. That they have all done so with the stoical good humour and perseverance of the original workshop necessitates both our open acknowledgement of such efforts and our sincere thanks.

Other organisations and people have also played their part. David Broughton was awarded a joint grant from the British Council and their Dutch counterparts (the NWO) for a visit to the Netherlands in January 1997 during which the foundations of the original workshop were firmly established (UK-Dutch Joint Scientific Research Project JRP352). During the final editing stages at the end of the project, the Research Committee of the School of European Studies (EUROS) at Cardiff University funded another trip by David Broughton to the Netherlands. During the same visit, the Department of Political Science at Leiden University provided the necessary facilities to ensure the completion of the book.

We would also like to thank Professor David Hanley of EUROS for providing a wide range of overall support, ideas and suggestions; Monika Anton of the Aspen Institute in Berlin for commenting incisively on two key chapters; Karen Owen for invaluable help in the very last stages of preparing the manuscript; Professor Jan van Deth of Universität Mannheim for supporting the inclusion of the book in the European Political Science series; two anonymous referees who provided a number of important and valuable comments on the original book proposal, and finally, our two commissioning editors at Routledge for their continuing support (initially Patrick Proctor and then Craig Fowlie).

The book has benefited in numerous ways from the combined efforts of the above. We hope the book has also, in terms of its specific content, focused on an enduringly important issue that possesses the mysterious ability simultaneously to frustrate and to fascinate.

David Broughton and Hans-Martien ten Napel
Cardiff and Leiden, May 2000

1 Introduction

David Broughton and Hans-Martien ten Napel

It was probably inevitable that the onset of a new Millennium in the year 2000 would give renewed impetus to assessments of religion and its place in the secular world. For example, the *Economist* offered an obituary of God in which 'after a lengthy career, the Almighty recently passed into history'. Doubts about this outcome clearly remained, however, since the article ended with the observation that 'the test will come on Judgement Day when man, we are told, will meet his maker. Or will it be God meeting his?'[1]

In addition, BBC Radio Four's flagship news programme *Today* sponsored a survey which attempted to gauge the general level of belief in a number of fundamental Christian concepts. The survey comprised eleven questions including 'Do you believe that Adam and Eve literally existed?', 'Are all of the Ten Commandments applicable today?' and 'Is there a purgatory?'. It was sent to Church leaders, politicians, teachers, writers and scientists in the United Kingdom. The reactions to the survey ranged from charges of reductionism, particularly in terms of the perceived inadequacy of permitting only one-word answers and ticking boxes as a guide to fundamental questions of theology, to outright suspicion and hostility. One respondent, Dame Mary Warnock, indicated a lack of belief in every statement in the survey and yet she admitted that she described herself as a Christian and had indeed completed the survey on her return from communion in her village church where she had read the Epistle.[2]

This interest in religious matters continued into the first part of year 2000 with the coincidence of a number of separate events that attracted much attention. First, the Pope's visit to the Middle East in March represented an attempt at reconciliation with other faiths that required diplomacy of the highest order. The visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum certainly stirred poignant memories for many. Yet it could not deflect attention from the continuing theological inability of the Catholic Church to do more than blame the 'Godless ideology' of the Nazis for the Holocaust rather than accept any blame itself for the Church's silence during the 1930s. The relationship between Catholics and Jews consequently remains fragile, despite such gestures of contrition for the events of the past.

Second, a new Catholic Archbishop of Westminster was installed in Britain. The emphasis on unity between different faiths was unmistakable in the first

sermon by Cormac Murphy-O'Connor who stated that 'the road to Christian unity is like a road with no exit'.[3] This was widely interpreted to mean relations between the Catholic Church and the Church of England, a relationship effectively derailed in practical terms by the latter's decision to ordain women priests in 1992.

Third, and regardless of its specific relationship with the Catholic Church, the travails of the Church of England continued to attract often scornful media attention. The changing, sometimes confused, relationship between the Church of England, Parliament, politicians and the media is a source of increasing irritation and mutual misunderstanding on all sides. Adding the continuing disagreements within the Church of England on issues such as the acceptability of the ordination of women and gay clergy into the mix and the Church of England appears firmly stuck between a rock and a hard place. These divisions within the Church effectively mean that it can go neither back nor forward without real fear of schism. Using focus groups to find out what its 'customers' want and adopting 'good business practice' in its finances appear unlikely to attract much more than increasing cynicism.

Finally, the twentieth anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador acted to remind many of the potency of the churches outside Europe as the 'voice of the voiceless' and 'the journalists of the poor'. The use of frequent radio broadcasts and constant salvos against injustice, inequality and oppression can become a central focus of Church activity in countries where 'political preaching' becomes the major means of articulating the hopes of the 'nameless'.[4]

The two main questions

Despite the widespread attention paid to these and other religious events in the first quarter of year 2000, we do nevertheless have to ask to what extent any of this matters to ordinary people in Europe. Are individuals listening any more to organised religious elites and following their cues and edicts? The overwhelming evidence of the last thirty years is that fewer and fewer people are attending church, that respect for Church traditions and norms has declined rapidly and that even amongst the remaining 'faithful', the motivations for and justifications of 'religious behaviour' are often mixed and blurred.

Adequately answering the highly complex and inevitably overlapping questions derived from these broad processes of multi-dimensional change would be a truly daunting task even within a single country. Making justifiable comparisons across the countries of Europe would require a lifetime's unflagging research activity and an unpredictable number of scholarly monographs. Even then, there could be no guarantee that believable and satisfying answers would necessarily be found to even the most salient questions of faith and religious practice.

We nevertheless started this project with just such a canvas, encompassing a total of five major themes on religion and politics, including examining the contours of 'religious maps' and the organisational dimension of religion in each country. We

also wanted to consider different levels of analysis, the relationship between religion and respondent self-location on the left–right scale, religion and the welfare state, religion and nationalism, ethnicity, and community. Generational change, the role of religious beliefs and issues and 'new politics' were all to be discussed.

An initial and mercifully brief consideration of this agenda demonstrated the sheer impossibility of dealing with such topics usefully within the confines of a single volume. Instead, we decided to focus upon two main questions: firstly, how can we most effectively test the impact of 'secularisation' on voting patterns in different European countries and secondly, to what extent has there been a 'decline' in the impact of the religious cleavage? The basis for the chapters would be the analysis of quantitative data drawn from election and other social surveys. The compelling practical pressures noted above sensibly forced us to be much more modest and hopefully therefore more immediately useful in this contribution to current research on the place of religious faith and its role in mass politics in modern Europe.

We are especially interested therefore in how religion influences and shapes mass electoral behaviour in twelve different European countries. To that end, we have deliberately included a range of country case study chapters to provide examples of a variety of different religious experiences and relationships. The chapters range from the Lutheran traditions linking the Scandinavian countries (four countries considered) through the religiously 'mixed' countries (Catholic and Protestant) of Britain, Germany and the Netherlands to the Catholic heartlands of France, Spain and Italy. We chose to include two countries from the former Eastern Europe (Hungary and Poland) as the civil societies of those two countries emerge from the state-imposed atheism of the Cold War.

The choice of countries to be included was equally guided by inescapable practicalities. The chapters (with the exception of the chapter on Britain which we commissioned later) were originally presented at an ECPR workshop in Bern in 1997 but they have all undergone much subsequent revision and addition to achieve the final form in which they are presented here. The workshop included a paper on Belgium but the author was unable to provide a revised version. We were also initially tempted by the idea of including chapters on the Republic of Ireland, Russia and Greece but ultimately no room could be found for these undeniably interesting countries within a single volume.

In addition to the country case studies that form the core of the volume, we have included a chapter by Brian Girvin that sets the scene for the country studies by considering the roots of and recent ideas regarding the process of secularisation in Europe. This particular chapter immediately follows this introduction.

The background to the project

One of the research questions that strongly guided our thinking both in the initial workshop and in this book was the way in which analyses of the relationship between religion and voting have fallen so dramatically out of academic favour in the last twenty years. Thirty years ago, Rose and Urwin (1969) suggested that

religious divides were more important than various measures of class or social status in determining patterns of electoral choice. This conclusion marked the high watermark of religion and its use in surveys and electoral analysis. Since then, it has become common for religion not even to be mentioned in analyses of voting behaviour (except in a purely historical context) in a variety of European countries. If the topic of religion is mentioned at all, it is usually only in passing and largely to conclude that it doesn't matter any more, that religion has 'declined' in its impact on electoral choice.

We would argue that the 'decline' of religion in the context of voting behaviour has not yet been demonstrated empirically. In particular, we believe that assumptions of irreversible secularisation are just that, even if strong, religiously based attitudes are now often confined to the private consciences of the older generations of the populace. This does not mean that the triumph of 'secular city' and the 'death of God' are necessarily permanent features of the mass politics of modern Europe.

Clearly, the impact of religion on voting will depend upon a number of different influences and contexts. For example, the degree of religious group integration and mobilisation as well as the extent and nature of the barriers between different religious groups are likely to be significant. Such barriers have been high in the past to keep 'unbelievers' out and to retain a high degree of religious coherence. Non-religious social groups such as trade unions could rarely match this degree of fidelity. These barriers were perceived by many religious groups as being vital to their self-interest in terms of the preservation of their overall influence. In addition, such numeric and public support underpinned the ability of the churches to meet the challenges posed by a variety of 'outside forces' more likely to see them as opponents, even enemies, than allies.

The way in which religious issues are confronted and resolved will also be important. Are religious issues 'live' on the prevailing political agenda or are they dealt with in private via procedures of compromise and conciliation? Do politicians recognise the unpredictable potency of these issues and ensure that election campaigns only rarely mention them explicitly as part of their appeals to voters? It seems certain that the political parties will play a crucial role in 'framing' religious issues and mediating in the resolution of religiously based social conflicts. In this way, religious disputes might disappear at elite level, but is this necessarily the case at the mass level of ordinary voters?

Religious views are often closely linked to particular parties and voting habits, and that link can persist down the generations without any reinforcement by means of current disputes or issues. This can produce cross-pressures on voters which are essentially derived from the past but which are still played out in the minds and electoral calculations of the voters in the present.

We cannot assume of course that the link between religion and voting behaviour will necessarily be displayed in any particular or consistent pattern. Broad experiences in Europe would nevertheless suggest that there are certain commonalities across countries. However, we need to be careful in depicting any statistical link that is uncovered as being proof positive that religious disputes or

conflicts remain important to the contours of mass politics in modern Europe. It is perfectly possible that the reality is rooted more in obscure and baffling statistical artefacts left over from a previous period of religious conflict, which have been accepted uncritically and passed psychologically down the generations. Would such a conclusion render the link between religion and voting essentially spurious, a link without any substantive import? It is one task of this volume to unravel these potential links in order to attempt to answer this particular question.

Methodological approaches

Religion, in an important sense, is inevitably 'irrational' and that makes it difficult to empirically analyse its various features and dimensions adequately. We can however certainly shed more light on these central questions than in the past if we avoid any general guiding assumptions about irrelevance and 'decline' *before* we actually examine the reality of religion and its relationship to mass politics in Europe today.

Employing an analytical approach to studying religion, focusing on the use of quantitative data at its core, it is nevertheless necessary to recognise the well-known problems and difficulties of this type of approach.

One of the problems, which all our country contributors faced, was difficulty in terms of the availability of empirical data to test the idea of the 'decline' of religion, particularly over time. The limited range of questions on religion and non-comparable question wording also proved to be problematic. Another cause for concern centred upon the face validity of the data as appropriate measures of the many diverse dimensions of religious life, most commonly and frequently operationalised as religious denomination and rates of church attendance.

On the face of it, these difficulties might seem to be exaggerated, with tenable solutions offering themselves after initial exploratory data analysis. After all, most people know to which religious denomination they belong (at least nominally), if any, and they can usually quantify how frequently they attend church without many problems.

In reality, however, a detailed assessment of the problems of measuring religion empirically throws up many problems of analysis and interpretation, difficulties that are made even more complex in a cross-national and comparative context.

For example, in a European context, the main denominational distinction is between Protestants and Catholics. Catholics take their overall cues and direction from the Pope and the Vatican, and are therefore assumed to be the recipients of a single, coherent set of teachings. However, can we assume that all Protestants are alike in their religious beliefs because they are broadly classified as belonging to the overall 'Protestant' faith? To what extent can we assume that the Lutherans in the Scandinavian countries share core beliefs with the Dutch Protestants and the adherents of the Church of England?

When we consider rates of church attendance as an indicator of religious commitment, we know from previous research that attendance at church differs by denomination. For example, weekly attendance is assumed to be important for

Catholics but this is often not the case for Protestants. Given this, how should we best categorise church attendance, and how 'frequent' is 'frequent' attendance if we choose to combine perhaps five or six original categories into three as is often the case for actual data analysis?

What are the most important specific religious issues that play a role in the structuring of electoral choice today? Abortion remains a sensitive and divisive question in many countries, as potentially does the 'new agenda' of bio-ethical and genetic questions that have emerged in recent years. In the past, the availability of divorce was a touchstone of religious belief for many, but the 'religious agenda' has since moved on to encompass a much wider variety of highly complex moral and ethical issues.

Each of the country chapters that follow broadly considers these three areas: denomination, church attendance, and religious issues in the context of 'their' particular country. In our concluding chapter, we bring together the main threads of the preceding analyses, looking at the thorny problems of analysing religion empirically and suggesting ways in which the clearly identified problems of data quality and reliability could be improved.

Implicit assumptions that the various processes of socio-economic modernisation would act to push organised religion into a peripheral, privatised, secular twilight world remain widespread. According to these assumptions, the organisational and integrative abilities of the various churches would inevitably diminish and their previous and respected ability to play a fundamental role in debates surrounding the key moral and ethical questions of the age would decline. The 'definitional authority' of the churches would be dissipated amongst other competing social groups as the grip of secular wisdom gradually asserted its control.

For many people, this description provides a good match to their own particular 'religious reality'. This book attempts to document the linkages between religion and voting behaviour in Europe as one contribution to testing empirically the validity of these assumptions. Ignoring organised religion has always been an option and it is one that more and more people appear to exercise. We contend however that ignoring religion should not be simply and blithely equated with assumptions that it is insignificant and irrelevant in the ways that ordinary voters think about or act in the arena of mass electoral politics.

Notes

1 *Economist*, 31 December 1999.
2 *Daily Telegraph*, 23 December 1999.
3 *Independent*, 23 March 2000.
4 See the text of the sermon on the anniversary of Romero's assassination given by Rt. Rev. John Rawsthorne (http://www.tasc.ac.uk/cc/cn/), 24 March 2000.

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2 The political culture of secularisation

European trends and comparative perspectives

Brian Girvin

Introduction

If, as many urge, the twentieth century could be characterised by changes which transformed the political, economic and social environment of the world, then one of the paradoxes of the century was the resistance to such changes and their consequences (Giddens 1999). Despite this resistance, many of the hopes implicit in the original Enlightenment have been achieved. The most important of these can be seen in the democratisation of politics, in the drive for equality and in the continuing insistence that there are universal values such as human rights (Sen 1999). The continuing impact of capitalism, science and technology reinforce the view that change has become pervasive.

This does not lead however automatically to the conclusion that such an outcome is necessarily welcome. Political and cultural opposition to all aspects of the Enlightenment has been maintained since the eighteenth century. For John Gray, the Enlightenment has led to nihilism. Gray has voiced concern at the deleterious effect of the Enlightenment (especially its liberal form) on traditional cultures, most particularly on religion (Gray 1995).

One of the central points of tension since the Enlightenment has been between religion and politics. The precise form that these tensions take differs according to the nature of the society in which the confrontation takes place, but they remain widespread. Moreover, these tensions have not been exclusively European, but appear, often in quite different guises, in many societies outside Enlightenment Europe.

Not only is religion a political issue, but politics itself is regularly affected by religious considerations (Boyle and Sheen 1997). Among the issues which affect the relationship between politics and religion, those concerned with abortion and the role of women in society have a global importance, as have issues concerned with church and state, freedom of expression and belief, ethno-religious disputes as well as educational and medical matters.

There are at least three aspects to the relationship between religion and politics in the contemporary world. The first is the demand the state makes on all citizens to accept its authority and to recognise it as the legitimate source of rules for the governing of society. Some of these rules will encroach on the

self-regulation of autonomous bodies within that society in areas such as education, trade union law or taxation. Secondly, organised religions will seek to mediate their relationship with the state by pursuing claims considered necessary for the promotion of their objectives. Some of these will be specifically political, such as a demand that a church should be established by the state, but others will be more indirect, as in the case of lobbying on specific issues. The third aspect is the nature of belief and membership in a specific society. An individual's belief system will affect his or her actions in respect of the political and if that individual is informed by a religious sensibility, then it is likely that this will influence political decisions.

An individual will interact between the institutions of church and state in many ways. The outcome will be a political one where specific action in the public domain is being sought. Religion enters the public domain at various points. It is rare for organised religion to eschew this realm entirely. Religious groups in most parts of the world are deeply involved in the political process, and where this is not the case, it is often as a consequence of a specifically political act to exclude them on the part of the state or other political agency (Keddie 1997; Haynes 1993). The relationship between religion and politics is certainly not new. In many parts of the world the boundary between the two continues to be the basis for conflict and debate. It was not until the Enlightenment that the role of religion in politics was openly denied and attempts made to regulate, if not exclude it, from the political domain.

In European politics, the impact of this particular conflict has had important consequences for political identity and mobilisation ever since. In their seminal study of cleavage structures, Lipset and Rokkan identified four possible cleavages which reflected the primary political divisions in Europe. Interestingly, given the attention that is frequently given to class divisions, they insisted that church–state divisions were among the most important for mobilisation and political competition in the formation of modern party systems. They noted that all the churches were involved in this conflict, whether Catholic, Lutheran or reformed, although the outcome differed according to the religious type (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). In European states as different as France, Britain or the Netherlands these conflicts, and the divisions they generated, continued to provide important markers for political identity and mobilisation until at least the 1960s.

In respect of religion and politics, this is of considerable importance, for many of the parties which dominated political life after 1945, and which continue to be influential into the twenty-first century, had a religious basis, although they may not have been denominational parties as such. If political parties continue to require the support of those who identify with a specific church, then this raises important questions about the nature of political behaviour in the modern world. A central question in this respect is the extent to which politics has been secularised, what this actually means in liberal democratic states, and whether the specific European experience has more general application.

The secularisation model

The late Ernest Gellner held that 'it would be difficult to deny the overall trend towards secularization', while recognising that strong counter currents existed (Gellner 1996:15). Secularisation is generally a product of the Enlightenment and its impact on the nineteenth century. Conflict existed between churches (as a consequence of the Reformation) and between church and state (over property and regulation of institutional matters for example), but nominally church and state were Christian throughout Europe. The Enlightenment challenged this by drawing on the classical world to criticise the world of Christianity and to condemn it as irrational, anti-intellectual and anti-scientific. Prejudice and superstition were taken to be by-products of religious belief and one of the objectives of the Enlightenment was to challenge the control exercised by the church over education and the moral order (Voltaire 1972: 343–6, 349–64).

While the Enlightenment was essentially an intellectual movement, it created for the first time a body of ideas resting on foundations independent of church or biblical authority. Moreover, during the nineteenth century, church authority was challenged in many parts of Europe and secularism became a mass movement in some states. Liberalism, socialism and nationalism were often self-consciously anti-clerical and, at times, openly anti-religious. Increasingly, scientific and historical advances challenged the self-image of Christian truth and in these and other areas, secular authority gained priority over that of religion. It is in this context that Nietzsche could claim that 'God is dead' in the sense that, for a significant section of public opinion, the existence of God became a matter of personal concern rather than a central aspect of daily life (Chadwick 1975: 15).[1]

Alasdair MacIntyre has suggested that secularisation involves 'the transition from beliefs and activities and institutions presupposing beliefs of a traditional Christian kind to beliefs and activities and institutions of an atheistic kind' (MacIntyre 1967: 7–8).[2] A less restrictive approach to the question is provided by Berger who claims that secularisation is 'the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols'. The most public and political representation of this is 'in the evacuation by the Christian Churches of areas previously under their control or influence – as in the separation of Church and state, or in the expropriation of Church lands, or in the emancipation of education from ecclesiastical authority' (Berger 1973: 113).[3]

Whereas MacIntyre's view is associated with the changing attitudes of individuals in society and the movement between polar opposite presuppositions, Berger's approach is more institutionally-based. He provides an alternative means of measuring how the institutions in a society move from being primarily religious to secular. Both emphasise the importance of industrialisation in the process of secularisation. In Berger's case, he provides a direct causal relationship between the two phenomena, but suggests that there is a 'cultural lag' between the secularisation of the economy and the effect of this on the state,

family and society. MacIntyre and other critics of the secularisation thesis have argued that this cultural lag poses a problem for causality, noting that it is difficult to make the claim for direct causality in these circumstances.

The nature of this relationship has been a major concern since the publication of the 1851 census in Britain. The census highlighted the low level of church attendance on the part of those who lived in the new industrial centres and this allowed observers to make the causal link between industrialisation and secularism (Inglis 1963: 1–20). Some social theorists concluded that religion had outlived its usefulness and only served as an instrument of oppression. The most famous expression of this was Marx's view that religion was 'the opium of the people', but positivists such as Comte drew similar conclusions (Chadwick 1975).

If positivism considered that religion would lose its function as a consequence of social development, Durkheim countered that religion was present in the human condition. What had changed, he suggested, was the form that ritual or religion took, not that the spiritual dimension was missing (Durkheim 1915: 427). In a more contemporary context, Greeley has asserted 'that the basic human religious needs and the basic religious functions have not changed very notably since the late Ice Age'. He argues that the evidence for secularism is weak and limited to certain intellectual groups (Greeley 1973: 1–3).

Weber provided a further dimension in his study of rationalisation, emphasising that the world could in principle be understood in rational terms; fundamentally that it could be 'disenchanted'. If rationalisation and intellectualisation are at the heart of reason, as envisaged by the Enlightenment, then a clear alternative to the dominance of theological and supernatural explanations for behaviour and action is available. Metaphysical explanations may continue to influence some sections of the population, but ultimately significant groups assert rational and scientific modes of analysis and these acquire legitimacy (Weber 1948: 139, 155). Unlike Marx, Comte or Spencer, Weber was more sympathetic to religion and his understanding of it was more sophisticated than most of the positivist contributions during the nineteenth century.

The influence of the classical theorists of secularism and social change continued to affect analysis of trends in the twentieth century. Kumar, for example, in his review of modernisation and post-industrial theory reiterated the link between industrialism and secularisation (Kumar 1978: 101). Bryan Wilson insisted that political institutions as well as society had been effectively secularised during the twentieth century. He noted the loss of clerical authority in most European states, the rise of anti-clericalism and the need on the part of churches to openly defend their privileges and way of life. However, he warned that secular societies have strong contradictions within them, especially the failure to provide a means of self-regulation and order, which historically the churches have provided. This concern is one which has gained in salience since the mid-1960s, particularly concerning the implications for society of the loss of faith and the continuing weakening of traditional values (Wilson 1966: 232–3).

Some doubts about secularisation

The process of modernisation and secularisation proved to be more ambiguous and complex than the classical theorists expected. Moreover, the impact of modernisation and secularisation was not always benign; it was frequently alienating and disruptive. The political implications of Nietzsche's philosophy were decidedly anti-modern and anti-liberal (Toulmin 1990: 139–60). In respect specifically of secularisation, the evidence has never been clear-cut and numerous exceptions appeared. Revisionist studies have argued that church membership is not the only criterion for evaluating whether a society is religious or not. Moreover, even the claims of a close relationship between industrialisation, urbanisation and secularisation cannot always be sustained. In some cases, churches maintained their strength or indeed increased their membership during the first half of the twentieth century. In societies as diverse as the Netherlands, Quebec, Belgium and Ireland, religious participation remained widespread and intense at least until the 1960s.

Moreover, historical research suggests that urbanisation can correlate positively with rising or stable church membership. If, as Brown suggests, 'urbanization and industrialization can *cause* church growth' then the traditional causal relationships are certainly open to question. He provides an alternative model based on the view that church growth declined and stagnated after urbanisation slowed down.

In England, Scotland and Wales, this seems to have occurred by the 1950s, in the United States by the 1980s. Bruce has reasserted the traditional secularist view by re-analysing religious data from the 1851 census for England and Wales. His results show negative correlations between urbanisation, religious diversity, Catholicism in sixty-six towns and cities and church-going (Brown 1992: 31–58; McLeod 1981; Bruce 1992: 170–94).

Secularisation is not necessarily a universal phenomenon, but a product of specific conditions in Europe. The United States seems to provide a clear alternative to the view that all modern societies become secular in the sense that church-going declines. De Tocqueville suggested that democratic societies may remain religious. American religiosity remains high in comparative perspective given the levels of urbanisation and industrialisation in that country (De Tocqueville 1969: 442–9; Gedicks 1995; Lipset 1996: 53–76). Huntington has claimed that each of the major world civilisations is based on religion and is culturally specific; in so far as Europe has secularised, this is a consequence of the specific processes at play in that region. Consequently, it is not possible to export secularisation to other cultures and civilisations. Islam is usually cited as the basis for a civilisation most immune to secularisation and liberalisation, though such an approach could be applied to Africa, Asia and perhaps also Latin America (Huntington 1996; Haynes 1993).[6]

Cyclical aspects to decline and recovery of church membership also have to be considered. It is possible that while individual churches go into decline, overall membership of churches remains stable. Martin reviewed secularist

approaches to religion in sociology concluding that '*secularization* should be erased from the sociological dictionary' (Martin 1969: 9–22). However, he was reluctant to discard the thesis in total and reformulated it later by providing a detailed and complex model for interpreting patterns of secularisation. Diversity of patterns in the process of secularisation is probably the key approach of more recent studies, with writers concentrating on the concept as a 'social myth', rejecting Durkheim's view that there is a radical disjunction between the secular and the profane and highlighting historical contingency in belief and practice (Martin 1978; Glasner 1977; Finke and Stark 1992; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Greeley 1972).

Secularisation and politics

Many of the contributions to the debate on secularisation remain concerned with the issue of church attendance, religious identity and the factors which promote or restrict specific outcomes. In a comparative context, outcomes are quite different, due to the complex socio-historical processes at work in specific cases. Religious participation, belief and behaviour will be affected by the historical experience of a state, but also by its religious composition. A predominantly Protestant society will differ from one where Catholicism is dominant, but both will differ from a society with a mixed religious population (Giorgi 1992).

Nevertheless, an overall trend can be discerned during the twentieth century in Europe which points in the direction of a decline in church membership as well as a decrease in those willing to accept the main theological claims of Christianity. None of these trends are uniform, but if Western Europe is taken as a single region for analytical purposes, the movement is seen to be away from the orthodox position. In France, Britain and the Netherlands, belief in God declined between 1947 and 1990, while similar trends are evident in Germany from the mid-1960s. Moreover, by 1990, a majority of those interviewed did not believe in life after death in these countries.

Up until the Second World War, a significant section (perhaps even a majority) of the European population remained enmeshed within a religious culture. At the very least, they fulfilled the obligations demanded of their respective churches for membership. Since the 1950s, a new pattern is discernible, one which is reflected in declining membership, participation and attendance. Thus the half-century between 1950 and 2000 represents a significant break in religious behaviour in the liberal democratic states of Western Europe.

In order to examine the political consequences of these changes, a number of factors require consideration. The first is the extent to which a particular state is more or less secular in terms of its public institutions. Is there an established church or, if not, does a specific church (or denominations) have particular privileges (in respect of public funding or control over education for example). This attempts to assess the extent to which specific institutions or policies in an individual state are secular. An assessment of these features is not connected to church membership; indeed it is possible that an established church exists (as in

England and Scotland) but the majority never attend its services. Likewise, a state may be institutionally secular, yet most people are churchgoers (as in the United States or Ireland).

A second consideration is the extent to which denominational parties exist in a party system or, where a specifically denominational party does not exist, the extent to which there is a religious political constituency which overwhelmingly gives its support to one as opposed to another party. One historic example of this would be the strong Protestant support given to the Conservative Party in Britain and, more recently, the extent to which 'born again' or fundamentalist Christians support the Republican party in the United States (Catteral 1994: 637–70; Rozell and Wilcox 1997).

Of key importance to the secularist argument in politics is the recognition that there is an important relationship between church attendance and voting behaviour, and indeed of non- or irregular attendance. Although electoral behaviour is affected by other factors such as gender or class, church attendance in a number of cases is the single most important variable for explaining voting decisions. In France, for example, a majority of regularly practising Catholic working-class people voted for the MRP, but among those who rarely or never attended church, support ran at about 3 per cent. Similar patterns of voting behaviour can be discerned in Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands.

It should also be noted that a religious dimension to politics can be found where the society is religiously homogeneous, but where religious practice and church-going are not universal, and in societies where a number of denominations co-exist. In the first case, a clerical–anticlerical division in politics is often present, though in some cases the non-religious may be indifferent to religious issues and the division is weak. In the second case, the religious dimension in politics will be expressed through the organisation of denominational parties or through denominational identification with one party, even if that party is not specifically denominational. This is a somewhat different emphasis from that of Alford, who concluded that where religious homogeneity existed, there is unlikely to be tension between religion and politics. This is only the case if all adherents to a religion share a common belief system and do not divide along religious lines on policy issues. The Irish case up to the 1970s provided some evidence for this, as has been shown by Whyte. However, even in the 1980s, with continuing high levels of church attendance, Irish politics was seriously divided on how best to handle a series of religiously-influenced moral issues (Alford 1963: 49–59; Whyte 1974; Girvin 1996).

While this approach does not presume that a decline in church attendance is associated with changes in the relationship between religion and politics, it suggests that decline will change the nature of political competition and open up certain groups (the working class and women for example) to non-religious political appeals.

However, there is another route to political secularisation and that is through institutional change. Institutions may change and become more secular in the sense that the state will acquire authority in policy areas once reserved to religious

bodies. This can occur even without mass change at the level of popular belief. Thus, the deep-rooted values and norms of a political culture could remain stable, but the institutional framework could change. Indeed, secularisation in this sense long predates industrialisation, the scientific revolution or urbanisation. Thus Pope Pius IV issued an edict in 1559 claiming the right to depose heretical monarchs, while Henry VIII in the Act of Supremacy (1534) insisted on the sovereignty of the English monarch on all religious matters within the realm. In time, secular authorities increasingly sought to either subordinate the established church to their authority or to remove the church from any influence in the political domain.

The Enlightenment contributed to this process and provided political leaders with an intellectual justification for their actions. This can be seen in Emperor Joseph's introduction of a *Toleration Act*, but is expressed most strongly in the American Constitution (1787). Article VI established a clear boundary between church and state in the United States when it insisted that 'no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States'. Perhaps even more important was the First Amendment which declared that

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibit the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

The 1868 Fourteenth Amendment extended these rights further and the relationship between church and state in the United States is based on judicial interpretation of this article and its amendments.

This 'republican-pluralist' model clearly separates the church from the state, while accepting a diversity of religious membership and participation. In terms of the secularisation thesis, the United States is a reminder that separation of church and state can occur when a society is neither urban nor industrial, but where religious involvement remains high. In effect, it establishes a secular framework within which religious activity takes place.

Despite the clear distinction between church and state established in American law, Americans continue to actively participate in church-based organisations and maintain one of the highest church attendance rates among liberal democratic states. Nor is American politics free of religious issues as the influence of the Christian Right attests. Additionally, not one member of Congress will acknowledge to not having a religion.[7]

The alternative model to that of the United States is the 'republican-radical' one associated with French anti-clericalism. The French revolutionary tradition excluded religion from its consideration in the belief that Catholicism and clericalism were anti-republican. For much of the nineteenth century, the republican tradition considered that loyalty to the church excluded loyalty to the nation as prescribed in Article 3 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen

(1798). Article 10 of the Declaration provided for liberty of opinion, expressly religious opinion, though the rationalist basis of republicanism believed that freedom would undermine religious belief. That this did not occur led to tension and acrimony between clerical and anti-clerical movements throughout the nineteenth century, with each side using the state to undermine the other. This came to a head in 1905 when the anti-clerical government of Emile Combe consolidated relations between church and state in favour of the state in the Law of 9 December 1905.

While this law was the product of specifically French conditions, it highlighted the continuing tensions between the Catholic Church and the state in those political systems where there was a strong Catholic presence. In some cases, as in France, Italy and Spain, the lines of cleavage between clerical-Catholic and republican-secular were to be maintained into the post-1945 period, reflecting both the hostility of the liberal tradition to Catholicism and the continuing opposition of the Papacy and individual national churches to secular institutions.

Between the American and French models, there were a number of alternatives. Of particular interest was the 1831 Belgian constitution which was essentially a compromise between liberal and Catholic Belgium after the secession from the Netherlands. Articles fourteen to seventeen of the Constitution prescribed the rights and responsibilities between church and state. It was an essentially liberal document which acknowledged specific rights for the state, but implicitly facilitated considerable autonomy for the church. This was the first liberal constitution in Europe in a predominantly Catholic state which became institutionalised and widely accepted. The main reason for this was the shared identity of Catholic and liberal Belgians. While political conflict between the two sides was to dominate Belgian politics for the next century, it remained largely confined within the constitutional order. This was demonstrated in the 1880s when the liberals sought to encroach on Catholic education, a tactic which provided the basis for Catholic electoral mobilisation and the successful rebuffing of these attempts (Girvin 1994: 42–62; Deprez and Vos 1998: 23–80).

The United Kingdom provides a further contrast to these examples. Here we find established churches: Anglican in England, Presbyterian in Scotland alongside eventual disestablishment in Ireland and Wales. The state became increasingly pluralistic in the course of the nineteenth century and was characterised by high levels of toleration, exhibited by the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act, but within a strong Protestant political culture. In political terms, the secularisation of British politics is a product of the influence of liberalism and the notion of parliamentary sovereignty. This may have been facilitated by the absence of a written Constitution, but it also maintained the Protestant nature of the state in respect of the established church and the monarchy.

Similar developments took place in Sweden and Denmark. Increasingly those societies became plural and tolerant but the established church maintained its role at the centre of the political establishment. In each case, though, the

autonomy of the Church was limited due to its established nature and it is, in effect, subordinate to the state. The 1849 Danish constitution which established the Lutheran church also conceded freedom of conscience, thus facilitating a degree of openness and toleration. By way of contrast, the 1860 Swedish Religious Law was considerably more restrictive than that of Denmark and consequently less secularist in outcome and intention (Maclear 1995: 238–42).

The constitutional or formal road to the secularisation of politics faced a number of difficulties which were not resolved in Europe until after 1945. In a limited number of states, especially Britain and the Scandinavian democracies, problems of church and state eased during the inter-war years. Constitutional government is conditional on a number of factors. Among the most important is the acceptance by minorities and majorities that the constitutional order will be maintained whatever the electoral outcome. This required a consensus between the religions in a particular state, the most explicit example of this being the Netherlands which, after 1917, effectively institutionalised recognition of the various religious and secular 'minorities' within the state. This did not amount to the secularisation of Dutch politics, given the continuing dominant role of the religious parties, but it did provide a secular means of resolving a conflict which had religious considerations at its core. Although this strategy of accommodation in the Netherlands was not generally followed elsewhere, it does provide an example of how institutional arrangements can be plural, while religion and politics remain strong (Franklin and Baun 1995).

If Protestant states became increasingly tolerant, if not actually secular, in policy and institutional terms, this was not the case for those states with large Catholic populations. The papacy remained hostile to political democracy and constitutional secularism until after the Second World War and its preference was for authoritarian states which would recognise the Catholic Church explicitly. A comparison between the Weimar Constitution of 1919 and the 1933 Concordat between the Papacy and the Nazi government highlights this preference, as does the similar Lateran Accord between the Italian Fascist State and the Vatican in 1929 and the Concordat which accompanied it. Where constitutional secularism did exist, as in the Netherlands or Belgium, the Pope did not condemn it but these examples were never promoted as models for Catholic politics. Even the Irish Constitution of 1937 which had been drafted with particular care to address Catholic concerns was not openly supported by the Pope, although it was later to be promoted as an example of a Christian constitution.

One of the main reasons the Catholic Church remained opposed to the liberal political order until after 1945 was the conviction that liberalism led to secularism. Pope Pius XI made this explicit in his encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* in 1931 which, as John Whyte argues, sustained the revival of a 'closed Catholicism' well into the post-war period (Whyte 1981: 84–6). For many Catholic political parties, and for significant sections of the church itself in individual states, the liberal secular state and thus constitutional secularism remained anathema. The close alliance in many inter-war states between the state, the church and authoritarian Catholic political forces represents the dominant model

for religion in politics. The Pope preferred Concordats with individual states or the exclusive recognition of the Catholic Church by the state in a Constitution, preferably one which was corporatist in nature (Buchanan and Conway 1996; Girvin 1994: 59–93).[8]

The secularisation of European politics

At the end of the Second World War, European politics were not generally secular. Outside Scandinavia and Britain, religion remained a key factor in the politics of most democratic states. However, a number of changes in the political environment contributed to the transition to secular politics. One of these was the defeat of Nazism, an outcome which closed off the possibility of a return to authoritarian politics in Western Europe; another was the threat to religion by the expansion of Communism and the onset of the Cold War. Both of these factors persuaded many Catholics and Protestants to revise their view of liberal democracy.

To engage in liberal democratic politics entailed a minimum level of tolerance of the opposition, a toleration which had frequently been absent prior to 1945. While toleration is not equivalent to secularisation, its presence in a competitive political environment provided the basis for compromise and consensus. To accommodate the denominational differences in post-war Europe, the constitutional system had to be broadly secular, even if the political parties and the electorate were not.

Two other factors were crucial for the secularisation of European politics. The first of these was the democratisation of the European right and the domestication of its electorate through identification with moderate centre-right or Christian Democratic parties. The second condition was the legitimisation of liberal constitutionalism as the institutional framework for post-war politics. Constitutionalism became a central concern for most of the centre right in post-war Europe and its importance for legitimation can be seen later in the transition to democracy in Spain and Portugal (Gellner 1988: 242–3).

At a formal level, the right was transformed after 1945. Prior to this, it was internally divided between democratic conservatives and the authoritarian right which sought to undermine democratic institutions. The change involved the right accepting the limits and discipline of liberal democratic institutions and political competition. Thus, the right during the post-war years accepted electoral competition and the rules of the political game within a pluralistic system. The most important expression of this change was the rise of Christian Democracy as the main representative of the right in continental Europe.

Christian Democracy is similar to the moderate conservatism which prevailed in Britain and elsewhere in Northern Europe throughout the inter-war years. Between 1945 and 1960, Christian Democratic parties re-defined right-wing and conservative politics, placing them firmly within the democratic process in their respective political systems. In a number of cases, these parties became the mainstay of government formation for the decades after 1945, influencing the

nature of the post-war consensus and the evolution of political structures. In addition, it is arguable that the stability which Western Europe experienced at this time owes much to Christian Democracy.

However, a less radical, but no less reactionary force, remained on the right in 1945 which had yet to accept the nature of democratic government: Roman Catholicism. Whatever the relationship between Catholics and democracy in individual states, the Church as an institution and in its ideology eschewed quite explicitly the modern democratic world, while its prescriptions for that world involved a return to the pre-Revolutionary era (Burns 1990).[9] In some ways the Catholic criticism of modernity was the most comprehensive provided by the right prior to the emergence of Nazism, and it was one which maintained its influence thereafter. Not only was Catholic ideology opposed to the progressive temper of modernity, but also to its decidedly Protestant and democratic nature which remained antithetical to Catholicism (Hirschman 1991).

By 1945, this approach was no longer politically viable and the emergence of Christian Democracy represented a response by lay Catholics to democratic politics. This involved a break with the politics of the Papacy, which continued to favour more authoritarian alternatives. The Pope's response to democratic government was contingent and his view of relations between church and state remained traditional (Pope Pius XII 1954).

However, by 1945, events were already moving outside the Pope's power to influence them. Catholics had participated in the resistance movements in Italy, France, the Netherlands and Belgium for example. One consequence of this was a renewed relationship between Catholic politics and patriotic nationalism. In the unlikely event of the Pope insisting on a closed Catholic polity similar to the pre-war period, it would have been opposed by Catholics in a number of these states (Whyte 1981: 76–99). This was the weak point of authoritarian Catholicism after 1945. A significant proportion of Catholics now believed that traditional denominational politics were no longer appropriate. There was a growing insistence on the part of lay Catholics in Austria, France, Germany and Italy that their political involvement should change in a democratic direction. These parties did not cease to be religious, but narrowly confessional politics was weakened due to the need to make 'catch all' appeals for votes.

Christian Democracy provided the incentive in a number of states for Catholic politics to break out of the 'closed' system which had previously characterised it and to form alliances with other religious groups (Girvin 1994: 96–126; Van Kersbergen 1995; Kalyvas 1996). Although it was not the intention of Christian Democratic parties to assist the secularisation of their societies, this was one of the paradoxical outcomes of their success in mobilising religious voters in a democratic political system. Another was the widespread acceptance of constitutional government in the two decades after 1945. Christian Democracy was instrumental in assuring that religious voters would accept these developments, in part because in most states Christian Democratic parties contributed to the constitution building process. This is not to claim that the existence of a liberal constitutional order supported by Christian Democracy dissolved the

clerical/anti-clerical cleavage or completely shattered the link between religion and authoritarian politics, but it is to claim that such support sustained the institutional framework for achieving this. Notwithstanding the occasional confrontations over traditional issues such as education or divorce, left and right and clerical and anti-clerical forces largely accepted the institutional and constitutional arrangements agreed after 1945.

The way in which constitutions were written after 1945 reinforced this change. The Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany is an important case in point. Articles four and five provide traditional liberal rights of faith and expression, while article six on marriage, the family and the status of children provides special protection for the family and the mother, while granting equality between legitimate and illegitimate children. Article seven provides a framework for education. These articles, especially numbers six and seven, reflect the influence of Christian Democracy, but not the assertion of a narrowly denominational approach.

A contrast can be drawn with the Italian Constitution which from the outset exhibited strong tensions between the liberal commitment to a secular state, Christian Democratic influence on educational matters, the family and the church and a left-wing influence on economic rights. In contrast to the German example, the Italian constitution was at best an uneasy compromise between antagonistic forces and one which remained inherently unstable. There was considerable tension from the outset between article eight which secured the equality of all religions and article seven which recognised a special position for the Catholic Church in accordance with the 1929 Concordat. After its 1948 election victory the Christian Democratic party (DC), notwithstanding the secular basis of the Constitution, used the resources of the state to extend Catholic power in Italy. A further comparison can be noted with the continued imposition of specific religious norms through an alliance between church and state in Spain and Portugal.

Despite these anomalies, the European post-war order was essentially a secular one in political terms. The electoral strength of Christian Democracy led to the acceptance of religion as a key component of political competition in a number of West European states. Despite this, religion itself had become liberalised, if not yet secularised. Religion was now reflected through the competitive political system. One of the paradoxes of European politics in the 1950s was that, alongside the secularisation of the political system, it is also possible to identify the continuing growth of parties and movements with a strong religious component.

In effect, and perhaps with the exception of the DC in Italy, Christian Democracy involved a break with older traditions of political Catholicism, an acceptance of some aspects of liberal secularism, especially pluralism. There was also a recognition that the liberal democratic system could protect the interests of religion and in some cases advance it. By integrating religious and right-wing voters into a constitutional system, Christian Democracy laid the basis for the stability of European politics and the weakening of its own denominational character. It is ironic that the successful implementation of the Christian Democratic

programme probably contributed indirectly to the weakening of religion as a denominator of political identity. These changes also forced the Papacy to recognise that its anti-liberalism could no longer be sustained without modification, something particularly accepted by John XXIII who recognised the need for accommodation and acted decisively by calling the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s.

Social change and European secularisation since the 1960s

By the early 1960s, a number of factors appeared in European politics which accelerated the process of change already under way since 1945. Of particular significance was the attenuation of the conflicts between left and right as well as those between clerical and secular opinion which had characterised political divisions for the previous fifty years. Even the Cold War settled down to ritualistic exchanges. It might not have been the 'end of ideology', but Bell was correct in his view that the old conflicts had been largely exhausted. This had been facilitated by the success of liberal democracy after 1945 in promoting consensual politics (Bell 1960; Girvin 1994: 190–7).

Furthermore, the party systems of many European countries increasingly reflected the consensual and 'catch-all' nature of political competition, drawing the main political parties into a policy environment which valued consensus over conflict. Rapid economic growth, affluence, urbanisation and industrialisation as well as the transformation of educational opportunities further enhanced this for those born after 1945 (Van Deth 1995; Inglehart 1990: 177–87).

It is not necessary to accept Inglehart's post-materialist model to recognise that change was accelerating in Europe by the 1960s and that this was having a growing impact on traditional values, political identification and social behaviour. What occurred during the 1960s was that social change weakened further those groups which had traditionally been most supportive of religion and who were most likely to vote for Christian Democratic or conservative parties. In Protestant countries a process of disengagement from the traditional churches was already under way by 1945 or shortly after. In Catholic countries the pattern appeared a little later, usually in the 1960s, but the trends were similar (McLeod 1981: 132–43; Jagodzinski and Dobbelaere 1995).

In political terms, this aided the process of secularising politics in that issues that contributed to tension between religion and politics were either reconciled, neutralised or they disappeared. By this time, the traditional confrontation between Catholic and secular politics in Belgium evaporated and was replaced by political mobilisation around issues of language and national identity. In France, the Fifth Republic successfully defused the historic hostility between Catholicism and anti-clericalism, while creating a new democratic consensus. In the Netherlands, social change weakened the pillarised nature of the system, leading to a more secular policy. In Italy, the process was slower, but already by the late 1960s, Catholics, liberals and socialists (but not communists) were co-operating in government, while promising a more inclusive and open political

system. In each case, the process was different due to the specific nature of the political culture, but in all, with the exception of Ireland, there was an appreciable decline in traditional norms and values associated with religion and a weakening in religious participation among all groups (Girvin 1994: 190–206; Deprez and Vos 1998).

These changes do not undermine the traditional finding that those who attend church regularly are more inclined to support a party on the right than one on the left, but if the number of regular churchgoers is declining, this will affect the potential catchment area for traditional parties on the right. This can be seen in Italy in 1990 where 65 per cent of regularly practising Catholics voted for centre-right parties, while those Catholics who attended church infrequently were more inclined to vote for parties on the left. In the Netherlands, 62 per cent of regularly practising Catholics and 55 per cent of regular Protestant churchgoers supported the CDA, but in a context where regular churchgoing is a minority activity. Regular churchgoers in the Netherlands account for 27 per cent, while those with no religion account for 43 per cent. A similar pattern is discernible in West Germany in 1990 where there is a 30-point difference in support for the CDU-CSU between regular churchgoing Catholics and those who attend infrequently. In Germany, as in the Netherlands, regular churchgoers account for only 25 per cent of the sample.[10]

However, one should not draw the conclusion that such social trends necessarily advantage left-wing political parties. While a decline in churchgoing in the rural population and within specific social groups such as housewives will affect the traditional right catchment area, this sector of the political spectrum is not condemned to oblivion. Conservative and Christian Democratic parties are political agents and they can continue to attract support from various groups within society. However, what these changes do imply is that Christian Democratic or Conservative parties can no longer depend on an integrated religious and traditional political base to launch their political appeals. As a consequence of these changes, the secular basis for politics has been extended further.[11] The success of Christian Democratic and conservative parties during the 1980s confirms the right's ability to benefit from social change in a more secular era.

If we return to the definition given by MacIntyre earlier in this chapter, there are relatively few atheists in Europe (4.9 per cent in the European Values Survey). However, this does not exhaust the question of measuring the extent of secularisation in Europe. Most of the institutions and the constitutions of the member states of the European Union are secular to the extent that church and state are separate or, if not formally so, the political impact of establishment is negligible. The Swedish church has been disestablished in 2000, while in Britain there is a campaign to abolish the 1701 Act of Settlement prohibition on the sovereign marrying a Catholic. The exception within the European Union is Greece, where more traditional church-state norms are maintained, in contrast with the new constitution of Spain which is comparable with the secularist variant in the rest of the European Union.

The data available on religious identity, values and church-going support the view that politics in Europe is essentially a secular exercise. Table 2.1 provides information on church attendance in nine European states and Northern Ireland in 1990.

Approximately a third of the overall sample never go to church, just over a third do so once a month or more and the remainder go infrequently. While 74 per cent of the sample belong to a religious denomination, only 34 per cent attend church on a regular basis (at least once a month). Seventy-five per cent reported that they were brought up in a religious fashion and 60 per cent consider themselves to be religious.

There is a contradiction here between identifying with a religion and the practice of that religion. About a quarter of those interviewed are secular in the sense that they never attend church and do not believe that it is important to hold a religious service for rites of passage. Between a third and forty per cent continue to attend church regularly and consider religion to be important in their daily life. Slightly less than a third (32.4 per cent) believe that 'life is meaningful only because God exists', whereas 48 per cent reject this proposition. This does not entail that life has no meaning (only 5.3 per cent assent to this), though a majority of respondents agreed with the view that 'the meaning of life is that you try to get the best out of it', a view which seems to have very little religious significance.

The secular trend in opinion can be located in respondents' disposition towards the church on a number of levels. A slight majority believe that the church is giving adequate answers to people's spiritual needs, but not to their moral needs, family life or social problems. Now this need not entail a secular

Table 2.1 Frequency of church attendance, 1990[i]

	Frequently	*Infrequently*	*Never*
Total	34.2	43.0	32.2
Belgium	30.4	25.4	43.9
France	16.8	30.8	51.7
West Germany	33.9	46.2	19.7
Britain	23.4	30.4	46.2
Northern Ireland	68.0	18.1	13.2
Ireland	87.4	8.6	3.7
Italy	52.7	31.1	15.0
Netherlands	30.2	26.5	42.8
Portugal	41.2	36.7	22.2
Spain	43.0	28.1	28.6

Note: The question was: 'Apart from weddings, funerals and christenings, about how often do you attend religious services these days?' The table excludes 'other' responses and therefore does not total exactly 100 per cent.

i 'Frequently' includes those who attend church service at least once a month or more; 'Infrequently' includes those who only attend occasionally.

Source: European Values Survey, 1990.

viewpoint; after all, the respondents might want the church to do this but they are disappointed with the response. However, when asked directly whether it is proper for churches to speak out on specific matters, a majority consider it appropriate for them to do so on disarmament, racial discrimination, third world problems, euthanasia and the environment, but only 21 per cent thought that this should be the case in respect of government policy and 33 per cent in the case of homosexuality.

Respondents make a distinction between the right of the church to have a voice and actual support for a church position on individual issues. On abortion, for example, 49 per cent consider it proper for the church to have an opinion, but attitudes towards abortion among Catholics, in particular, diverge significantly from the official position of the church. Ninety per cent of all respondents supported a woman's right to have an abortion if her health was at risk, while 75 per cent agreed that an abortion was justified if the child would be born physically handicapped. Despite the liberalisation of opinion on these moral issues, attitudes to specific moral issues remain dependent on the intensity of the individual's religious involvement. This is particularly true with issues such as abortion and homosexuality. However, attention should also be focused on those who are infrequent churchgoers or who never go to church, whose opinions tend to be more liberal than regular church goers.[12]

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that European politics has become secularised over the past fifty years. The religious dimension in politics has largely disappeared and the constitutional-institutional arrangements in most states now reflect the pluralistic and tolerant norms at the heart of liberal democracy. This outcome has been facilitated by the democratisation of European politics, although secularisation has been one of the unintended consequences of this. The decline in church attendance, especially among women, has also contributed to this outcome as has the urbanisation of European life. Developments in the Republic of Ireland over the next decade will provide a further test of this hypothesis, because the patterns identified in this chapter have appeared in Ireland later than in other European states. Poland will provide a similar test.

It seems likely that in the new century religion will be less salient in the political realm, that political mobilisation will concentrate on issues other than religion but that some issues with a moral content will continue to draw on religion and have a political impact, if a diminishing one.

The history of religion and politics since the Enlightenment shows that the relationship between the two in specific cases is often extremely complex and varied, and that the links are rarely pre-determined. These complex and varied forms can be appreciated further in the detailed analyses contained in the chapters which follow.

Notes

1 Chadwick suggests that churches have not been especially stagnant in the context of new ideas and that a distinction needs to be made between secularisation and the evidence that churches had on many occasions adjusted to new ideas and scientific advances.
2 If this definition is accepted, then there is very little evidence of secularism in Europe.
3 According to Berger secularisation

> affects the totality of cultural life and of ideas, and may be observed in the decline of religious contents in the arts, in philosophy, in literature and, most important of all, in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world.

4 Inglehart (1990: 192–3) considers that the post-materialist is more concerned with the meaning of life than materialists, but attributed this to the decline in religion generally.
5 Similar concerns have been expressed by Gray (1995) and by the current British Prime Minister Tony Blair on numerous occasions.
6 Keddie (1997) suggests that the export of secularism to non-European areas was a consequence of local elite considerations and its content may have changed as a consequence.
7 See 'What's God got to do with the American Experiment?' *Brookings Review* 17, 2 (1999) (special issue devoted to discussion of religion and politics in the United States).
8 See also the Corporatist Constitutions of Austria (1934) and Portugal (1933 and 1935) in Ehler and Morall (1954: 496–516). The absence of some of these features from the Irish Constitution was one of the reasons for Papal reservations (Gallagher 1996).
9 The Italian Christian Democrat De Gasperi at times highlighted this association: 'Should not even we be worried, we who lean for support on the Catholics, so amenable to dictatorial government and to Conservative ideas? . . . In the light of Catholic history, we are not justified in asking people to take it for granted that we stand for freedom. Catholics have always been divided on this point.' Cited in Riccardi (1987); see also Cornwell (1999: 336–59).
10 This paragraph is based on data contained in the International Social Survey Programme and is reported on extensively in Heath, Taylor and Toka (1993: 49–80).
11 Some of the electoral strategies adopted by the centre-right during the 1980s and early 1990s have been examined in Girvin (1994: 206–18).
12 This is based on secondary analysis of the European Values Study (1990). I am grateful to Professor Chris Whelan for providing me with the data. See also Heath, Taylor and Toka (1993); Portelli (1994: 179–99); Giddens (1994: 84–5); 'Abortion, Morality, Law and Politics' *Parliamentary Affairs* 47, 2 (1994) (special issue).

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3 Reading the runes

The religious factor in Scandinavian electoral politics

John Madeley

Introduction

In September 1997, Kjell Magne Bondevik became the first leader of a Christian party in the Nordic area to be elected Prime Minister in a general election. Some twenty-five years earlier his predecessor as leader of Norway's Christian People's Party, Lars Korvald, had also briefly acted as Prime Minister but only because the majority Labour government of the day had resigned from office as a result of having failed to deliver a 'yes' vote in the country's first referendum on entry to the European Community.

Bondevik's appointment in 1997, by contrast, followed an election in which the Christian People's Party attained a higher vote than ever before in its sixty-four year history, outshone its centrist allies (the Centre and Liberal parties), and successfully projected him as the people's choice for Prime Minister. In addition, as on the previous occasion, tensions between the Centre and Conservative parties over relations with Europe also ruled out the possibility of a broader non-socialist coalition. Although the Bondevik minority coalition consequently enjoyed the narrowest parliamentary base of any government since Korvald, there was no denying that the Christian People's Party had finally arrived at the centre of Norwegian public life after a long pilgrimage, a journey which had started among a group of religious-political revivalists in Norway's Bible-belt (in the south and west of the country) in the early 1930s.

The significance of the Bondevik administration's appointment is easily over-stated however. Although it proved to have a greater longevity than most commentators originally expected by lasting two-and-a-half years in total, it finally succumbed in March 2000 when, against its urging on environmentalist grounds, the Storting voted to proceed with the construction of gas-fired power stations.

On the other hand, the Norwegian Christian People's Party's success was not the only highpoint in this Indian summer of Scandinavian Christian Democracy. Elsewhere since the late 1950s, other Christian parties had been founded in imitation of the Norwegian example and they too achieved a new prominence in the 1980s and 1990s.

Denmark's Christian People's Party and Finland's Finnish Christian League have never quite escaped the electoral relegation zone but, as is evident from

coalition theory, size is far from everything, especially for parties in the centre of the party spectrum. In the Danish case, the party benefited from the fine parliamentary balance between left and right which has gifted them the opportunity to exercise influence. On a number of occasions up to 1982 they engaged with some success in the complicated parliamentary game of 'majority-mongering' and they cut deals with both non-socialist and Social Democratic minority cabinets. Finally, in 1982, despite suffering a decline in support since the mid-1970s, the party served in government as part of Schlüter's 'Four-Leaf Clover' administration which lasted until 1986. In a similar manner, a decade later, the small Finnish party served in the Aho coalition in Finland from 1992 to 1995.

It was in Sweden however that Scandinavian Christian Democracy achieved its latest and most striking breakthrough. Having failed over twenty-five years to surmount the 4 per cent threshold for representation in the Riksdag, it garnered over 7 per cent in the 1991 election and immediately entered the Bildt-led non-socialist majority coalition.[1] Like the other members of that coalition, after a turbulent three years, it suffered at the subsequent polls – only just surmounting the representation threshold – but resumed its rise in 1998 when it almost trebled its share of the vote, taking 11.8 per cent.

It is curious that in the decade which saw a general recession in Christian Democratic fortunes across its heartlands in continental Europe, there should have been a resurgence, however modest, in the previously unpromising territories of the far north. Could it be that while secularisation, at least on this measure of electoral performance, continues to advance in mainland Europe, an opposite, de-secularising trend is evident on the Continent's northern periphery? Are the relatively new stirrings in the Nordic area mainly significant for negative reasons, as the previously hegemonic position of social democratic and other political traditions is degraded by economic globalisation and its consequences, the very factors which further south have impacted on the more established Christian Democratic traditions of the Continent?

This chapter attempts to provide some answers to these questions by examining the heritage and character of Nordic Lutheran secularity, the contradictory nature of the Christian parties in Scandinavia and the role of religion in their recent electoral efflorescence.

The Lutheran background

All the Nordic countries belong to (and, indeed, collectively constitute) Europe's sole mono-confessional Protestant region (Martin 1978; Madeley 1982). Under the rule of respectively the old Danish and the then-new Swedish royal houses, the two halves of the Nordic area (*Western*: Denmark, Norway and Iceland and *Eastern*: Sweden and Finland) were completely Lutheranised in the sixteenth century (Derry 1979). Unlike in other parts of Northern Europe where the Reformation settlement was also successfully, if less comprehensively, institutionalised, Roman Catholicism was completely eliminated among the native populations of these northern territories (Hunter 1965: 38).

The Reformation was the direct outcome of successful dynastic projects to strengthen the Crown by engrossing the considerable wealth of the Church and incorporating its educated manpower as a corps of ecclesiastical civil servants within the developing structures of the state. The Church was, at a blow, converted from rival power to powerful resource: *pietas firmat regnam* (piety strengthens rule) as the telling motto of Denmark's Christian IV ran. Thoroughgoing systems of Erastian Church-government were introduced, producing an effective nationalisation of the Church in the different territories, excluding all claims of papal jurisdiction, taking over the great accumulation of Church property, dissolving the monasteries and the religious orders and reducing the remaining ('secular') clergy to the status of Crown servants.

Seen from the Roman Catholic angle, this amounted to wholesale secularisation, indeed the virtual elimination or subjugation of the Church by impious and heretical monarchs. Seen from the Lutheran-Evangelical angle on the other hand, it involved the meritorious intervention of 'Christian Princes' in the cause of godly reform, bringing about a return to the simplicities of the gospel and developing new systems of religious discipline, which extended to all the king's subjects and not just to the clergy.

On these terms the Reformation was to be seen, not as the secularisation of the Church and its property, but as an attempt at the 'Christianisation' of whole populations, the opening-up of religious life from its confines within religious orders and confraternities, and its inculcation as a rule for all subjects whatever their calling.

The stability of the Reformation settlement, once it had been secured, rested on the nature of the bargain that it represented: the Crown would support the Church in its spiritual mission if the Church, insofar as it represented a separate quantity at all, would in return support the Crown in the exercise of its secular authority. The state's authority over the Church and over the whole population by means of the Church was being exercised in such a way in Scandinavia as to make religious uniformity and conformity ever more complete. Scandinavian historians and others refer to the *enhetsprincip* (unification principle) on which this system of religious monopoly and homogeneity was based.

From the late eighteenth century, however, other pietist movements of various sorts emerged here as elsewhere among the Protestant populations of Europe and North America. This time, pietism often took the form of lay revivalism and attempts to use the police powers of the confessional state led to more or less intense – and even, on occasion, violent – local conflicts. Laestadians across the north of Norway, Sweden and Finland, Haugians in Southern Norway and Grundtvigians in Denmark, each eventually managed to defy the authorities successfully and persuade them by their stubbornness to dismantle the mechanisms by which the official churches' religious monopoly had been upheld for so long.

While no basis for Protestant–Catholic differences survived among the indigenous populations after the Reformation period, other confessional traditions did eventually achieve a degree of representation. From the eighteenth century

various representatives of alternative Protestant traditions began to register their appearance, most of them, as in the case of the Moravians, Quakers, Methodists and Baptists, taking their inspiration from abroad (Eidberg 1995).

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Pentecostalism established its first bridgehead in Europe in the Nordic countries, while from the 1960s, the presence of groups of immigrants with, in particular, a Muslim background and loyalty, further extended the confessional range of religious pluralism. Finally, the emergence in the 1980s of new, more or less exotic, religious movements, added a latter-day element of diversity to the marginal, if colourful, religious fringe, particularly evident in the urban areas.

That the degree of pluralism that this fringe contributes to the Nordic religious scene is, in comparative terms, relatively small is in part because it was only in the twentieth century that positive guarantees of religious freedom were finally secured.[2] The slowness and tardiness of the process of the progressive deregulation of religion – the ban on Jesuits entering the country was only finally removed in Norway in 1951, over the protests of the Christian People's Party – was partly motivated by little more than the unwillingness of state elites to bear the costs of regulating the religious market.

The Christian parties in context

The family resemblances between the party systems of the Nordic area, particularly among the core Scandinavian states of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, have been strong ever since they first took form (after the First World War) (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rokkan 1966). The Scandinavian party system format or model had three distinctive features until approximately 1970: a dominant left–right axis, Social Democratic parties whose strength far outweighed that of any rivals to their right or their left, and the existence, alongside the Liberals and Conservatives of agrarian parties in the centre of the party spectrum (Berglund and Lindström 1978). By adding the small but occasionally important Communist parties on the far left, the five-party spectrum can be presented thus:

Communist – Social Democrat – Agrarian – Liberal – Conservative

This ideal-typical model was nowhere perfectly realised even during the halcyon days of Social Democratic hegemony after the Second World War, although it was closely approximated in Sweden between 1948 and 1964. In Denmark, Finland and Norway other parties – ideologically or ethnically or (in the Norwegian case) religiously distinct – complicated the picture, even during the first postwar decades of electoral stability.

The changes which, since the 1960s in particular, have modified this pattern include the relative decline of the Social Democratic parties and the transmutation of the agrarian parties into generic centre parties in an episodically successful attempt to widen their appeal beyond the agrarian special interest sector.

More interesting in the present context however, is the emergence or strengthening in all the Nordic countries of other political dimensions in addition to the left-right one, as signalled by the emergence and development of entirely new parties. In the late 1950s, there emerged in Denmark and Norway left-socialist parties which have since become permanent fixtures, taking over from the moribund small communist parties. They also articulated other sources of cleavage, including regional divisions, general anti-establishment opinion and a new culture-radicalism. Latterly, they became the principal channels for environmentalist protest in addition. In Finland and, to a lesser extent Sweden, where communist parties had once been larger and more securely established during the post-war period, green parties emerged alongside them to represent this new, environmentalist dimension of politics.

A second new group of parties, which have in part thriven by counter-opposition to the emergent left-socialist/green pole, is represented by the neo-liberal parties, such as Denmark's Progress Party which pioneered the trend in 1973. In that turbulent year it won 16 per cent of the vote and became the second-largest party in the system within a year of its founding. Norway soon followed the Danish example, as did Sweden around 1990 when the New Democracy Party for a short time joined the 'tax-welfare backlash' trend. All of these parties have suffered damaging splits, usually in connection with bitter leadership struggles – and the Swedish party paid the penalty of virtual oblivion after just one three-year parliamentary term as a 6 per cent party, despite attempts to save itself by appealing to anti-immigration sentiments. As champions of general deregulation and opponents of 'nanny state' controls on alcohol, each party also marked itself strongly in opposition to the new growth of Christian parties, which represented a third new departure from the classic left–right model.

As already noted above, the Norwegian Christian People's Party had earlier pioneered this trend, having been founded as a regional party in 1933 in the south-west of the country, and emerging as a significant, national party in 1945 (when, it will be noted, Christian Democracy as such was also emerging for the first time as a major political force across Continental Europe). As Table 3.1 indicates, Finland followed the example in 1958, then Sweden in 1964 and, finally, Denmark in 1970.

There were a number of common factors in the circumstances which gave rise to the foundation of the parties in each country. In Norway, the repeal of prohibition, the production of a 'blasphemous' play at the National Theatre and a polemical assault on 'Christianity as the Tenth Plague' by a prominent socialist intellectual, coincided to stiffen the resolve of leading revivalist circles in and around Bergen to desert the Liberals, and launch their own Christian People's Party (CPP) (Lomeland 1979). Their instant local success, which resulted in the election of a well-known leader of one of the major inner-mission organisations, was repeated at the following Storting election and plans were soon laid for a national launch. This was delayed by five years of war and occupation, but when it finally occurred in 1945, the unusual

Table 3.1 The Nordic Christian-Democratic parties (in chronological order of their foundation)

Norway:	*Kristelig Folkeparti* (Christian People's Party, founded 1933)
Finland:	*Suomen Kristillinen Liitto* (Finland's Christian League, fd. 1958) *Finnlands Kristen Liga* (Finland's Christian League)
Sweden:	*Kristen Demokratisk Samling* (Christian Democratic Rally, fd. 1964); (from 1991:) *Kristdemokratiska Samhällspartiet* (Christian Democratic Social Party); (from 1996:) *Kristdemokraterna* (Christian Democrats)
Denmark:	*Kristeligt Folkeparti* (Christian People's Party, founded 1970)

circumstances of national liberation and a widespread determination decisively to reject the totalitarian horrors of right and left extremes gave the party a fair wind. Of the many attempted new political formations of the 1930s and 1940s, the CPP alone succeeded in establishing itself.

In Finland, where after the war the newly legalised Communist party took almost 25 per cent of the vote, the fear of domination by atheist political forces was combined with a characteristic evangelical distaste for lax controls on alcohol and salacious publications (Arter 1994: 309–10).

Eight years later in Sweden there were more specific concerns about promiscuity, particularly among young people, the length of time devoted to religious education in public secondary schools, the call for stricter film censorship and even a controversy about whether it was proper for the National Board of Social Affairs to advise against children attending certain Pentecostal meetings (Karvonen 1994: 125). It was the extraordinary success of a petition campaign, attracting the signatures of over a quarter of the total population, in support of maintaining the number of hours devoted to religious education that provided the greatest encouragement to the new party's pioneers (Henningsen 1994: 105).

In 1970, when the Danish Christian People's Party was launched, the immediate precipitating events were two pieces of legislation: one introduced by a Conservative minister of justice in 1969 making for an almost complete removal of controls of pornography, the other a year later introducing abortion on demand (Eysell 1994: 351). In the case of Finland, Sweden and Denmark another element of communality was, on the one hand, the existence of the Norwegian example and, on the other, the active assistance of the Norwegian party which assisted at the birth of all the other parties.

At the time of their foundation each of the parties made great play of opposing the 'de-Christianisation' of society, campaigning against the relaxation of laws governing alcohol, abortion and pornography and fighting for the defence of Christian values generally in national life. Their tendency to emphasise these 'core issues' (*hjertesaker*, as the Norwegian Christians call them) was what distinguished them from all other parties to the left and right with whom activist

Christians had become disillusioned. It is clear that their emergence was associated with many Christian activists entering politics for the first time; even in the Norwegian and Danish cases, where the parties were in large part the product of splits from, respectively, established Liberal and Conservative parties, they were greeted as providing a political home for Christians, who had previously felt homeless. It seems likely that for these voters and members at least the new parties signified a turning from relative political quietism, of a sort often associated with pietism, to relative political activism.

The Norwegian party had a number of religious-political forerunners going as far back as the political Haugians in the first half of the nineteenth century and can be shown to represent the translation into politics of a series of broadly coinciding cleavages which were historically deeply entrenched (Rokkan 1967; Madeley 1994). Partly despite, and partly because of this, there was within the revivalist circles associated with the new party in 1933 a sense that politics belonged to 'the things of this world' which were usually best avoided or only taken on for good reason and with great caution. That good cause existed could be argued on the basis of a clear and present danger to Christian values. That caution would be exercised was thought to be assured by the fact that the party pioneers were trusted leaders from within the circles of religious activists.

The Christian party voters

Survey evidence indicates that support for the Christian parties comes predominantly from religious activists associated with either the evangelical wing of the state churches, typically organised in a range of voluntary mission associations, or dissenters of an evangelical bent (Valen 1981). In each case, the regionally differentiated pattern of support broadly matched that of the religious map: thus, in Norway the CPP was strongest in the 'Bible belt' of the south and west; in Finland the main strongholds of the SKL (*Suamen Kristilinen Liitto*) were in rural parts of the south; in Sweden, the area around Jönköping, famous for its revivalist history, was the Christian party's principal homebase; while in Denmark it was the west of Jutland, which provided the most secure footing for the Danish CPP (Karvonen 1994: 129).

These geographical patterns also reflect the fact that the parties, in their origins at least, presented themselves as movements of the periphery, engaged in the defence of a subset of Christian cultural values, which retained greatest support there. In the Norwegian case the CPP at the start was also a vehicle for the defence of a wider set of cultural values of the periphery, complicated as it was by the extra factor of the linguistic struggle (Rokkan 1967). The Norwegian case, as the longest-established and the strongest case of Scandinavian Christian Democracy, has been comprehensively researched using both aggregate and survey evidence since the 1950s and the connections with religious membership and activity thoroughly documented. The most important single predictor of the CPP vote in the areas of its greatest strength is membership, and attendance at the meetings, of missionary and other religious organisations. Accordingly, the

Christian parties are not so much Church parties – indeed the official Church leadership typically make a point of distancing itself from any association with the parties – as parties of a religious 'awkward squad' of rather troublesome activists and enthusiasts whose presence tends to make for tension and division.

As Table 3.2 shows, there have been distinct variations in the strength of the Christian vote in Scandinavia across time as much as space. As Karvonen comments: 'In Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the Christian electoral peak coincides with protests against the dominant (i.e. Social Democratic) party. Generally speaking, these electoral successes can be explained with reference to the fact that the parties managed to capitalise – in addition to the original moral appeal – on a more political protest' (Karvonen 1994: 128).[3]

In doing so they were of course in competition for much of the most recent period with other new political formations on the far left and far right of the political spectrum, namely, the left socialist and so-called progress parties respectively. The Swedish party was actually called New Democracy. It can be argued that the mutual opposition of these three parties, supplementing as they did the old triangle of opposed economic power groupings which formed the core of the established party systems, collectively reflect and represent the emergence of a 'new politics' (Jenssen 1993). As the least new of the three, the Christians tend to be seen as the principal opponents of the other two: thus, for example, in 1985, on the moral-religious factor identified by Aardal and Valen, '[Socialist Left] voters here constitute an ideological counter-pole [to the Christians], with the Progress Party hard on their heels' (Aardal and Valen 1989: 67). Certainly, the Christian party has throughout been strongly critical of the cultural radicalism of the socialist left with its strong feminist commitment, particularly in their support of free abortion. The Progress parties in each country were seen as almost equally objectionable by groups associated with the Christian parties, because of their neo-liberal commitment *inter alia* to the relaxation of restrictive censorship and alcohol laws. Counter to both these political trends, the Christians argued for a return to the moral standards which had once been promoted in the schools and which once had underwritten the established legal codes; as such, they tend to be seen as representing pre-industrial in opposition to post-industrial values (Van Deth and Scarbrough 1995: 431). Occasionally, the Christian parties are painted as 'out on their own', representing a uni-polar deviation from the other parties on a religious-moral dimension of their own devising (Aardal and Valen 1995: 88). Even if this is largely so, it is clear that the existence of post-modern antagonists on the idealist left and the materialist right have helped to rationalise and justify this position.

The issue of abortion has been important in this respect in each of the Nordic countries since the early 1970s. Its prominence has varied considerably, however, dependent in part on the degree to which other issues, such as nuclear power or tax reform or relations with Europe, have competed with it. In Norway the electoral earthquake of 1973, which, *inter alia*, boosted the standing of the left-socialists and the Christians, and ushered the Progress party into the system, was marked by the salience of tax reform and European issues in addition to abortion. Each of these were mentioned as important issues by, respectively 25,

Table 3.2 The Christian parties of the Nordic countries in parliamentary elections, 1933–99

	Norway Storting			*Sweden Riksdag*			*Denmark Folketing*			*Finland Eduskunta*		
	Yr	*V%*	*Seats*	*Yr*	*V%*	*Seats*	*Yr*	*V%*	*Seats*	*Yr*	*V%*	*Seats*
1930s	1933	0.7	1									
	1936	1.2	2									
1940s	1945	7.9	8									
	1949	8.4	9									
1950s	1953	10.5	14									
	1957	10.2	12							1958	0.2	0
1960s	1961	9.6	15	1964	1.9	0				1962	0.8	0
	1965	8.1	13							1966	0.4	0
	1969	9.4	14	1968	1.5	0						
1970s							1971	2.0	0	1970	1.1	1
	1973	12.3	20	1973	1.8	0	1973	4.0	7	1972	2.5	4
							1975	5.3	9	1975	3.3	9
	1977	12.4	22	1976	1.4	0	1977	3.4	6			
				1979	1.4	0	1979	2.6	5	1979	4.8	9
1980s	1981	8.9	15	1982	1.9	0	1981	2.3	4			
	1985	8.3	16	1985	2.5*	1	1984	2.7	5	1983	3.0	3
							1987	2.4	4	1987	2.6	5
	1989	8.5	14	1988	2.9	0	1988	2.0	4			
1990s				1991	7.1	26	1990	2.7	4	1991	3.1	8
	1993	7.9	13	1994	4.0	14	1994	1.8	0	1995	3.0	7
	1997	13.7	25	1998	11.8	42	1998	2.5	4	1999	4.2	10

Note: In Sweden there has been an electoral threshold of 4 per cent since 1970. In Denmark the threshold has effectively stood close to 2 per cent since 1960.
*KDS/CDA share of vote estimated to have been cast for electoral alliance with Centre Party.

26 and 26 per cent of respondents (Jenssen 1993: 68). At the two following elections, however, in 1977 and in 1981, abortion stood alone as the issue mentioned by most survey respondents. As another glance at Table 3.2 reveals, the salience of the issue coincided with an initial upswing in support and then a decline in 1981, when differences between the Christians and Conservatives on the issue threatened the likelihood of a right-centre majority government gaining office. After the election, the CPP did in fact refuse to join such a government, because of its commitment to reforming the abortion legislation. It only relented eighteen months later, after a special party congress had effectively accepted that the absence of a Storting majority on the issue meant that such a reform was not then feasible. While the commitment to reform the abortion law remains, it has since become less central as other areas of moral concern, such as bio-ethics and genetic engineering, have become more prominent.

The Christian parties, in their early years at least, had a tendency to concentrate on what were for them, 'core' moral-religious issues to the exclusion of others;

tending to present themselves as single-issue (or at least narrow issue range) parties. Listhaug identifies Norway's CPP, even in its maturity, as a 'core-oriented' party in the sense that the party's programme and ideology was 'primarily oriented to serve the interests and values of a specific social group' (Listhaug 1989: 161). The group so indicated is identified not by particular social class characteristics however – the Christian parties like their sister-parties on the Continent, are all cross-class – but by its association with the activist (mainstream) religious subculture. Despite this characteristic, the parties have, over time, adopted policy stands in a number of areas which, taken together, have given them a broader, but still distinctive, profile.

Thus, in each country, the Christian parties have been strong supporters of aid to Third World countries, and when they have accepted government office, have often taken the aid ministries. This was the case in the two roughly contemporary 1990s coalitions in Sweden and Finland. Their commitment to the support of the old, the sick and the handicapped is typically presented as a Christian moral obligation, rather than as a prudentially sound approach to social insurance. Their generally strong endorsement of policies of environmental protection has been argued in terms of Christian notions of 'stewardship' of the world's resources.[4]

On other prominent issues of the day, for example on relations with Europe, they have often been divided, however (Mathieu 1999). This is a specific area where there is a striking contrast with Continental Christian Democracy, itself the principal progenitor of the European integration project. None of the Nordic parties has been wholehearted supporters of this project. Even the membership of the Swedish party, whose leadership was most enthusiastic, was internally divided. Large sections of Christian party opinion take the view that the distinctiveness of the Lutheran heritage in the north would be put at risk.

The national Church leaderships on the other hand have tended to be in favour of European integration partly on grounds of a generalised ecumenical commitment, while for a small number of fundamentalists – here the term seems apposite – European integration is of the devil. Mathieu quotes one comment from a debate within the Danish party:

> The next two letters show how bad it can go when one uses 'Christian arguments' to put forward political views. The first posits that the Union is only protection against godless socialism, and the other portrays the Union as the forerunner of the anti-Christ.
>
> (Mathieu 1999: 163)

Here the significance of the religious provenance of the parties is not that it provides a guide to policy but that it provides a countervailing force for cohesion without which the parties might well have split, as happened for example with the Norwegian Liberal Party in 1972.

The Christian parties have a great propensity for preaching 'values', even the value of 'values' as though the religious-based values to which they conspicuously subscribe were the only ones worthy of support. Thus, for example, the Bondevik

Table 3.3 The Nordic Christian parties in government

	Prime Minister	*Term of office*
Norway:	Lyng	1963
	Borten	1965–71
	Korvald	*1972–3*
	Willoch II	1983–6
	Syse	1989–90
	Bondevik	*1997–2000*
Sweden:	Bildt	1991–4
Denmark:	Schlüter	1982–8
Finland:	Aho	1991–5

Note: The entries in italic are those for administrations with Prime Ministers from the Christian party (in this table both from Norway's Christian People's Party).

government set up a Values Commission to undertake social-scientific research on value-orientations of the Norwegians, with the hope of illuminating the nature and significance of the choices the country faced.

One of several paradoxes associated with the origins and development of the Nordic Christian parties is that they have gained impetus at precisely the times when extra increments of secularisation have been proposed. Christian Democracy in the far north is, in this sense at least, genuinely 'reactionary': it represents a defensive reaction on the part of the religiously active minorities to developments which that minority conceives as the final, fatal steps toward complete abandonment of the countries' heritage of Christian institutions, traditions and values. As such, however, it is clearly value- rather than interest-driven, whether those values are seen as pre-, or post-, industrial or materialist (Hellevik 1993).

The paradoxes of religious voting in the Nordic area

The Nordic Christian parties present a number of *prima facie* puzzles or paradoxes to the observer. In broad spatial terms, it seems curious that parties of this type should have arisen and gained significant support in a part of Europe which is particularly noteworthy for its advanced secularisation. In temporal terms, a related paradox arises from the observation that they emerged at times when already highly secularised societies were experiencing further secularising policy-shifts. These paradoxes dissolve however when the picture is painted in more detail, as seen earlier, and the historic presence, in each of these societies, of religious activist minorities is identified.

The Nordic Christian parties represent native traditions of religious activism, which have retained local strength in some of the more peripheral regions where the parties have established a moderately strong presence. These 'ten-per-cent

minorities' have proved relatively resistant to secularisation; their organisations, whether within, or outside of, the state churches, have continued to reproduce themselves. With their survival, their members have become ever more aware of a shared distinctiveness, as the rest of the national populations progressively liberate themselves from the remaining inhibitions of a restrictive Lutheran heritage. There is nothing paradoxical or surprising about minorities protesting against the abolition of arrangements and commitments which they hold dear.

More puzzling however is a second paradox that, when this protest takes the form of permanent political party organisation, instead of, say, single-interest campaigns on particular issues (such as religious education in public schools, or the relaxation of regulations governing abortion) it would seem to contravene the Lutheran rule against 'mixing' religious with political concerns. Most of the religious activists after all, especially those within the state church, present themselves as upholders of a stricter and on the whole more orthodox Lutheranism than the great generality of the membership, and yet it is they who seem most to contravene the Lutheran rule.

The Christian parties should, then, be seen to represent a protest against the conventional Lutheran understanding that the proper concerns of the state are secular matters, about which it is legitimate for Christians to disagree. When the great majority of nominally Lutheran Scandinavians vote according to their views on these secular matters, they are in fact, however paradoxically, remaining faithful to a long-standing Lutheran tradition. For them, the reason why matters relating to religion have on the whole been prevented from obtruding into the business of politics is because there has for so long been a broad national consensus on them, reflected in part in the continuing support for the national churches.

As argued elsewhere, 'the antinomies of Lutheran politics' can be illuminated by unpacking these implicitly conflicting elements within the Lutheran heritage (Madeley 1994). The revivalists in effect dissent from the conventional view by arguing that the state churches generally fail to live up to their vocation as guardians of orthodoxy. In addition, the revivalist Christians dissent from the Lutheran mainstream by claiming that faithfulness to the gospel actually requires a range of commitments in secular policy areas, thereby claiming by implication that a separation of religion and politics cannot be properly upheld, at least under prevailing conditions. Whether such a separation might be sustainable under conditions where an effective majority remained true to the national commitment to uphold the Evangelical-Lutheran religion, a commitment which is still embedded in some of the state constitutions, usually remains unanswered.

An essential feature of the politics of the small Christian parties then is that they do not reflect the impact of the religious factor as such, so much as a minority protest against a quasi-religious consensus which still prevails in the mass of the population. This is reflected in the fact that, almost universally in the Nordic area, the Christian parties are attacked by the other parties for seeming to imply that they represent, either the only real Christians, or those who are just better Christians. Seen from outside they should instead be seen as trouble-makers; cultural reactionaries who seek to undermine a broadly liberal Lutheran

consensus. The effect of such considerations is to undermine the impression, otherwise conveyed by the Rokkanian analysis to the effect that Norway's CPP represents a defence of traditional rural values against urban-driven secularisation. Rather, the CPP should be seen as the vehicle of a dissident religious subculture which, perversely perhaps, claims to be a bulwark of the nation's traditional commitment to Lutheranism.[5]

In 1979, Lijphart identified what he called a 'paradox of religious voting' in his comparative study of the relative strength of religious, linguistic and class factors in the four competitive party systems where they could be shown to be in competition with one another. He had concluded on the basis of this 'crucial experiment' that, overall, 'religion turns out to be victorious, language is a strong runner-up, and class finishes a distant third' (Lijphart 1979: 452). The relative weakness and strength respectively of class and language he found unsurprising, the inversion of the older, reverse orthodoxy having almost become a commonplace by 1979. That the religious factor should beat out the linguistic in 'a decisive trial of strength' on the other hand was a puzzle.

Though not stated in these terms, Lijphart's paradox seemed to be: why did the religious factor emerge so strongly, when the actual business of politics, in terms of what politicians argued about and conducted campaigns around, seemed to be focused on quite other, secular issues? One of the explanations he canvassed was the Lipset–Rokkan argument to the effect that modern party systems reflect the pattern of cleavages of the period when the parties came into existence.[6]

However, the case of the Nordic Christian parties cannot be accounted for in this manner, since the rise of the parties and voting along religious lines postdate the 1920s, when the party systems can be seen to have frozen along lines of the then-dominant cleavages. In Scandinavia the political agenda has been dominated, from the 1930s to the 1960s at least, by triangular material-interest struggles between labour, business and farmers. Indeed, as noted above, one of the distinguishing features of the party systems was the centrality of these struggles across the left-right spectrum.

Conclusion

In the Nordic systems the significance of the religious parties is that, although they are rooted in cleavage structures of considerable age, they failed to emerge until after the 'freezing' of the party systems. Even in the Norwegian case attempts to found a Christian party in the 1920s failed and it was only in 1933 that a small, if successful, beginning was made.[7] What needs to be explained is why such inauspicious beginnings were later rewarded with success, a success which was then copied elsewhere in the Nordic area even later. The fact that the new parties had to compete in an unfavourable environment dominated by established parties can be taken to account in part for why they failed to become more than moderately successful. The fact that they at least managed to achieve moderate success, on the other hand, can be taken as a symptom, on the one hand, of the continuing depth and strength of the religious cleavage, and on the other

of the weakening grip of the old party oligopoly from the 1960s onwards.

In this, the Christian parties can be seen to represent a new centrist pole competing against other relatively new entrants to the party system: the new left of the left-socialists and the new right of the neo-liberal progress parties. This second triangular tier in the party system can be seen to represent the emergence of a new ideological agenda for which the terms post-industrial, post-modern and post-material suggest a number of alternative descriptions and explanations.[8] Common to them all, however, is the notion that the new politics of values provides a surprisingly favourable setting for the survival of Scandinavian Christian Democracy.

Notes

1 The 4 per cent threshold had been introduced in 1970 as part of a major constitutional reform. As Table 3.2 indicates, in 1985, the party had been able to gain one seat by means of a controversial alliance with the agrarian-based Centre party. In this, the Swedish party followed the example of the Finnish Christian party which had also first gained representation (in 1970) by means of a Centre alliance.

2 How small this margin is can be doubted on the basis of polling evidence. Thus in the mid-1990s, for example, 52 per cent of Norwegians were reported to believe in the likelihood, if not the certainty, that the stars affected their personal fates (Botvar 1996: 145).

3 Finland, as Karvonen points out, lacked a dominant party comparable to the social democrats elsewhere in the Nordic area. It did for twenty-five years have a dominant political establishment centred on President Kekkonen on the other hand and entry of the SKL leader into the presidential contest in 1978 in opposition to Kekkonen represented a similar type of protest. It coincided furthermore with the party's strongest showing in the Eduskunta election the following year.

4 While, like the other parties of the centre and left, the Christians have tended to adopt environmentalist stands, it is not clear that their core constituencies are similarly supportive to the same degree. Botvar (1996) shows that New Age groups and even the folk-religious mainstream in Norway are in fact more supportive.

5 The idea that religious revivalism represents traditional rural culture arises from the fact that this tradition is locally important, even dominant, in some 'peripheral' areas. In many respects, however, revivalism can be seen as an attempt to reform traditional rural culture along puritanical lines – an attempt which has been contested throughout, not least in Norway in the conflict between the 'pure' and 'moderate' wings of Liberalism.

6 In this connection Lijphart wrote of the 'entrenched atavisms' of the party systems of Belgium, Canada and Switzerland, which had 'religiously-oriented' structures rooted in the past, the effect of which was to encourage voting along religious lines, long after political disputes over matters related to religion had ceased to be prominent.

7 For an attempt to explain why the religious cleavage was not reflected earlier at the level of the party system, see Madeley (1977).

8 It is more usual for cleavages associated with religion to be identified as pre-industrial (see, for example, Listhaug 1989: 11). That the Christian parties have done well on resisting the policies of the 'post'-parties and trends however indicates their significance in the new setting, whatever labels are used. Knutsen argues that it is not only the relatively new entrants to the party systems that are affected by the new ideological tone. Instead, he sees the post-materialist 'turn' as supplementing, rather than displacing, the left–right struggle (Knutsen 1985).

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4 A confessional cleavage resurrected?

The denominational vote in Britain

David Seawright

Introduction

Britain has a long history of politicians competing with one another to appropriate the Christian message for their own parties. In this context it was reported that William Hague, the Conservative opposition leader, would 'woo Christian voters lost to Tony Blair's brand of socialism' (*Daily Telegraph*, 24 August 1998). This speech to the Conservative Christian Fellowship was to be delivered eighteen months after the Party's disastrous defeat at the 1997 General Election. Conversely, Mr Blair had explained that it was his active Christianity that led him to reject Conservatism in favour of Labour (*Guardian*, 16 November 1998). Indeed, similar to the previous Labour leader, the late John Smith, Mr Blair is fond of emphasising his commitment to Christian Socialism, and yet any sneering doubts are directed at his socialism, not his Christianity. However, there is an ambivalence between the public and private manifestations of Mr Blair's faith, and this is clearly evident in an interview Mr Blair gave to Michael Cockerell for a BBC documentary which marked his first 1,000 days in office.

> The PM then stopped talking and shifted uneasily on his sofa. I asked him why he seemed so uncomfortable when talking about his faith. "Because you get completely misconstrued when you do. Either people think you are trying to wear God on your sleeve or paint God into the picture – and most people find that distasteful, including me. Or alternatively, it is somehow taken that you don't have a political grounding; well, I do have a political grounding".
>
> (Cockerell 2000: 13)

Wilkinson points out that 'Tony Blair has been called the most overtly Christian Prime Minister since Gladstone. Regular participation in the Eucharist, whether Anglican or Roman Catholic, is central to his faith' (Wilkinson 1999: 47). The public manifestation of Blair's faith was also quite evident in the Cockerell interview:

> I am a practising Christian and that's part of me – there's no point in denying

> it; but I suppose that what I drew from Peter Thomson [a minister of the Anglican Church of Australia] is the idea that your religious belief wasn't something that shut you away from the world but something that meant you had to go out and act.
>
> (Cockerell 2000: 13)

So why would both leaders of the major British political parties think this 'Christian appeal' to be such a positive strategy at a time when 'it is undeniable that the membership of the principal Christian denominations in this country is declining' (Davie 1995: 49)? If one were to offer a simple but venal explanation, it may be that although only 2 per cent of the population regularly attend the established Church of England, 69 per cent identify with it and 87 per cent identify themselves as Christian (Haynes 1998: 66). Moreover, Davie emphasises the increasingly evident mismatch between statistics relating to religious practice and those that relate to the persistent undercurrents of faith in God (Davie 1995: 4–5). Of course, this is a perennial problem for the analyst of religious groups in Britain: church membership, church attendance or religious affiliation mean different things to different groups. For example, the Roman Catholic Church usually includes all those baptised in the Catholic faith on its membership rolls, while other churches may just include those in communion at a specific time. For a variety of reasons, recorded attendance at church services in Britain has been unreliable, and with many churches facing the threat of closure, congregations may become 'more or less enthusiastic about emphasising the numbers they have' (ibid.: 45). As we shall see, in Britain, there is still a majority of people with a religious affiliation who regularly declare themselves in surveys to have a specific denomination. However, at best, these respondents may only practise the rights of passage of that denomination in birth, life and death ceremonies; or put colloquially: hatched, matched and dispatched.

There may thus be quite a distinctive post-war secular trend in the numbers regularly attending orthodox churches but those who believe in a deity, holding moral assumptions and values, Christian or not, are still an overwhelmingly majority. The 'dual character of British society is Christian but secular' (Haynes 1998: 69) and this is the electoral environment in which such 'general moralistic' appeals are made.

The emphasis, however, is firmly placed upon the 'general' appeal. Even if the idea of secularism is challenged, the idea of a decline in a religious cleavage is not. The received wisdom in contemporary academic circles is to discount the importance of religion as a social cleavage reflected in voting behaviour in the United Kingdom – of course with the exception of Northern Ireland (Marshall *et al.* 1989: 226). In fact, Haynes echoes these sentiments when he states that 'religion and party politics in Britain, outside Northern Ireland, unlike mainland Europe, . . . has not been an important aspect of party politics for most of the twentieth century' (Haynes 1998: 69). This chapter will challenge this received wisdom, and show that it is far too facile an approach to dismiss outright the idea of denominational voting in mainland Britain.

We are all too painfully aware of the existing religious cleavage in Northern Ireland. This chapter will nevertheless concentrate solely on mainland Britain. Technically, Great Britain and the Province of Northern Ireland are both constituent parts of the United Kingdom but it would need a further chapter, at least, to do full justice to the highly complex situation found in Northern Ireland. The religious cleavage is of course reflected in the mass electoral behaviour of the Province with ethnic, cultural and in some instances even linguistic cleavages that reinforce the political segmentation into two homogeneous blocs. Simplistically, we can view these two blocs as a 'sixty–forty' split in the Province with the majority, Protestant community, support disproportionately given to the Unionist parties who advocate maintaining the link with Britain. On the other hand, the parties supporting the Nationalist goal of a united Ireland receive overwhelming support from the Roman Catholic population.

It is no coincidence that the Unionist Party of Northern Ireland was once aligned with the Conservative Party, and before we go on to analyse the level of denominational voting on mainland Britain, we should examine the historical background of the religious cleavage which Haynes considers as consigned to history and not an important aspect of twentieth-century British politics.

The historical legacy

As late as the nineteenth century, and arguably into the early years of the twentieth, religion was a fundamental issue in British politics. The Liberal proposals for constitutional reforms for Ireland and more importantly for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland, and then later in Wales, secured for the Liberals the support of the Nonconformists and Roman Catholics. Gladstone freely admitted to this in 1868: 'Our three corps d'armée, I may almost say, have been the Scotch presbyterians, English and Welsh Nonconformists, and Irish Roman Catholics' (Hanham 1959: 205). The Conservatives were accepted as the Anglican Party but later in the century as the defenders of Protestant interests in Ireland and Scotland (whether Anglican or Nonconformist). Hanham shows how closely connected the local Conservative Working Men's Associations were to the local Protestant Churches at this time and highlights their resistance to 'any attempt to subvert the Protestant faith or the Constitution of the Country' (ibid.: 107).

This then was the historical legacy which Butler and Stokes spoke of as reinforcing the imprint of religion on British politics. They outlined this imprint in their seminal work on British electoral behaviour of the 1960s:

> The natural way these religious identifications were reflected in party allegiance is suggested by the explanations given by two of our respondents of the reasons for their fathers' partisanship: a Glasgow chargehand said 'He was an Orangeman and a Freemason, so of course he was a royalist and voted Tory'; a London butcher's wife said, 'Dad was an Irish Catholic, so of course he was against the Conservatives'.
>
> (Butler and Stokes 1971: 159)

Religion may have left its indelible mark upon the British body politic but for Butler and Stokes the religious differences they found were weak compared to those they would have expected to find in the past. This decay in the religious cleavage was established by comparing a pre-1918 cohort with a post-1951 cohort from their survey. Among those born before the First World War the difference between Anglicans and Nonconformists in party support was enormous. When attention was turned to those born *after* the Second World War, it was found that the huge difference in Anglican support for the Conservatives and the anti-Conservative views of the Nonconformists had largely disappeared (ibid.: 165–6).

Conspicuous by its absence was a similar analysis for the Roman Catholic vote. Indeed, Roman Catholic support for Labour, at 62 per cent, was 7 per cent higher than that found among the Methodists for Labour (ibid.: 160). This omission could be explained by the relatively few Roman Catholic respondents in their survey compared to the combined Nonconformist element and in particular, the number of nominal Church of England respondents. This problem of data, or more precisely the lack of it, will be addressed later but as we shall see the political allegiance of the Roman Catholic citizen is of such a distinctive character that it will also fundamentally challenge the religious dealignment thesis.

This distinctive character has been shaped by centuries of hostility to Catholicism, whether explicit or implicit. Indeed, Hanham when describing the forms of intimidation that employers and their managers might use to carry their influence gives as an example a letter sent to an elector in Burton upon Trent in 1868: 'However, if you persist in your intention of voting for Popery, you must excuse my stating that I intend to remove my money from your property, and place it where it can assist Conservatism and Protestantism' (Hanham 1959: 84). As late as 1995 Davie could state: 'To a lesser extent, a residual Protestantism in most of Britain also explains a certain degree of caution, suspicion even, with respect to some aspects of Roman Catholicism, not least the question of papal authority' (Davie 1995: 76). This is the historical backdrop to the following post-war analysis of the religious differences in voting behaviour in Britain.

Religious dealignment

Table 4.1 shows the relationship between religion and vote in England for those elections between 1959 and 1997 where it has been possible to obtain the necessary data. The 1959 data come from the series of Gallup surveys conducted in 1963 where respondents were asked to recall how they had voted in 1959.[1] The data for the remaining years have been derived from the British Election Study series. In some years the information on vote was acquired immediately after the election, but in others it is based on respondents' recall at a later election of how they had voted in the previous election. In all of the surveys religion is the denomination to which the respondent feels they belong, but it does not necessarily indicate religious observance.

Table 4.1 Religion and vote in England, 1959–97

	C of E %	*Other Prot.* %	*RC* %	*None* %	*Odds-ratio Con/Lab*
1959					
Conservative	50	44	37	33	1.1
Labour	44	45	59	61	
Liberal	6	11	4	6	1.8
	(N=4448)	(756)	(605)	(307)	
1966					
Conservative	45	34	27	28	1.4
Labour	50	55	69	64	
Liberal	5	11	4	8	2.3
	(N=854)	(205)	(114)	(47)	
1970					
Conservative	56	45	35	42	1.3
Labour	38	39	60	53	
Liberal	6	16	5	5	2.5
	(N=753)	(171)	(136)	(506)	
1974 Feb.					
Conservative	45	37	25	33	1.0
Labour	36	29	51	49	
Liberal	19	34	24	18	2.5
	(N=827)	(181)	(148)	(581)	
1974 Oct.					
Conservative	44	34	28	32	1.2
Labour	36	33	59	52	
Liberal	20	33	13	16	2.6
	(N=805)	(175)	(145)	(246)	
1979					
Conservative	55	45	51	43	1.2
Labour	31	32	40	44	
Liberal	14	23	9	13	1.4
	(N=503)	(164)	(146)	(568)	
1987					
Conservative	58	53	43	45	1.1
Labour	28	29	48	40	
Liberal	14	18	9	15	2.3
	(N=957)	(245)	(189)	(550)	
1992					
Conservative	55	48	37	42	1.3
Labour	28	33	48	39	
Liberal	17	19	15	19	2.5
	(N=990)	(262)	(207)	(660)	
1997					
Conservative	39	26	15	21	1.9
Labour	44	57	72	60	
Liberal	17	17	13	19	4.2
	(N=848)	(324)	(261)	(672)	

Sources: 1959: Gallup Interview surveys conducted in 1963, weighted data for 1959.
BES surveys 1966, 1970, 1974, 1979, 1987, 1992, and 1997. Insufficient data are available to report results for 1964 and 1983.

The data, at this stage, focuses on England for two main reasons. Firstly, England with over 80 per cent of the UK population dwarfs the other constituent nations of mainland Britain, namely Scotland and Wales. Thus, when we examine the data for Britain as a whole we find only a marginal difference from what we find in Table 4.1 anyway because of the sheer weight of numbers of our English data (see Table 4.4). In fact, for much of the past, England was used as an interchangeable term for Britain and this was continually reflected in the paucity of survey data for Scotland and Wales. By utilising our Gallup data, we now have data that considerably enhance the extent of our longitudinal analyses and some crucial time series can now be offered, not only for England, but also for Scotland. Unfortunately, we can make no such longitudinal comparisons for Wales here because, as the smallest of the British nations, we still do not have sufficient data to do so.

Secondly, Scotland, belonging to the Celtic fringe, is seen as being culturally distinct from England, and crucially, this is reflected in the different denominational make up of the two nations. The 'established' Church of England is Episcopalian, and as outlined above, nearly 70 per cent of the English identify themselves as such but in Scotland the Episcopalian communion is tiny compared to the Presbyterian churches (Brierley and Wraight 1995). The 'Scottish Kirk' is Presbyterian and because of this it likes to classify itself as 'established yet free' (Davie 1995: 17). As late as 1961, the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland thought it was clear 'that the Church of Scotland is looked to as the Church by at least three quarters of the population' (Church and Nation Committee 1961: 430), and Haynes could identify 67 per cent of Scots as 'nominal members' of the Church of Scotland (Haynes 1998: 66). Thus, it makes sense to examine England and Scotland separately.

We see in Table 4.1 that the Conservatives have consistently maintained an advantage in the support they receive from Church of England adherents. In all but two of the post-war elections presented in the table, namely 1966 and 1997 – two occasions when Labour had a comfortable lead over the country as a whole – the support for the Conservatives from Anglicans has been greater than that given to Labour. In fact this divergence in support is quite marked for the elections of 1987 and 1992 when the Conservatives received well over half of the Anglican vote while Labour achieved just 28 per cent. In five out of the nine elections the Conservatives achieved 50 per cent or more of the Anglican vote and only once, in 1997, do they fall below 40 per cent. More importantly, we still find an extant cleavage between Anglican and Nonconformist support for the Conservative Party. In every election listed we see that the Conservatives perform better in the Anglican category than in that of 'Other Protestant' – by as much as 13 per cent at the last election – and over the period this Conservative/Anglican advantage has averaged out at 8 per cent.

In stark contrast, over the same period, we see that Roman Catholic support has been overwhelmingly in favour of Labour, by as much as a staggering 72 per cent at the last election of 1997. Indeed, on average, Labour has had a 23 per cent advantage in support from the Roman Catholic community over the Conservatives.

Such figures cast serious doubt on claims that there is no longer a religious cleavage reflected in contemporary voting behaviour. We can examine such claims with greater rigour by analysing this table more formally using a statistic known as the odds ratio. This measure simply takes the ratio of the level of support for a party among any two groups and compares it with the level of support for another party among the same two groups. A whole host of such odds ratios can be calculated from Table 4.1.

On the right-hand side of the table however the two odds ratios of greatest single interest to us are given; namely, the Conservative/Labour odds ratios of support among 'Church of England and Other Protestants', which is listed first in each election year, and between 'Church of England and Catholics', listed second in each election year. Thus, for example, the odds ratio of 1.1 in 1959 is calculated by taking the Conservatives' share of the vote among Church of England (50 per cent), dividing it by their vote share among Other Protestants (44 per cent) and then dividing the result by the equivalent figures for Labour (44 per cent/45 per cent). The higher the odds ratio, the stronger the religious alignment. The crucial advantage of the statistic is that it provides a measure of the relative level of religious voting independent of changes in the level of party support or in religious identification.

The odds ratios for 'Church of England/Other Protestant' confirm the findings of Butler and Stokes that the Anglican/Nonconformist cleavage has all but disappeared. It is important, however, that we should note that it has not disappeared completely. If that were the case then the odds ratios would be zero. In fact, the highest odds ratio, of 1.9, is recorded at the last election of 1997 and the average over the post-War period is around 1.3. But it should be of no surprise now to find that the average 'Catholic/Church of England' odds ratio is nearly double that at 2.5 and that the highest recorded, over the period, is once again that of 1997 (Table 4.2). These odds ratios for 1997 may be an indication of Conservative reliance on a social base of Anglicanism when their political woes mount.

Butler and Stokes focused on certain groups in order to highlight the extent of religious dealignment, in particular the fall in Conservative support among working class Anglicans and the weakening of the Liberal/Nonconformist axis.

> The erosion of the religious cleavage as the class alignment became more predominant has carried furthest in the working class. . . . In our youngest two cohorts no significant religious differences is associated with the incidence of working-class Conservatism. But among our oldest respondents, religion makes a difference to the likelihood of a working class voter being a Conservative.
>
> (Butler and Stokes 1971: 169)

Fortunately, we can now rigorously examine such claims for the period 1959 to 1997.

The odds ratios from our data can be modelled statistically by the statistical technique of loglinear modelling. Loglinear modelling takes all of the odds ratios

in a table and helps us to identify whether there are any statistically significant changes (Gilbert 1981). To model the equivalent data in Table 4.1, including a dichotomous operationalisation of class into working-class and middle-class respondents, we simply specify what associations we think exist between the variables in the table. So, for example, first we can say that we think that the overall level of support for the parties differed from one election to another, that there is an association between vote and year of election. Second, we can equally incorporate into the model an association between vote and religion, that at all elections in the table those of different denominations tended to vote for different parties. Third, we can specify an association between class and vote, that from one election to another, those of different classes tended to vote for different parties. And lastly, we can also state we think the proportions of people in each denomination changed from one election to another.

What we can now ask is how well we can replicate the real data in Table 4.1, in conjunction with our middle-class and working-class dichotomy, by assuming that the four relationships specified in our model exist but no others. We have excluded from the model a crucial term for us, that there has been any *change* in the relationship between religion, class and vote over the years. Thus, if our data are replicated reasonably well, even though our crucial association has not been included in the model, then it is demonstrated that there has been little change in the relationship between religion, class and vote in England since 1959. But what do we mean by replicating the data 'reasonably well'? We have to bear in mind that all of the figures in Table 4.1 are derived from sample surveys of the English electorate (and of the Scottish electorate in Table 4.3). All such surveys are subject to random sampling error in that they may not provide a wholly accurate measure of the actual behaviour of the English electorate because the sample of those interviewed is not entirely representative of all English voters. Moreover, the direction of any error is likely to vary from one survey to another. Thus we can expect some variation in the relationship between religion, class and vote at different elections simply as a consequence of sampling error.

Fortunately, loglinear modelling enables us to measure the probability that the difference between our model and the actual data could have occurred simply as a consequence of sampling error. This is done by calculating the chi-square statistic, a statistic commonly used in the analysis of contingency tables such as that set out in Table 4.1, for the difference between the figures produced by the model and the actual data (Erickson and Nosanchuk 1979). The bigger the difference between the model and the actual data, the larger the chi-square statistic and the lower the probability that the difference could have simply been produced by sampling error. By convention, if that probability is less than five per cent, we reject the claim that there is no real difference between the model data and the actual data; in this case this would mean that we would accept that the relationship between religion in the working class and voting had changed over time.

What we can see immediately from Table 4.2 is that we can reject the claim that there is no real difference between the model and our actual data. In other words the assumption of the model that there is no change over time in the

Table 4.2 Percentage working-class Anglicans voting Conservative and working-class Nonconformists voting Liberal in England, 1959–97, with adjusted residuals

	Church of England working-class Conservative			*Other Protestant working-class Liberal*		
	%	*residual*	*N=*	*%*	*residual*	*N=*
1959	31	–9.08	527	8	+0.09	21
1966	37	+3.13	172	11	+1.63	11
1970	45	+3.11	73	9	+0.49	3
1974 Feb.	35	+2.09	58	28	+1.18	11
1974 Oct.	29	+0.68	47	23	+0.58	9
1979	43	+1.23	39	32	+2.71	12
1987	47	+0.73	191	16	–0.28	15
1992	44	+0.68	184	13	–2.23	12
1997	28	+2.64	99	10	–2.54	12

Note: Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square = 273.8 DF = 118 P = 0.000.

relationship between religion in the working class and vote does not provide an acceptable fit to the actual data. Thus, the difference in the relationship over time is statistically significant, with a chi-square residual variation of 273.8, which with 118 degrees of freedom has a less than one in a thousand chance of occurring as a consequence of random sampling error.

The data directly challenge Butler and Stokes' assumption that no significant religious difference is associated with working-class Conservatism (Butler and Stokes 1971: 169). We can be confident of ruling out any conclusion that accepts religious dealignment in working-class Anglican support for Conservatism. This is seen clearly by examining what are known as 'residuals' from the model, that is the difference between the model's estimate of each entry in Table 4.1 (with the middle class–working class dichotomy) and the actual data. The residuals for working-class Anglicans are positive from 1966 onwards, which would rule out the idea of religious affiliation of working-class Anglicans waning since the 1960s. The strength of support in this category weakens somewhat between October 1974 and 1992 but the 1997 residual of +2.64 confirms the earlier impression that the Conservatives avail themselves of their 'core Anglican support' in times of electoral woe.

By contrast, the Liberal Democrats, in their various manifestations, secure their best results from working-class Nonconformist Protestants in the mid-1970s. However, we should be aware that the percentage bases for this category are small but the residuals show that the loss of the *relative*[2] strength of this support was in the 1980s and not in the 1960s as suggested by Butler and Stokes. Our model 'overpredicts' the proportion of working-class 'Other Protestants' voting Liberal up to 1979 and then 'underpredicts' the proportion thereafter, which rules out the idea that the Liberal working-class Nonconformist affiliation waned in the 1960s. Once again, both these examples raise serious questions about simplistic claims of religious dealignment.

Scotland

Similar claims are often made for the demise of religion as a determinant of voting behaviour in Scotland (Kendrick and McCrone 1989; Mitchell 1990; Brown *et al.* 1996). All too often this claim of denominational change has been made the scapegoat for the failure of the Scottish Conservatives. However, the evidence presented here demonstrates that the religious cleavage in Scotland has retained much of its influence on Scottish electoral behaviour.[3] Table 4.3 shows the relationship between religion and vote in Scotland between 1959 and 1997.

We see in Table 4.3 that the Roman Catholic alignment with Labour is even stronger in Scotland than in England. At the 1997 election Labour obtained a massive 81 per cent of the Catholic vote. But it is clear that this was not as a result of fortuitous circumstance. In 1966 Labour had also achieved four-fifths of Catholic support and over the 1959–97 period they managed to gain, on average, 75 per cent of the Catholic vote.

For all intents and purposes the Protestant respondents in Table 4.3 are the Church of Scotland respondents. There were so few 'Other Protestants' in the surveys that they were collapsed into the one Protestant category. The only two elections where the Conservatives lost their advantage in a plurality of Protestant votes were 1966 and 1997, again the two elections where Labour had a comfortable lead in the country overall. The absolute level of Protestants supporting the Conservative Party has indeed declined, in particular, from the high of 52 per cent in 1959 when the Party in Scotland was still called the Scottish Unionist Party. But, of course, the explanation of this *absolute* level of decline of Scottish Conservative support among Protestants may not be one of religious dealignment at all. Much more prosaic political factors could offer an explanation. It may now be the case that for other political reasons the Scottish Conservative Party is just an ineffectual political performer or that crucially, the fall in the level of absolute religious voting might be as a consequence of the rise of third-party support rather than its cause.[4]

Table 4.3 clearly delineates the rise of third-party support in the form of the Scottish National Party (SNP). Since the mid-1970s the SNP has been a serious contender for Westminster seats in Scotland. But of interest here is the disproportionate amount of support the SNP receives from Protestants and those of 'no religion' compared to the low level of support from the Roman Catholic community. It was generally held that in the past Catholics in Scotland were somewhat circumspect about the SNP's goal of independence as an independent Scotland would be overwhelmingly Protestant. But it was equally generally held that this Catholic perception of mistrust had been enervated somewhat at the most recent elections. Indeed, by 1992, the level of support for the SNP among Catholics (20 per cent) almost matched that among Protestants (22 per cent). In the 1970s, by contrast, the SNP was clearly far more successful among Protestants than Catholics. Interestingly, we see a 'homing tendency' for the Catholic vote to Labour at the 1997 election. In so far as there has been any religious dealignment in recent years it has been in a crumbling of traditional Catholic hostility to the SNP, as in 1992. Although there was a check in this Catholic dealignment in 1997,

Table 4.3 Religion and vote in Scotland, 1959–97

	Prot. %	*RC* %	*None* %	*Odds-ratio Con/Lab*
1959				
Unionist/Con	52	29	38	
Labour	43	68	60	
Liberal	4	3	2	2.8
SNP	1	0	0	
	(N=567)	(N=88)	(N=28)	
1966				
Conservative	37	20	0	
Labour	48	80	0	
Liberal	13	0	0	3.0
SNP	2	0	0	
	(N=114)	(N=10)	(N=0)	
1970				
Conservative	47	17	27	
Labour	37	79	57	
Liberal	7	2	6	5.7
SNP	9	1	10	
	(N=592)	(N=114)	(N=199)	
1974 Feb.				
Conservative	38	16	22	
Labour	31	76	43	
Liberal	10	0	9	6.2
SNP	21	8	26	
	(N=640)	(N=119)	(N=241)	
1974 Oct.				
Conservative	32	11	15	
Labour	29	75	43	
Liberal	9	2	8	7.6
SNP	30	12	34	
	(N=616)	(N=121)	(N=246)	

the 1992 result is still a clear indication of the threat that the nationalists now pose in Labour's traditional heartland (Mitchell 1992).

Once again we can analyse this religious relationship more formally by the use of our log ratio statistic. Again, on the right hand side of the table, the odds ratio of the greatest single interest for our Scottish data is given, namely, the Conservative/Labour odds ratio of support among Protestants and Catholics. With Labour's support also remaining persistently much stronger among Catholics than among Protestants, it can by now be of little surprise to discover in Table 4.3 that the Conservative/Labour odds ratio shows no sign of declining over time. If anything, it seems to have steadily increased over time reaching an all-time high of 11.0 in Scotland by 1979, before falling back slightly in the early 1990s to 9.7 and further still to 6.8 by 1997.

We can also establish just how much stronger this religious cleavage is in

Table 4.3 (continued)

	Prot. %	*RC* %	*None* %	*Odds-ratio Con/Lab*
1979				
Conservative	45	12	27	
Labour	27	77	46	
Liberal	11	3	8	11.0
SNP	17	8	19	
	(N=356)	(N=76)	(N=177)	
1987				
Conservative	38	10	19	
Labour	37	72	52	
Liberal	10	7	10	7.4
SNP	15	11	19	
	(N=461)	(N=120)	(N=150)	
1992				
Conservative	35	7	19	
Labour	31	65	39	
Liberal	12	8	12	9.7
SNP	22	20	30	
	(N=477)	(N=122)	(N=185)	
1997				
Conservative	19	5	9	
Labour	45	81	55	
Liberal	15	4	13	6.8
SNP	21	10	23	
	(N=329)	(N=98)	(N=202)	

Sources: 1959: Gallup Interview surveys conducted in 1963. The data have been weighted to reflect the correct distribution of party support in 1959.
1966: BES survey. SES surveys, 1970, 1974, 1979, 1992, and 1997. Insufficient data are available to report results for 1964 and 1983.

Table 4.4 Adjusted residuals for Protestant voting

Conservative			
1959	–2.89	1979	+0.61
1966	–2.04	1987	+1.13
1970	–0.40	1992	+1.22
1974 Feb.	–0.44	1997	+0.07
1974 Oct.	+0.74		

Note: Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square = 62.9 DF= 48 P= 0.073.

Source: Data from Table 4.3.

Scotland, compared to that found in England, by viewing a comparison of the odds ratios listed in Table 4.4 for England and Scotland, and also for Great Britain overall. The 'Church of England' and 'Other Protestant' categories were collapsed in this instance in order to make a direct comparison between the relative strength of the Protestant/Catholic cleavage in Labour/Conservative voting in Britain, England and Scotland respectively. The strength of the religious alignment is clearly delineated by the marked difference in the odds ratios. It is only in the latest election of 1997 that we find an 'English odds ratio' which reaches that of the lowest odds ratio found in Scotland at 2.8. In all other elections the English odds ratio is much lower than that found in any of the Scottish data. The average English odds ratio is 2.2 over the nine elections from 1959 to 1997; in contrast the Scottish average is 6.7. This neatly illustrates the relevance of the continued cleavage of religion compared to that found in England. The similarity in the results for Great Britain and England is, of course, explained by the sheer weight of English respondents.

No religion

We can see from Tables 4.1 and 4.3 that Labour secured a disproportionate level of support from those respondents in the 'no religion' category. In all elections in Scotland Labour had an overwhelming lead in this 'non religious' bloc. But the lead in England is nothing like as emphatic. By 1979, the lead over the Conservatives in England is cut to one point and then the Conservatives actually reverse this advantage at the 1987 and 1992 elections. However, in England at the latest election of 1997, Labour secured their most impressive margin of victory from this 'non-religious' category. Labour, in 1966, gained 64 per cent of the 'no religion' vote. This advantage over the Conservatives is three points lower than the 39 per cent advantage recorded in 1997.

If we were to accept the secularisation thesis, cognisant of the above evidence, then there would be an implicit future advantage for Labour as the electorate became increasingly non-religious. Attendance at religious services has undoubtedly declined (Brierley and Wraight 1995). But that is not the same as a decline in the proportion with a religious identity. Unfortunately, there are differences in the wording used to ascertain religious identity in the surveys, which could affect the proportion who say they do not have a religion. In particular, the wording used in the Gallup surveys from which the 1959 data are derived, and in which just 4 per cent in Scotland and 5 per cent in England said they did not have a religion, is more likely to encourage respondents to declare a religious affiliation than the wording used for the British/Scottish Election Study surveys from which the figures for 1970 onwards are derived.[5]

However, the wording in those later surveys has been reasonably consistent from election to election and they fail to show any trend in England: 33 per cent did not identify with a religion in February 1974 and 32 per cent did not in 1997. So this evidence certainly suggests that any trend towards secularisation may well have been a modest one in England and Labour should not be too optimistic

Table 4.5 Conservative/Labour odds-ratios of support among Protestants and Catholics, in Britain, England and Scotland, 1959–97

	1959	*1966*	*1970*	*1974 Feb.*	*1974 Oct.*
Britain	1.8	2.0	2.6	2.6	2.8
England	1.7	2.1	2.4	2.6	2.5
Scotland	2.8	3.0	5.7	6.2	7.6
	1979	*1987*	*1992*	*1997*	
Britain	1.5	3.3	3.4	3.2	
England	1.3	2.2	2.3	2.8	
Scotland	11.0	7.4	9.7	6.8	

Sources: 1959: Gallup interview surveys conducted in 1963. The data have been weighted to reflect the correct distribution of party support in 1959. 1966: BES survey. SES surveys, 1970, 1974, 1979, 1992, and 1997. Insufficient data are available to report results for 1964 and 1983.

about its continuing advantage in this category. However, in Scotland in 1997, we find a similar level of those expressing no religious affiliation (32 per cent) but this is a rise of 8 per cent since February 1974. It would appear that Labour has benefited considerably from this 'secularisation' trend in Scotland.

This particular trend is reflected in the extent of 'religiosity' of our respondents. In short, the support for Labour was strongest among those Roman Catholics who attended church most often and similarly the support for the Conservatives from Protestants was also strongest among this group. For example, 57 per cent of Catholics who attended church at least once a month voted Labour in 1992, while 49 per cent who never attended voted Labour. Among Protestants in 1992, 55 per cent of those attending at least once a month voted Conservative, while only 44 per cent of those who never attend voted in this way. In 1974 the categories were slightly different but similar findings reveal that this is a long-standing association. At the October election, 48 per cent of Protestants, who classified themselves as 'very much a practising member' of their church, voted for the Conservatives while just 38 per cent of those who were 'not really practising members' voted for the Conservatives. In similar vein, 66 per cent of Catholics from the first category voted Labour while just 60 per cent of those who were 'not really' practising members voted similarly.

Conclusion

The above evidence highlights the erroneous assumption that religion no longer matters as a social cleavage in voting behaviour in mainland Britain. In future, we should not be so ready to dismiss so easily the idea of denominational voting in Britain. We have seen the continued association between Protestants, in particular Anglicans, and the Conservative Party. Even stronger was the continued support of the Roman Catholic community towards Labour. Unfortunately, we did not have data to present a longitudinal analysis of the religious cleavage for Wales. But when the 1997 election data are examined, we see

that the level of Roman Catholic support for Labour at 75 per cent was at a very similar level to that found in England, 72 per cent, and in Scotland, 81 per cent. Thus the Roman Catholics as a group overwhelmingly supported Labour. Of course this British Catholic support for Labour is in stark contrast to their co-religionists' electoral behaviour on the continent of Europe, where Catholic support is disproportionately for right-of-centre parties.

The reason for this legacy of British Roman Catholic support of Labour is twofold. As immigrants they had entered the labour market on the lowest rung of the ladder and supported the party that was offering ameliorative policies for such a group. In additon, as Catholics with a strong Irish identity, they rejected 'Conservative and Unionist' hostility to Irish Home Rule.

No doubt the first reason also applies to the 'new immigrants' from the Commonwealth. Once again there was a problem with the numbers in the 1997 survey, with just twenty-six Hindus, forty-two Muslims and twenty Sikhs in the sample. The levels of voting for Labour did indeed uncannily resemble that for the Roman Catholic community. Overall 75 per cent of these 'new immigrants' supported Labour, 73 per cent Muslim, 75 per cent Hindu and 78 per cent Sikh. In contrast, the Jewish community split three ways in 1997, 42 per cent for the Conservatives, 30 per cent for Labour and 29 per cent for the Liberal Democrats.

This three-way split in the Jewish vote may just be an indication that members of the Jewish faith have long since successfully integrated into the political culture of British society. Indeed, Davie points out that numbers of those who are of the Jewish faith could actually be falling from a postwar high of around 400,000 in the 1950s, since 'unlike most other religious minorities in this country [they] have experienced relatively little in-migration since the war' (Davie 1995: 64). As stated previously, figures for religious denominations are notoriously unreliable in Britain and we may move some way towards rectifying this problem as the next census in 2001 will include a question on religious affiliation. The last time such data were collected was 1851. But Davie believes that there are over one million Muslims in Britain, with the Sikh and Hindu communities both standing at around a half a million each (ibid.: 63–6). These non-Christian communities face specific political problems, not least the extent of racist violence and abuse directed at them but, similar to the fierce debates within the mainstream Christian sects earlier in the twentieth century, there is now an increasingly vociferous debate about religious education and the need for separate schools for their communities. This debate may well be one that the British political parties will have to seriously address in the near future.

Heath *et al.* in their work, confirm that the 'importance of religion has been rather recently neglected in the study of British voting behaviour' (Heath *et al.* 1991: 85). This chapter has gone some considerable way to addressing that neglect and we believe as a result that the social cleavage of religion will have to be given greater consideration in future studies of electoral behaviour.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the computing department of the University of Strathclyde (where the data for this chapter are archived) for the use of their facilities. I would also like to thank the staff of the Social Statistics Laboratory at Strathclyde, in particular Professor John Curtice and Miss Ann Mair, for their kind help.

Notes

1 Asking people to recall how they voted some considerable time after the event is methodologically less desirable than asking them immediately after an election (Himmelweit *et al.* 1978). However, data on respondents' religion was not available in our Gallup surveys before 1963.
2 See Seawright and Curtice (1995) and Seawright (1999) for the importance of analysing the 'relative' level of denominational voting and not just the absolute level.
3 See also Seawright (1999) for a view which challenges this 'religious dealignment' explanation of the decline of Scottish Conservatism.
4 These residuals show that if anything the Conservatives have become relatively more dependent upon Protestants for support. The residuals for Protestants voting Conservative are negative from 1959 to February 1974 and positive at all elections thereafter. The model 'overpredicts' the proportion of Protestants voting Conservative in all elections up to and including February 1974 and 'underpredicts' the proportion thereafter, which would rule out the idea of the Protestant-Conservative religious affiliation waning in the 1960s and 1970s.
5 The wording used to ascertain religious identity in the Gallup surveys was: 'What is your religious denomination?' With further prompts for the 'main' religious groups, 'other' and 'none'. For the 1974 and 1979 British (and Scottish) Election Studies it was: 'Do you belong to any church or religious group and if yes, which denomination?' For the 1992 and 1997 BES (SES) it was: 'Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion and, if yes, which?'

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5 The ever-shallower cleavage

Religion and electoral politics in Germany

Geoffrey K. Roberts

Introduction

The linkages between religion and electoral behaviour are undoubtedly complex in most European countries and the German case is no exception. We can use three different approaches and themes in analysing the questions that inevitably arise. Each of these may be considered to be relevant to the key question of secularisation, and each is relevant to the linkage between religion and electoral behaviour.

First, it can be hypothesised that, if society itself is becoming more secularised, then elections and the behaviour of electors will also be more secularised. The example developed below, of the German Democratic Republic, bears this out to some degree. Second, independent of whether society itself is becoming more secularised, if the political agenda is more secular than before, then it is likely that voting decisions will be taken less on the basis of denomination or religion, and more on other grounds. Third, the electorate itself in its predispositions may be more secular. Independent of whether voters attend church regularly, independent even of the political agenda, past party loyalty or links between parties and the churches, voters may be inclined increasingly to make their voting decision on other than religious grounds: 'rational' voting, class- or regional-based voting decisions or the images of party leaders may well be acquiring more significance for the structuring of voting patterns. It is important to note of course that any or all of these three factors may be overlapping and reinforcing one another.

The historical and legal context

While cross-national influences may be important in assessing and explaining secularisation in relation to electoral behaviour in any one country, the historical background and the constitutional and legal context within which religion is regulated in relation to politics and the state are also of potential widespread significance.

Germany, the centre stage of so many of the religious conflicts in Europe in the previous millennium, has a long history of 'religious politics'. Many

examples can be cited: Luther and the Thirty Years War, subsequent rivalries between Catholic and Protestant German states, the role of the Catholic Church in supporting the Frankfurt Parliament's demands in 1848–9, especially concerning separation of the church from the Protestant Prussian state, the formation of the Catholic Centre Party (the *Zentrum*) in 1870 and Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* against the Catholic Church between 1873–87, the decision of the drafters of the Weimar constitution in 1919 to give the churches explicit protection in the political order, Hitler's attempts to found a new 'National Church' in the Third Reich and his controversial Concordat in 1933 with the Vatican. These examples demonstrate that 'religious politics' before the Second World War had much more importance in Germany than for example in the United Kingdom during the same period.

The churches, as one of the few social institutions in Germany still relatively untainted by association with Nazism, attempted to fill the 'spiritual and moral vacuum' for Germans in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Third Reich in 1945 (Maier 1974: 494). The western allies were prepared to look tolerantly upon church activities during the occupation period. The founding of a cross-denominational new party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) – the Christian Social Union (CSU) in its Bavarian manifestation – provided an interface between the churches and renascent political activity in occupied Germany. When the time came for West Germans to provide for their own government, the churches played a role in developing the content of the Basic Law (see later) (Golay 1968).

In East Germany, a CDU was also founded, though it was regarded increasingly with suspicion by its West German counterpart because of the strong, and later determining, influence over it of the Soviet occupying authorities and the Socialist Unity Party (SED) which came to rule the German Democratic Republic. In 1951 the CDU of the GDR (the 'Ost-CDU') accepted the socialist order of the new state, and in 1952 recognised the 'leading role' of the SED. From then on, it was little more than a vassal of the SED. The churches, especially the Protestant church, were of course viewed by the SED as a potentially dangerous rival source of identification and loyalty in the GDR, following the examples of Bismarck and Hitler in this regard. The churches were the victims of propaganda campaigns, of discriminatory policies (in relation to resources such as newsprint or permissions to travel abroad, and the educational opportunities and careers of church members) and became a target for observation and penetration by the secret police, the Stasi. They were allowed, though, a degree of autonomy in return for not opposing the regime directly. However, not only did churchmen protest themselves against particular policies or the general persecution of churchgoers (such as Pastor Brüsewitz, who immolated himself in 1976), the churches provided havens for dissident groups in the 1980s and especially in 1989 and 1990. A number of pastors and church employees became active in dissident groups such as *New Forum* and the East German Social Democratic Party in 1989.

The anti-church campaigns of the SED-regime had very considerable effects.

Eastern Germany was always a strongly Protestant region, and in 1946 the population of the Soviet zone of occupation was classified as 81.6 per cent Protestant, 12.2 per cent as Catholic, and 5.5 per cent as neither. In 1964, communist policies had caused the figures to change to 59.4 Protestant, 8.1 per cent Catholic and 31.9 per cent neither of these. Shortly before the end of the regime (data for 1986 and 1988), only 31.1 per cent identified themselves as Protestant and 6.7 per cent as Catholic but 60.7 per cent as neither of these (Ritter and Niehuss 1991: 34–51).

The constitutional and legal framework regulating the role and status of the churches in the German Federal Republic derives from the discussions of the drafters of the Basic Law in 1948–9. The preamble to that Basic Law (as the constitutional document for the then supposedly provisional Federal Republic is known) refers to the 'consciousness of responsibility before God' of the drafters of the Basic Law.

Several articles of the Basic Law make specific reference to religion or the churches. Article four refers to guarantees of freedom of belief, freedom of conscience and freedom of religion. Article seven makes provision for religious instruction in schools, but also allows individual teachers not to be compelled against their will to offer religious instruction. Article thirty-three provides that religious beliefs should not be a barrier to appointment to public office. Article 140 adopts various sections of the Weimar constitution which dealt with the churches as an integral part of the Basic Law, dealing with topics such as the prohibition of a state church, privileges of the churches in relation to taxation, guarantee of the special status of Sundays and holy days (*Feiertage*), and the access of the churches to military establishments, hospitals, prisons and other public institutions, to provide religious services and counselling.

Court decisions and supplementary legislation have extended these rights and privileges, so that churches in the Federal Republic have come to enjoy greater rights and privileges than in the Weimar period. The church tax (see later) is one of these privileges, deriving from principles stated in Article 137 of the Weimar constitution, incorporated in the Basic Law in Article 140. It provides by far the greater part of the income of the Protestant and Catholic churches. It can be utilised by other churches and religions (for example the Baptists and the Greek Orthodox Church), but not all churches wish to take advantage of that facility (Kalinna 1996: 75).

A number of cases dealt with by the Federal Constitutional Court have also been relevant to the relationship between the churches and the constitution. These will be discussed later.

The secularisation of German society

The most obvious indicator of religiosity is membership of churches. This is only a guide to nominal affiliation: thanks to the church tax system, many citizens contribute financially to churches without ever attending religious services. At the end of 1993, there were 28,460,000 Protestants (of whom 1,249,000 were

church attenders); 27,552,000 Catholics (of whom 5,404,000 attended church) according to official statistics, They paid respectively DM 8,234,600 (Protestants) and DM 8,496,142 (Catholics) (Statistisches Bundesamt 1995).[1] By 1997 these numbers had declined to 27,398,000 Protestants and 27,383,000 Catholics. They paid respectively DM 7,587,775 (Protestants) and DM 7,853,270 (Catholics) in church taxes (Statistisches Bundesamt 1999).

In percentage terms, in Western Germany in 1992, 43 per cent of the population were Catholic, 38 per cent Protestant and 19 per cent other religions or none. In Eastern Germany, 6 per cent were Catholic, 27 per cent Protestant and 67 per cent other religion or none (Wolf 1996: 724). In 1997, survey data revealed that 39.8 per cent of the population were Protestant (Western Germany 42.8 per cent; Eastern Germany 27.9 per cent) and 34.3 per cent were Catholic (Western Germany 41.5 per cent; Eastern Germany 5.5 per cent); 1.2 per cent belonged to other religions (Western Germany 1.4 per cent; Eastern Germany 0.7 per cent); 24.2 per cent were without religious affiliation (Western Germany 13.8 per cent; Eastern Germany 65.7 per cent) (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1998a: 13).[2]

However, such figures provide only outline data. To assess religiosity, frequency of church attendance is often used as an important indicator. There has been a clear and substantial decline in church attendance in Western Germany over past decades. In 1987, only 36 per cent of Catholics and 7 per cent of Protestants claimed to attend church frequently. This compares to 1953 data when 60 per cent of Catholics and 19 per cent of Protestants attended frequently (Cerny 1990: 284). Another source states that 9.2 per cent of Germans attended church regularly in 1992, but that 24.1 per cent never attended (Kleinhen 1995: 102).

Another potential indicator is the percentage claiming to believe in the existence of God (since it is possible to have such a belief, yet not feel obliged to attend a church). A survey in 1996 found a decline in this measure also. Whereas in 1992, 50 per cent stated that they believed in the existence of God, in 1996 only 45 per cent said that they did. In Western Germany the percentages of respondents stating that they believed in the existence of God were: in 1967, 68 per cent; in 1992, 56 per cent; in 1996, 51 per cent. In Eastern Germany only 27 per cent in 1992 and 20 per cent in 1996 stated that they shared this belief. More of those stating that they did believe in the existence of God tended to be in older rather than in younger age groups, suggesting that a cohort effect is at work (*Der Spiegel*, 23 December 1996).

The political agenda

Though from time to time a number of issues relevant to the churches, or issues considered by the churches to go to the heart of their value systems, are placed on the political agenda, politics for the most part in the Federal Republic is distanced from religious issues. This is partly because the political and social system created during the post-Second World War period managed to provide a context in which the principles of the relationship between church and state were settled. These principles included freedom of religious belief and the protection

of those beliefs, the status of the churches and their financing through the church tax, and the position of the churches in relation to education and social service provision, for instance.

Nevertheless controversial issues such as abortion law reform do involve the churches (and in this case especially the Catholic Church) very centrally. The attempt to produce compromise legislation to integrate legal provisions concerning illicit abortion in the 'old' Federal Republic and the 'new' Länder of the former German Democratic Republic led to sometimes bitter attacks by various people associated with the Catholic Church. Rita Süssmuth, for instance, a leading CDU politician, was called 'unchristian' because of her vote in favour of that compromise legislation, and Catholic priests referred to a 'holocaust of children' and compared abortion to the euthanasia programme of the Nazis (Prützel-Thomas 1993: 476).

Another example is the introduction of a new syllabus for ethical and religious instruction (*Lebensgestaltung-Ethik-Religion: LER*) in the Land of Brandenburg, in Eastern Germany. This was to replace a provisional syllabus, in which children were provided with integrated classes in ethical and religious instruction for one year, followed by a choice of options (including instruction by Catholic or Protestant ministers of religion) in the following year. That was thought to have been unsatisfactory, so a new system was introduced permitting religious instruction by representatives of the churches, but only with the written consent of the parents. The churches campaigned against this restriction (Reiher 1996: 20–1).

The Land government was accused of 'unpartner-like behaviour' by the churches; a commentator pointed out that this was ironic, since the Protestant church in Brandenburg is regarded as not especially conservative, and the Catholic bishop is a member of the Social Democratic party (SPD) – the governing party (Kalinna 1996: 77).

Other issues affecting religions or sects have included the 1979 battle by the churches to have family allowances included as income on which the church tax was calculated, a move which benefited the churches by DM 100–200 million per year at the time (*Der Spiegel*, 22 September 1980), disputes concerning the Holocaust memorial in Berlin, restrictions on the 'scientology' church, prompting ridiculous comparisons by Hollywood 'personalities' between such restrictions and Nazi book-burning; and government restrictions on various 'sects' and their influence on young people (Reinke 1996: 77–8)

Certainly a review of the programmes of the main political parties at recent elections demonstrates that religion features not at all, or else – for the Christian Democrats – only peripherally. The Basic Programme of the CDU, 'Freedom through Responsibility' (*Freiheit in Verantwortung*), praises the churches for their role in providing a system of values for society, expressly supports the system of church tax, and recognises the contribution of the churches in shaping the general welfare of German society. The CDU-CSU joint electoral programme for the 1998 federal election refers in its section on 'Freedom, Solidarity, Justice – Values as the Basis of Society' to the 'Christian image of humanity' (*das christliche Verständnis von Menschen*) and 'orientation on Christian values'.

This manifesto confirms the support of the Christian Democrats for the work of the churches, and the desire to protect religious belief from attack. While paying lip service to the legal protection, which other religions enjoy within the political system, the manifesto makes clear that such protection is only warranted when such religions do not disturb the peace or harm the religious freedom of others. But such generalities are all that can be found by way of direct link between party programmes and the churches, outside those of completely irrelevant parties such as the 'Party of Christians Loyal to the Bible' (*Partei Bibeltreue Christen*) which secured only 72,000 votes in 1998.

This contrasts to the period immediately following the Second World War, when the Christian Democrats, influenced very much by the Catholic Church and by personal links between party leaders such as Adenauer and church leaders, developed its Ahlen Programme (1947), noted for its close alignment with Catholic social policy. One can even, if only negatively, note also the Godesberg Programme of the Social Democrats in 1959, since this, by its inclusion of a positive reference to 'Christian values', removed some of the grounds for anti-SPD prejudices on the part of some voters.

The desire of the SPD for a more secular atmosphere in politics can be seen, though, in Brandt's government declaration in 1973. Brandt stated his government's view regarding the churches in these terms:

> We don't regard them simply as one group among the many in a pluralist society, and therefore do not wish to deal with their representatives as merely spokesmen for group interests. On the contrary, we consider that the churches are the stronger in their spiritual influence, the more independent they can become of social or party ties.
>
> (Kalinna 1996: 76)

The liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) has been the most explicitly anti-clerical of the main parties, a concern expressed forcefully in a 1946 party programme in the British zone, which rejected any totalitarian claim, national, social or *clerical* (my emphasis), and the first 'thesis' in the party's 1957 Berlin Programme, which firmly rejected the misuse of religion in political life. In election manifestos in 1961, 1969, 1976 and 1980 clear statements can be found complaining of the improperly close relations between the church and the state. In 1974, the party produced its 'Church Theses', focusing as much on securing the independence of the churches from the state as the state from the churches. It proposed the replacement of the church tax by a system of voluntary contributions, the prohibition of religious symbols in public institutions (which would have made redundant the 'crucifix' controversy in Bavaria – see later), and the abolition of state subsidies to the churches. These theses had no legislative consequences, though, and when the FDP switched back to a coalition with the Christian Democrats in 1982, the issue was quietly forgotten. The FDP 1996 Karlsruhe Programme makes almost no reference to the churches or religion, other than to imply that religions are on a par with other 'ideologies' (*Weltanschauungen*), a proposition which attracted criticism from the churches.

Of the cases analysed in the most authoritative English-language study of the Constitutional Court as a guide, the eight concerning constitutional aspects of religion and the churches are, with one exception, drawn from the period before 1980 (Kommers 1997: 443–95). However, the one more recent example is the 'Crucifix' case, dating from 1995, and it certainly demonstrated that religious controversies affecting German state and society had not entirely disappeared from the political agenda. This case involved the Land of Bavaria, whose school regulations required the display of a crucifix in every classroom. Parents of a child at a Bavarian school (followers of the anthroposophy beliefs associated with Rudolf Steiner) objected to this, claiming it violated the freedom of religion guarantee of the Basic Law. Lower courts having denied the parents' claim to have the crucifix removed, the case came to the Federal Constitutional Court. The Court held the school regulation to be unconstitutional. A dissenting opinion emphasised the constitutional rights of the Länder to regulate schools, and denied that the display of the crucifix could be regarded as a diminution of the freedom of religion. As significant as the Court's judgement, was the outburst of criticism (and some support) for that decision. Politicians, including the federal chancellor at the time, Helmut Kohl, as well as conservative newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and, of course, church leaders, criticised the Court. In Bavaria, demonstrations against the judgement took place. 'It was the most negative reaction to a judicial decision in the history of the Federal Republic and the only instance of clear and open defiance of a ruling by the Federal Constitutional Court' (Kommers 1997: 483).

Voting behaviour

One of the clearest indicators of secularisation in relation to electoral behaviour is the pattern of voting decisions made by social groups among the electorate. In the most recent Bundestag election in September 1998, it was evident that the Christian Democrats still benefited from above-average support from Catholic voters, and the SPD had above-average support from Protestant voters. The Christian Democrats (35 per cent of second list votes overall) obtained 47 per cent of Catholic voters, 33 per cent of Protestant voters and only 21 per cent of those with neither religious affiliation. The SPD (41 per cent of list votes overall) secured 46 per cent of Protestant votes, only 36 per cent of Catholic votes, and 41 per cent among voters with neither affiliation. Other parties showed no particularly marked trends in terms of the religious affiliation of voters, except for the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), who, with 5 per cent of list votes overall, won 16 per cent of votes of those with neither Protestant nor Catholic affiliation (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen: 1998a: 27).[3]

In Eastern Germany, the CDU benefited from Catholic and Protestant votes: it secured 42 per cent among those with a religious affiliation (the SPD won only 38 per cent), but the CDU only obtained 18 per cent among the many East German voters with no religious affiliation (the SPD secured 41 per cent and the PDS 26 per cent) (Weins 1999: 58).

Table 5.1 Party preference and religious affiliation

Election year	*1953*	*1957*	*1961*	*1965*	*1969*	*1972*
Catholics						
CDU-CSU	52	72	65	68	65	57
SPD	23	24	26	26	33	39
Protestants						
CDU-CSU	32	42	38	40	31	36
SPD	38	47	45	49	62	56

Sources: 1953–94, Wolf 1996: 714, citing Schmitt 1989 (for 1963–83) and ALLBUS surveys (1987–94); 1998, Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1998: 29.

When the additional factor of frequency of church attendance is introduced, more startling differences become apparent. In the 1998 Bundestag election in Western Germany the CDU-CSU secured 70 per cent of votes from Catholics attending church weekly, and 50 per cent among those attending occasionally. It also won 48 per cent of votes from Protestants who attended church weekly.

The SPD trend was in the opposite direction: among Catholics and Protestants the percentage voting SPD was highest among non-attenders, and higher among occasional attenders than those attending regularly. The Greens and the FDP won above-average shares of the votes of Protestants attending church weekly (9 per cent compared to an overall list vote of 7 per cent) (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1998: 29).

How do these data compare to other recent Bundestag elections? In terms of religious affiliation, the surveys conducted by Forschungsgruppe Wahlen found that the Christian Democrats secured 48 per cent of Catholic votes in 1990 and 52 per cent in 1994; they won 41 per cent (1990) and 39 per cent (1994) of Protestant votes. In 1994 in Western Germany they attracted 74 per cent of votes of Catholics who attended church weekly, and 54 per cent of those attending occasionally (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1990a: 37; Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1994: 23–4).

Similar trends can be observed in second-order elections. In the European Parliament election of 1999 the Christian Democrats secured 48.7 per cent of the vote. Among Catholic voters, they received 82 per cent of the votes of regular church attenders; 65 per cent from those attending infrequently; and 49 per cent from 'nominal' Catholics (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1999: 32). In the Bavarian Land election just prior to the Bundestag election in 1998, the CSU polled 52.9 per cent of the vote. It obtained 58 per cent among Catholics, 47 per cent among Protestants, and only 28 per cent among voters who were neither of these. However, it secured 75 per cent among regular church attenders and 56 per cent among infrequent church attenders, but only 44 per cent among non-attenders.

Given the general decline in numbers of those attending church regularly (only 19 per cent of the Bavarian electorate in 1998 admitted to attending church each Sunday (Renz and Rieger 1999: 85)), the CSU only secured 26 per cent of their total vote share from such regular attenders (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen

Table 5.1 (continued)

1976	*1980*	*1983*	*1987*	*1990*	*1994*	*1998*
62	53	65	51	46	44	47
32	33	25	33	36	30	36
40	30	39	31	30	29	32
50	51	51	50	46	45	48

1998b: 26–7). The SPD in that Bavarian election secured 28.7 per cent of votes overall, but only 25 per cent among Catholics. The Greens (5.7 per cent overall) won 14 per cent of the vote among those who were neither Catholic nor Protestant (Renz and Rieger 1999: 84–5). In 1990, for comparison, 23 per cent of Bavarian voters went to church weekly, and 30 per cent irregularly attended. The CSU won 79 per cent of votes from weekly-attenders, and 55 per cent from irregular attenders (55 per cent overall) (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 1990b: 18–20).[4]

Church-going voters are also loyal voters. Dittrich found that Catholics who attended church regularly were more likely to be consistent party voters (*Stammwähler*) (91 per cent) than Catholic voters in aggregate (only 81 per cent *Stammwähler*). The same trend is noted among Protestants, but at lower levels of church attendance: those attending church once a month or more often include 84 per cent loyal voters, but only 79 per cent of Protestants in general are loyal party voters (Dittrich 1991: 137).

Religious attachment also seems to have some relationship to electoral participation. In his detailed analysis of non-voting in Stuttgart, Eilfort found that religious affiliation has been a factor of increasing significance in influencing voters to participate in Bundestag elections.

Other data tell a similar story. While a decline in electoral participation has occurred among Protestants and Catholics in the period 1980–92 in conformity with the trend among the electorate as a whole, among those who lack religious affiliation it is a steeper decline, and those who claim to attend church regularly show a smaller decline in electoral participation than those who attend only infrequently or never (Kleinhen 1995: 102).

Electoral campaigning is also relevant to the issue of the degree of secularisation of voting decisions. A controversial practice in early post-Second World War German elections was the reading of 'bishop's letters' (*Hirtenbriefe*) in parish churches to Catholic churchgoers prior to an election. This was a more-or-less direct instruction on how 'good Catholics' should vote, and followed on from the custom in the Weimar Republic of securing support for the Centre party by such instruction to the faithful. In 1969, however, the German Catholic bishops adopted

the ruling from Rome (agreed at the Second Vatican Council) that electoral intervention was only justifiable when fundamental principles of democracy, human rights or the status of the church itself were in danger. From then until 1980, only the most general references were made in churches to elections.

The effect of abortion reform and the growing prominence in the SPD of the left wing of the party led to the Catholic bishops again intervening in the 1980 Bundestag election in a blatant manner. The 1980 'bishops letter' did not explicitly demand that Catholics vote for the CDU-CSU, but it did criticise the growing public-sector deficit and aspects of social welfare and family policy of the SPD-FDP coalition. This letter not only stimulated criticism on the left: from Herbert Wehner, the 'grand old man' of left-wing social democracy, for example (Reitz 1985: 235–7). Many CDU politicians and Catholics spoke out against such interference. A survey found that 40 per cent of all Catholic voters opposed the issuing of such instruction at elections, though only 23 per cent of CDU-CSU voters were opposed (46 per cent were in favour) (*Der Spiegel*, 22 September 1980). The 1980 letter was supplemented by free distribution in churches of a magazine (*Neue Bildpost*) which contained anti-SPD slogans and reporting. Since 1980 the Catholic Church has been more circumspect in its electioneering, though on issues such as abortion reform it has remained uncompromising in its stance.

Assessment

From the evidence, it would appear that the religious cleavage is diminishing in terms of its relevance for electoral politics in Germany, but that it is still a potent factor, and one which, on certain issues and for certain groups, can be of decisive importance.

Society is clearly more secular (in terms of church attendance, for instance) than before the Second World War or during the Adenauer era, and, with the addition of the 'new Länder' in 1990, Germany has become even more a society in which the link between the churches and politics has diminished. Fewer children attend denominational schools, which affects the political socialisation of children and their adult voting behaviour (Schmitt 1990: 188). The political agenda has become almost entirely 'secular'. Most issues that caused inter-denominational conflict or conflicts between a secular state and the churches (such as education) seem to have been resolved. Only abortion, some aspects of family policy, overseas development aid and a small number of minor one-off political issues seem to have any relevance to religious cleavages.

However, electoral behaviour, as the statistics demonstrate, still seems to be affected quite substantially by denomination and religiosity, though class, region, the urban-rural divide, level of education, degree of interest in politics, for some parties age and gender, perhaps the image of the chancellor-candidate or the party, are all potentially strong influences on the voting decision, or even the decision whether to vote at all. The Christian Democrats still benefit from above-average levels of voting support from Catholic voters, and the SPD, to a

Table 5.2 Electoral participation and religious affiliation

Bundestag election percentage of the electorate who voted			
	Group		
Year	*Protestants*	*Catholics*	*Others*
1972	91.7	91.7	88.8
1983	88.7	88.6	86.0
1990	78.1	76.7	72.9

Source: Eilfort 1994: 201.

somewhat lesser extent, from Protestant voters, and both the CDU and CSU benefit from above-average voting support from those Catholics and Protestants who attend church weekly.

There are various explanations for such party preferences on the part of those associated with the churches. Schmitt has suggested that three factors work in combination to explain the tendency for Catholics to vote for Christian Democrat candidates and lists. First, there is the connection to the church, where church teachings and other messages (the bishops' letters, for example) persuade Catholics to vote for the CDU or CSU. Second, there is group identification: since other Catholics tend to vote for the Christian Democrats, any one Catholic, influenced by awareness of this, is more likely to also vote for the Christian Democrats. Third, Catholics could share a set of common values which, independent of attendance at church, might seem best met by the policies of the Christian Democrats. However, for Protestants, Schmitt suggests that where a voter is especially influenced by links to the church, there is a tendency to vote for the CDU-CSU, but where the links are rather to the 'faith' (with perhaps low or absent church attendance) the voter is more likely to vote for a left-wing party: the SPD or the Greens (Schmitt 1989: 292).

Falter has noticed an interesting 'immunity effect': Catholics who attend church regularly seem far less likely to be enticed into voting for extreme right-wing parties, compared to Catholics with only nominal membership of the church (Wolf 1996: 719). Wolf concludes that the effect of denomination has halved during the period 1982–92, and the direct effect of religiosity (as indicated by frequency of church attendance) was greater than that of denomination in explaining voting behaviour both in 1982 and in 1992. He also notes that the Greens benefit from above-average vote shares among the non-religious (ibid.: 728, 731).

Of course, it is important not to equate religiosity with formal church attendance too closely. The popularity of cults and 'new age' symbols and activities, especially among the young, the large numbers of persons engaged in voluntary work on a regular or occasional basis and interest in spiritual topics in the media are all very visible in Germany, though very difficult to quantify. The Greens can be considered to benefit from the votes of many of these persons, which would qualify to some extent any claim of secularisation among the electorate.

There is also a very large Muslim population in Germany: around 3 million according to one estimate, though, since most of these do not possess German citizenship, they cannot vote in Bundestag elections. Nevertheless, the existence of such a large minority has led the Christian Democratic party group in the Bundestag to put down a 'major question' (*Grosse Anfrage*) to the government asking for data relating to fundamentalism, the social integration of Muslims and other aspects of their status in society (*Blickpunkt Bundestag*, December 1999).

Conclusion

A tentative conclusion to the question as to whether the religious cleavage is still relevant to the analysis of electoral politics in Germany would have to be yes, but only intermittently, conditionally and to a limited degree. It still seemingly forms part of the voter's self-identification. It still has an effect on habitual voting for those who identify themselves closely with a party, especially the Christian Democratic party. It is weaker in the new Länder of East Germany than in the 'old' Federal Republic, mainly because of forty years of socialist indoctrination and opposition to religion, and partly because the Catholic Church has always been weaker in eastern Germany.

The churches (including here those of religions other than the Christian religion) can best be seen as interest groups rather like other powerful interest groups in the Federal Republic: the farmers, coal-miners, health professions and the banks, for example, in that when their interests are directly affected by proposed policy changes, they can react effectively, but few issues on the political agenda do affect those interests today. It is in this context that, for example, the New Year pronouncements of the Catholic and Protestant church leaders at New Year 1997 in which they noted with concern the 'decline in the social state' can best be located (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 2 January 1997).

Another broad indicator can be used to consider the significance of the religious cleavage in Germany: the attention paid by academic experts to the issue of religion in relation to German politics, although this may indicate a more general lack of interest by political scientists, in Germany and elsewhere, in the religious dimension of politics as noted in the introduction to this volume.

In a recent book about the German political system in the second half of the 1990s, not one of the titles of the twenty-three contributions mentions religion or the churches, and there is but one index entry, relating to one page in a nearly-500 page tome referring to 'churches in the DDR' (Merkl 1995). Four years later, a subsequent collection of twenty-five essays on the same subject, again includes none focused on religion or the churches, and limits index references under 'churches' to nine pages, including two devoted to the 'crucifix' case (Merkl 1999). Another book of essays on developments in post-reunification German politics includes four pages on religion and electorate, and again a single index entry on religion (Smith *et al.* 1996).

In this context, Gibowski's verdict concerning the 1994 Bundestag election can still be taken as valid today:

> In general it can be said that a cleavage based on religion continues to exist in western Germany. In eastern Germany a cleavage of this kind does not exist between Catholics and Protestants, but rather between voters with religious ties and those without.
>
> (Gibowski 1996: 43)

Notes

1 The church tax is a supplementary income tax, collected by the state on behalf of the churches, so for any taxpayer it varies according to income. The deduction is approximately 8–10 per cent of the tax bill before church tax is calculated, varying according to the Land in which the taxpayer resides. It is possible to 'opt-out' of this tax, and increasing numbers of taxpayers take advantage of that proviso.
2 The discrepancy between official statistics, based on churches reporting membership, and rather lower data from surveys can be explained in part by the probability that some persons are still nominal members of the church, and even pay church taxes because of that, yet they do not regard themselves as Catholics or Protestants.
3 These data are from survey statistics.
4 These data are from survey statistics.

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6 The bells toll no more

The declining influence of religion on voting behaviour in the Netherlands

Joop J. M. van Holsteyn and Galen A. Irwin

Introduction

Following the 1994 parliamentary elections, a Cabinet was formed in the Netherlands without the participation of Christian Democratic parties. This statement may not strike the reader as particularly remarkable, but it provides an important perspective when one adds that this was the first time that this had occurred since the first elections under universal suffrage in 1918. With the exception of the period of German occupation, Christian Democrats were in power for an uninterrupted period longer in the Netherlands than the Bolsheviks in Russia. From 1918 until 1967 the three major Christian Democratic parties held half or more of the seats in Parliament. After the loss of their majority position in 1967 they were able to continue in office because of their position in the centre of the political spectrum; with the right and the left unwilling to join in a coalition, no coalition could be formed without them. However, when twenty seats were lost in 1994 and the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) fell to only thirty-four of the 150 seats, this dominance was also lost. Moreover, the Labour (PvdA) and Liberal (VVD) parties dropped their refusal to co-operate together in a coalition and along with the social-liberal D66 formed a Cabinet without Christian Democrats. This combination proved so successful that it was continued after the 1998 parliamentary elections.

Figure 6.1 shows the post-war decline in electoral support for religious parties, both major and minor, in the Netherlands. Up until the election of 1963, a majority of the votes were cast for a religious party. This fell to less than forty per cent between 1963 and 1972, but remained fairly stable until the disastrous elections of 1994 and 1998. The three major Christian Democratic parties once dominated Dutch politics, with a pre-war high of 54.5 per cent of the vote in 1922 and 53.4 per cent of the vote in 1948. In 1998 their successor, the CDA, was able to gain only 18.4 per cent of the vote. With a loss of almost two-thirds of its support, the party was forced to attempt to adjust to its new role as an opposition party (Versteegh 1999).

The goal of this volume is to examine the process of secularisation of democratic electorates in Europe. To what extent has there been a decline in the impact of the religious cleavage, particularly in terms of voting behaviour? Figure 6.1

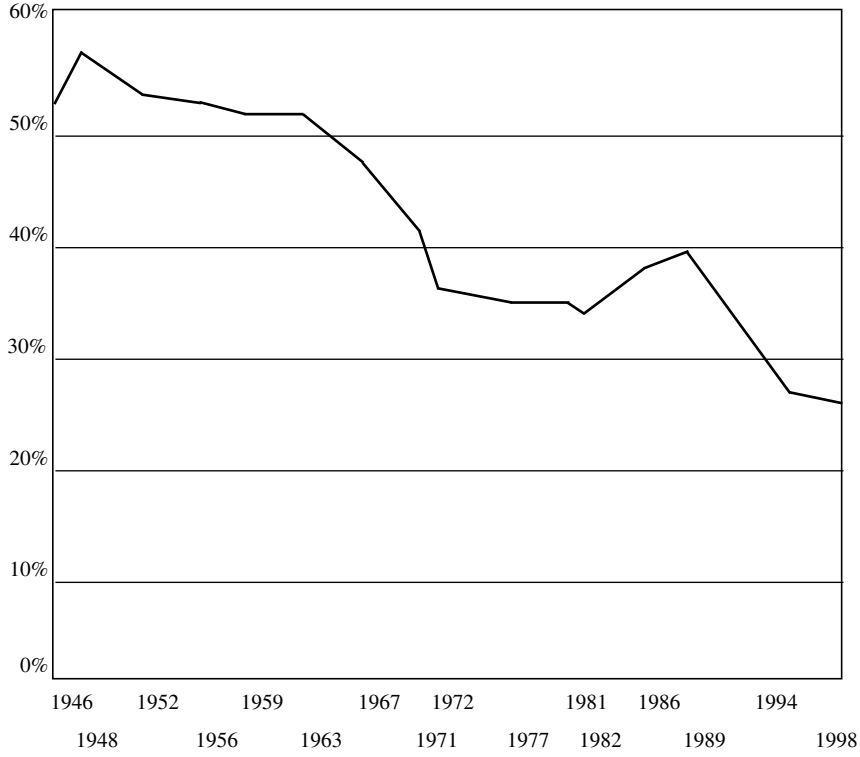

Figure 6.1 Share of voters for confessional parties in the Netherlands, 1946–98

Source: Bron: Daalder, Dittrich and Gosman, 1998: 30–1.

demonstrates clearly that change has occurred in the role of religion and religious parties in the Netherlands that surely must be as dramatic as any of the countries included in this volume. The following analysis will therefore attempt to describe what changes have taken place. It will attempt to show what the importance of the religious cleavage has been and its significance today in the Netherlands. In the conclusion, some ideas concerning the future will be presented.

There are two main ways in which religion and religious beliefs may play a role in the choices that voters make. One involves an almost direct translation of religious beliefs into a vote choice; the other is more indirect. In the direct link, political parties are formed that are based upon religious principles. Voters identifying with the appropriate religious group or denomination translate their identification into a vote for the party. In electoral systems lacking a specifically religious party, such as the United States or Britain, the link between religion and vote choice – if it exists at all – becomes indirect.

Political parties take stands on various issues. Although the parties may not be based upon religious principles, voters with religious beliefs may find that some parties take stands that are closer to their own than other parties. The link

between voter and party thus becomes indirect via issue positions rather than group identification. Where links are direct, indirect links may also exist. No religious party could count on undying support from a religious group without taking issue positions that were compatible. In addition, parties may choose to court voters outside the group on the basis of popular issue positions, and thus enhance their strength through various indirect linkages.

In the Netherlands the direct link between religion and vote choice has long been dominant and it will therefore receive the most attention here. Three conditions must be met in order for a direct link between voters and parties to exist. First of all, there must be political parties that are based upon religious principles and who direct their appeal to a specific religious group or denomination. Second, voters must identify with one of these religious groups. Finally, voters must make a conscious link between their religious identification and the associated political party. Each of these conditions will be examined. By showing how changes have occurred, particularly in the latter two conditions, we can show how the process of secularisation of voting has taken place in the Netherlands and how the importance of religion has declined. Because of this decline, brief attention will also be given to the indirect link, by examining which issues are important in this regard and how opinions on these particular issues have evolved.

Religious political parties

The first mass political party in the Netherlands was the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP), which was founded in 1879 by Abraham Kuyper, a very skilled organiser who also united dissidents who had split off from the Dutch Reformed Church into the *Gereformeerde* Churches. The name of the political party was chosen to show the opposition of these orthodox Calvinists to certain aspects of the liberal philosophy of the French Revolution, particularly the principle of popular sovereignty. Earlier in the century, the leader of the movement, G. Groen van Prinsterer, had formulated this opposition in his statement 'Against the Revolution, the Gospel'. Instead of popular sovereignty, sovereignty was given by God and could best be exercised through the monarchy of the House of Orange (Andeweg and Irwin 1993; Gladdish 1991; Koole 1995).

The ARP is the prototype of a political party that satisfies the first condition specified earlier. The party was founded as the political arm of a social movement for the emancipation of a specific group in society, a goal that fits easily within its broader aim of producing a religious revival within Dutch society in general. This group is known in Dutch as the *kleine luyden*, a term that is not easily translated, but it refers roughly to shopkeepers, artisans, clerks for example, who made up what now might be called the lower middle class. The group felt that it was discriminated against, not only because of their social position, but also because of their orthodox religious beliefs. In addition to the church and political party, Kuyper set up a newspaper to be the mouthpiece of the movement and a university to train an intellectual elite. Eventually virtually every area of life,

including school, health care, broadcasting, and trade unions had organisations oriented towards members of this religious group. Other groups followed this lead and there developed the Dutch system known as *verzuiling* or pillarisation (Lijphart 1968). Three, possibly four, pillars emerged: Protestant, Catholic, Socialist and Liberal.

Within three decades after its founding, a split had occurred within the ARP. Religious and political differences (the latter over the extension of popular suffrage) led to the establishment in 1908 of the second political party for Protestants, the Christian Historical Union (CHU). Those opposed to the expansion of suffrage left the ARP to found the CHU; the CHU was also more oriented to the dominant Dutch Reformed Church (Van Spanning 1988).

Disagreement over religious and political questions, such as the separation of church and state and the possibility of co-operation with the Catholics, led to another split within the Anti-Revolutionary movement and the founding of the Political Reformed Party (SGP) in 1918. This party is oriented to specific small denominations of orthodox Calvinists and remains ultra-conservative in its political opinions. The party has been represented continuously in Parliament since 1922.

Since the Second World War, other Protestant parties have emerged. The Reformed Political League (GPV) resulted from yet another theological disagreement within the *Gereformeerde* Churches in 1948 and has been represented in Parliament since 1963. Disapproval of the merger of the three largest religious parties and opposition to liberalisation of abortion seem to have been the main impetus for the founding of the Reformed Political Federation (RPF) in 1975.

Catholics were elected to Parliament in the nineteenth century, but what was to become the political arm of the Catholic emancipation movement was not established until 1926. The Roman Catholic State Party (RKSP) received the support of the Church hierarchy to become and remain the only lasting political party for Catholics. After the Second World War the party was renamed the Catholic People's Party (KVP) and opened itself up for membership to non-Catholics who could support its principles and policies. It remained, however, a party for Catholics, drawing virtually all its support from this group and virtually none from non-Catholics (Bakvis 1981; Houska 1985; Irwin and van Holsteyn 1989a; Thurlings 1971). Catholic splinter parties have appeared briefly (the Catholic National Party in 1948 and 1952 and the Roman Catholic Party Netherlands in the 1970s), but these have never had major or lasting influence.

The three major religious parties (ARP, CHU and KVP), together with the PvdA and VVD, formed the five parties that dominated Dutch politics after the Second World War. In the 1960s the Christian Historicals and the Catholics began to lose support and cries went up to form a single Christian Democratic party. To the surprise of many, this was achieved in 1980 when the three officially merged into the CDA (ten Napel 1992; Verkuil 1992). There is thus now a single major party for Christians (CDA) and three smaller parties for Protestants (SGP, GPV, RPF). In the near future it is likely that there will be only two smaller Protestant

parties. In January 2000 the membership assemblies of the GPV and RPF approved a proposal of both party executives to form a political union. The new party will bear the name ChristianUnion and will continue to bear a clear religious identification: 'The ChristianUnion is a federation of Christians. Not simply because in the country the most votes count, but because Christians belong together' stated the folder that was distributed on the day the vote was taken. Mergers have thus reduced the number of religious parties (or will do so in the near future), but all clearly satisfy the condition of being parties that aim their appeal at voters with a religious identification.

Secularisation

No political party based upon religion can gain votes if there are no adherents who identify with the relevant religious group. In the Netherlands the major religious denominations have been the Dutch Reformed, the *Gereformeerden* or Calvinists, and the Roman Catholics. The first national census in the Netherlands was carried out in 1879 and provided accurate information concerning the size of the three groups. With the exception of the period of the Second World War, a national census was held approximately every ten years until 1971. No census has been carried out after this date, but the increasing use of public opinion surveys allows estimates to be made of the percentages of the Dutch population adhering to the major religious denominations for each election year through to 1998 (see Table 6.1).

The secularisation of the Netherlands in the 120 years since the first census is clearly revealed in this table. In 1879, less than one per cent of the Dutch population did not express adherence to a religious denomination. Until 1930, this percentage remained less than 10 per cent. In the post-war period, however, it has climbed steeply. By 1960 it had risen to about 20 per cent and in the ensuing period it again more than doubled. At the end of the century, approximately half of the Dutch population did not express adherence to a religion. This rise is dramatic and represents a substantial reduction in the electoral market to which religious parties can direct their appeal.

Examination of the figures for the various denominations shows the losses are by far the greatest for the Dutch Reformed. In the first census a majority of the population reported adherence to this denomination, but the percentage has declined at every year represented in Table 6.1. By the 1930s a majority had become one-third; by 1971 one-quarter; 1977 one-fifth; 1989 one-sixth; and 1998 one-ninth. By contrast, the other Protestant group, the *Gereformeerden*, has remained relatively stable. After Kuyper broke from the Dutch Reformed Church in 1887, this group formed approximately 8 per cent of the population in the census of 1889. This rose slightly during the twentieth century to a sample estimate of 11 per cent in 1971. The most recent estimates indicate a slight decline to 7 per cent in 1998.

The percentage of Catholics in the population grew slowly throughout the century, probably due to a higher birthrate, reaching peaks of 40.4 per cent in the

Table 6.1 Percentages of Dutch population (for survey figures: electorate) reporting adherence to religious groups

	Roman Catholic	*Dutch Reformed*	*Calvinist (Gereformeerd)*	*Other*	*No religious adherence*	
According to census figures						
1879	35.9	54.5	3.5	5.8	0.3	
1889	35.4	48.6	8.2	6.2	1.5	
1899	35.1	48.4	8.1	6.1	2.3	
1909	35.0	44.2	9.7	6.1	5.0	
1920	35.6	41.2	9.5	5.9	7.8	
1930	36.4	34.5	9.4	5.3	14.4	
1947	38.5	31.1	9.7	3.7	17.0	
1960	40.4	28.3	9.3	3.6	18.3	
1971	40.4	23.5	9.4	3.1	23.6	
According to survey figures						*N=*
1959	37	28	10	4	21	1,927
1967	27	30	9	3	20	4,158
1971	39	25	11	4	21	2,489
1972	34	22	10	3	30	1,603
1977	34	20	9	2	35	1,853
1981	36	17	9	3	35	2,297
1982	34	16	8	5	37	1,537
1986	31	15	6	4	44	1,623
1989	29	15	8	5	43	1,752
1994	25	14	6	4	50	1,804
1998	28	11	7	7	47	12,098

Source: Census figures are from the Central Bureau of Statistics; no census has been held since 1971. The 1959 survey figures are from Faber *et al.* (1970: 98); the remainder are from the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies (DPES). See also Irwin and van Holsteyn (1989a: 34).

1960 and 1971 censuses. Since 1971 a decline has set in, so that 100 years after the first census the percentage of Catholics was back at its original level. In the past two decades, this decline has been somewhat more rapid so that the most recent estimates are that as few as one-quarter of the population still identify themselves as Catholics.

Simply responding, 'Catholic', 'Dutch Reformed', or '*Gereformeerd*' may in itself be insufficient to satisfy the condition set above for voting for a religious party. As any priest or pastor is all too aware, many adherents are that in name only. On the other hand, those who testify to no religious adherence may be camouflaging a residue of adherence that may still exert some influence. A simple survey request for possible identification with a religious group does not capture the nuances that may be embedded in the responses. Therefore, before examining the voting behaviour of the groups in Table 6.1, it is useful to develop a typology that better disentangles the various subtleties of religious adherence.

The typology developed by Pijnenburg (Pijnenburg and van Holsteyn 1987) subdivides both the secular and religious identifiers into two categories. Those who claim no religious adherence are divided into those who were raised in a religious environment and those who were not. The latter can truly be called secular, whereas the former is secularised. Those who profess a religious adherence are subdivided according to the degree to which they practice their religion. Those who respond that they attend religious services on a weekly basis are termed practitioners, whereas those who attend less often are merely adherents. If these four categories can be conceived as representing points on a continuum of increasing strength of religious adherence, they would be ordered Secularists, Secularised, Adherents, and Practitioners.

The frequency distribution across the four categories can only be computed from the sample surveys of the Dutch Parliamentary Election Study (DPES) and is therefore only available for the elections from 1971 through 1998.[1] The results for these years are presented in Table 6.2 and provide additional insights into the process of secularisation. We note first that the percentage of those who report that they were not raised in a religious environment has remained relatively stable across these years at about one-fifth of the population. Since in Table 6.1 a substantial rise in the percentage with no religious adherence was found, these must of necessity be found in the group that has been secularised.[2] In the 1971 survey the percentage of Secularised was considerably less than the Secularists, 13 versus 19 per cent. By 1998 the percentage exceeded that of the Secularists, 29 versus 23 per cent. The percentage of secularised *Gereformeerden* in the population may have doubled, but this is only a jump from about 2 to about 4 per cent. The percentage of secularised Dutch Reformed has risen by about half (from 6 to 9 per cent), but the bulk of the change has come from Catholics. In 1971 only 5 per cent of the sample fell into the secularised Catholic category; in 1998 this had risen to 17 per cent, a rise of more than 300 per cent. For the future, the secularised category can grow only if this process continues and those in the adherents and practitioners categories become secularised. The children of the secularised, however, will most likely end up in the secularist category. In either case it seems unlikely that a direct link between these voters and a religious party will exist.

It is the decline in church attendance, revealed here in the group 'Practitioners' that most clearly demonstrates the decline in importance of religion. In a major survey of religious attitudes (in 1966) 43 per cent of the population reported attendance at a church service on the previous Sunday. In 1996 this had declined to 17 per cent (Dekker, De Hart and Peters 1997: 15). Among church members, 'regular' attendance dropped in this period from 77 per cent to 44 per cent. The national election studies, which provide the data for the analysis here, begin only in 1971, but the decline in the percentage of Practitioners between 1971 and 1998 reveals the same pattern. First we can note a well-known fact: the *Gereformeerden* have always been more faithful in church attendance than the Dutch Reformed. Although the latter had approximately two and a half times as many adherents in 1971, the percentages of practitioners are about equal (7 per cent). In both cases this has declined a few per cent, but substantially in relative terms, by 1998. It is

Table 6.2 Religious typology, 1971–98

	1971	*1977*	*1981*	*1986*	*1989*	*1994*	*1998*
Secular	19	21	20	23	21	26	23
Secularised							
– Catholic	5	8	8	13	13	16	17
– Dutch Reformed	6	6	7	8	8	9	9
– *Gereformeerd*	2	1	2	3	4	4	3
Adherents							
– Catholic	14	22	26	25	25	21	27
– Dutch Reformed	12	14	12	9	9	10	7
– *Gereformeerd*	2	2	2	2	2	3	2
Practitioners							
– Catholic	25	15	12	9	7	6	4
– Dutch Reformed	7	5	4	4	4	3	3
– *Gereformeerd*	7	4	7	4	6	3	4
N=	2184	1622	2081	1432	1539	1624	1806

Source: DPES 1971–98.

again the Catholics among whom the change is dramatic. In 1971 roughly one quarter of the Dutch population could be classified as Catholic practitioners. By 1998 this percentage had fallen to a level of only 4 per cent, roughly equivalent to the size of the two Protestant denominations. Together, the three groups comprise only about one-ninth of the population.[3]

Those who do not, or no longer, attend services weekly must be found in either the Secularised or Adherents categories. We have just seen that the secularised category has increased. This is also true, but to a lesser degree, for the Adherents. The table reveals a jump for Adherents among Catholics from 1971 to 1977, but a fairly constant level thereafter. The percentage of *Gereformeerden* who profess a religious identification, but who do not attend services weekly continues to be small (about 2 per cent). The percentage of Dutch Reformed among Adherents has actually declined. For this reason, the overall percentage for this category has risen less than that found among the Secularised.

Deconfessionalisation

The decline in religious identification does not tell the complete story of change in the Netherlands. Our third condition for linking religious beliefs and vote choice specified that in order to cast a vote via a direct link between religious identification and a political party, the identifier must make a cognitive link between the two. Such a voter must see his or her religious beliefs as a guide in politics. Such a link is not an imperative, since a voter might not establish it and prefer to vote according to their social class, ideology, or some other factor. One can and may keep religion and politics separate. Yet some voters do see their

religious beliefs as a guide to political beliefs; they may even be encouraged to do so by their religious leaders. Such beliefs, however, are subject to change. Weakening the cognitive link between religious beliefs and politics is generally referred to in the Netherlands as deconfessionalisation.

The *God in the Netherlands* studies have traced various changes in religious beliefs, both on questions of orthodoxy and of the relation between religion and politics, between 1966 and 1996 (Dekker, De Hart and Peters 1997). The percentages holding traditional beliefs have declined. For example, those believing:

- in a God who is involved in the life of every person declined from 47 per cent to 24 per cent
- Christ to be the Son of God declined from 59 per cent to 39 per cent
- that the Bible is the word of God declined from 56 per cent to 31 per cent
- that natural disasters were the will of God declined from 40 per cent to 11 per cent
- in the usefulness of prayer declined from 65 per cent to 45 per cent.

In general, there was a decline from 38 per cent to 11 per cent in the size of the population that could be classified as 'strongly traditional-orthodox'(ibid.: 22).

The decline in orthodoxy does not imply that religion has lost all its importance. The percentage that did not consider itself religious did not increase between 1979 and 1996, and the percentage that said that religion had no meaning in their life rose only from 28 per cent to 37 per cent. However, most importantly here, religion has become more of a personal matter and is seen less often as the foundation upon which all areas of life should be organised. Beliefs that broadcasting organisations, sports clubs, trade unions, youth organisations for example should be organised along religious lines have declined substantially. Even those believing that political parties should be based upon religion declined from 35 per cent to 30 per cent between 1979 and 1996, whereas those who believed that religion and politics should not be separated dropped from one-third in 1966 to one-fifth of the population in 1996 (ibid.: 35–6).

In the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies, the statement 'Religion is a good guide in politics' has been posed to measure the belief in a link between religion and politics. This statement is useful because it does not refer to either organised religions or to the history of *verzuiling* in the Netherlands, but can capture the more personal nature of religion that has become more important in recent decades.[4] The responses to this statement for the period 1971 to 1998 are found in Table 6.3. The change in responses during this period is not as dramatic as one might have thought based upon the results in the previous tables. In fact, the figures reveal more stability than change. It is true that the percentage agreeing fully has declined from 12 per cent to 6 per cent, but if we look only at the distinction between 'agree' and 'disagree', the percentages are the same in 1998 as in 1971. This could indicate that, whereas participation in organised religion and beliefs about how society should be organised have altered, the importance of personal faith as a guide for political thinking has not changed so dramatically.

Belief that religion is a good guide in politics is strongly linked to one's own religious position. In Table 6.4, the percentages in full agreement with the statement are reported for each of the categories of the typology for the period 1971–98. Again, little change is found during the last three decades. Although the size of the various groups may have changed, the percentages agreeing with the statement are quite stable. In general it would seem that the *Gereformeerden* in all groups are the most likely to agree with the statement and the Catholics the least likely. However, it is not the change through the years or by religious denomination, but the difference between the categories that is most important here. In general, those who attend services weekly tend to agree that faith is a good guide in politics, whereas those who were not raised in a religion and those who have left a religious denomination generally disagree. In the remaining group – the Adherents – about half tend to agree that faith is a good guide.

Religious voting

We described the process of secularisation and deconfessionalisation in the Netherlands in the previous section. We have seen that the percentage of the population identifying with a religious group has declined, and among those who claim identification, church attendance has declined. Orthodox beliefs have also declined, and some ideas related to religion and politics have changed. Some voters believe that religion is a good guide in politics and some do not; such beliefs are strongly related to the religious typology. The analysis now proceeds by examining how these beliefs are related to political behaviour, that is, in voting for a religious party.

Table 6.5 provides a breakdown of the vote for religious parties for the ten categories of the religious typology. The most important conclusion to be drawn is that, although at the macro-level much change has taken place, at the individual level religious behaviour remains an important factor in determining vote choice in the Netherlands. The more religious one is, the more likely one is to cast a religious vote. Only in the elections of 1986 and 1989, when the CDA was riding high on the popularity of Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, did the party gain more than four per cent of the vote from those who were not raised in a religious denomination. On the other hand, those who attend religious services weekly generally tend to vote for a religious party. Seldom do less than three-quarters of these voters fail to cast a vote for a religious party. Between these extremes, either attending services less frequently or leaving the church has a strong impact on the likelihood of supporting a religious party. To a considerable extent, when one weakens or loses one's religious identification the party 'identification' is lost as well. Those who attend religious services less than once a week are considerably less likely to vote for a religious party than the weekly attenders. Among those who are adherents, but not practitioners, only between one quarter and one half generally vote for a religious party.

Relinquishing one's religious identification, that is, becoming secularised, has an even greater impact. According to Table 6.2, this group is growing in size,

Table 6.3 Religion as a guide in politics, 1971–98

'Religion is a a good guide in politics'							
	1971	*1977*	*1981*	*1986*	*1989*	*1994*	*1998*
Fully agree	12	12	16	10	10	6	6
Agree	28	28	27	28	29	27	33
Disagree	43	38	30	35	42	45	47
Fully disagree	18	22	27	27	19	21	14
N=	1,730	1,583	1,705	1,283	1,476	1,471	1,757

Source: DPES 1971–98.

Table 6.4 Religion as guide and religious typology, 1971–98

Percentage of voters who (fully) agree with the statement: 'Religion is a good guide in politics'							
	1971	*1977*	*1981*	*1986*	*1989*	*1994*	*1998*
Secular	15	13	15	9	15	8	15
Secularised							
– Catholic	18	10	16	7	12	13	18
– Dutch Reformed	19	12	13	23	17	16	18
– *Gereformeerd*	30	5	37	17	25	21	26
Adherents							
– Catholic	27	33	41	42	39	43	46
– Dutch Reformed	38	32	50	59	47	49	52
– *Gereformeerd*	50	57	66	55	62	82	51
Practitioners							
– Catholic	54	64	71	76	82	78	77
– Dutch Reformed	75	94	86	96	98	90	95
– *Gereformeerd*	87	96	94	90	99	98	92

Source: DPES 1971–98.

while their support for religious parties is diminishing. They almost never vote for a smaller religious party, and support for the CDA has declined. In 1994 and 1998 electoral support in this group was only a few percentage points higher than among the Secular voters. Support for the party is not independent of the religious identification; voters who loosen their ties with religion do not maintain a loyalty to the party, but change their vote as well.

Within the groups of our religious typology, the specific denomination of the voter retains an effect. In each of the categories it is the group *Gereformeerden* who generally are stronger in their support of religious parties. In part this is related to the fact that they have more parties to choose from, since the smaller religious parties are all oriented toward this denomination. In part, it is an artefact or 'effect' of the findings in Table 6.4, which showed that this denomination more

often agreed that religion was a good guide in politics than the other denominations in any of the categories. It must be noted, however, that the choice of party, particularly among the Practitioners, is changing. The percentage of Protestant Practitioners who cast a vote for the CDA (or its predecessors) has declined from 60 to 70 per cent to less than 50 per cent in May 1998. More of the *Gereformeerden* cast a vote for a small religious party at the most recent parliamentary elections than for the CDA.

Catholic Practitioners are now the group most likely to cast a CDA vote, but as was seen in Table 6.2, it is this group that has declined most rapidly over recent decades. The 72 per cent in Table 6.5 now comes from only 4 per cent of the population. Since Catholic Adherents have become the largest single category in this typology, their voting behaviour is of considerable importance. Support for the CDA remained above 40 per cent through the 'Lubbers' elections of the second half of the 1980s, but has dropped dramatically in the elections in the 1990s.

Table 6.5 thus establishes that the more religious a person is, the more likely they are to vote for a religious political party. Above we have argued that this relationship is not automatic, but that it comes about because voters with religious beliefs feel that these beliefs are a good guide in politics. There is a cognitive link between their religious beliefs and behaviour and their political beliefs and behaviour. Table 6.4 has shown that there is a relationship between religious beliefs and agreement with the statement that religion is a good guide in politics. In Table 6.6 these two variables are linked with voting behaviour. In order not to make the table completely unwieldy, the various denominations have been combined to create only the four major categories of the religious

Table 6.5 Religious typology and vote for a religious party, 1971–98

	1971			*1977*			*1981*		
	*CDA**	*small rel.**	*total rel.*	*CDA*	*small rel.*	*total rel.*	*CDA.*	*small rel.*	*total rel.*
Secular	4	–	4	4	–	4	3	–	3
Secularised									
– Catholic	15	–	15	15	1	16	7	1	8
– Dutch Ref.	2	–	2	10	–	10	8	–	8
– *Gereformeerd*	6	–	6	–	–	–	4	4	8
Adherents									
– Catholic	36	–	36	41	–	41	42	0	42
– Dutch Ref.	16	1	17	21	–	21	23	–	23
– *Gereformeerd*	62	7	69	46	5	51	44	4	48
Practitioners									
– Catholic	74	–	74	75	1	76	82	1	83
– Dutch Ref.	64	15	79	69	14	83	52	19	71
– *Gereformeerd*	70	22	92	91	3	94	69	20	89

(continued on next page)

Table 6.5 (continued)

	1986			*1989*		
	*CDA**	*small rel.**	*total rel.*	*CDA*	*small rel.*	*total rel.*
Secular	7	–	7	8	–	8
Secularised						
– Catholic	18	–	18	14	–	14
– Dutch Ref.	10	–	10	17	–	17
– *Gereformeerd*	19	–	19	22	–	22
Adherents						
– Catholic	45	0	45	48	–	48
– Dutch Ref.	36	–	36	38	1	39
– *Gereformeerd*	57	4	61	48	3	51
Practitioners						
– Catholic	73	–	73	79	1	80
– Dutch Ref.	64	19	83	42	36	78
– *Gereformeerd*	63	30	93	58	39	97
	1994			*1998*		
	*CDA**	*small rel.**	*total rel.*	*CDA*	*small rel.*	*total rel.*
Secular	3	–	3	2	–	2
Secularised						
– Catholic	7	1	8	4	–	4
– Dutch Ref.	3	–	3	1	–	1
– *Gereformeerd*	6	–	6	11	–	11
Adherents						
– Catholic	35	0	35	29	–	29
– Dutch Ref.	23	–	23	21	2	23
– *Gereformeerd*	50	5	55	42	3	45
Practitioners						
– Catholic	65	1	66	72	–	72
– Dutch Ref.	54	23	77	48	40	88
– *Gereformeerd*	50	42	92	42	50	92

Note: *For 1971 votes for the KVP, ARP and CHU have been added and listed under CDA; for the smaller religious parties, in 1971 these were the SGP and GPV, in 1977 SGP, GPV and RKPN, in 1981 SGP, GPV RKPN and RPF, and in later years the votes for SGP, GPV en RPF are combined.

Source: DPES 1971–98.

typology, and all religious parties have been combined. Table 6.6 thus reports the percentage voting for a religious party for each of the categories and whether or not they have agreed with the statement.

In each of the religious types for each and every election, making a cognitive link between one's religious beliefs and political beliefs has a strong effect upon

voting. As seen above, very few of the Secular voters agree that religion is a good guide in politics. However, among those who do, the percentage voting for a religious party is generally somewhat higher. Most interesting are the elections of 1986 and 1989, in which 26 per cent and 11 per cent (of these very small groups) voted for a religious party. These were the elections in which the CDA Prime Minister Lubbers was extremely popular. Apparently this popularity appealed more to those who were more open to religion and politics than those who were not.

The impact of the cognitive link between religion and politics is even stronger among the Secularised. For this group, the percentage voting for a religious party is several times greater among those agreeing with the statement than among those disagreeing. Again, the highest percentages are for the elections of 1986 and 1989. For both this group and the Secular group, failure to make the cognitive link makes it extremely unlikely that one casts a religious vote. The percentages seldom rise above 5 per cent, the exceptions again being 1986 and 1989.

The largest group in size was the Adherents. Whereas the Secularised no longer profess a religious identification, this group still identifies with a denomination but does not attend services as frequently as the Practitioners. For the Adherents the cognitive link between religion and politics becomes extremely important in determining whether an individual will support a religious party or not. Among those who agree with the statement, about half, with a low of 40 per cent in 1971 and a high of 60 per cent in 1989, vote for a religious party. Among those individuals who disagree with the statement, only about a quarter, with a low of 14 per cent in 1998 and a high of 36 per cent in 1986, vote for a religious party.

Finally, even among the most religious group, the cognitive link makes a difference. As was seen in Table 6.4, very few of these voters do not agree that religion is a good guide. However, when they do, the percentage supporting a religious party drops to below that of those who do agree. Attending services weekly and linking religion and politics is a virtual guarantee that voters will support a religious party.

Indirect effects

Because of the Dutch tradition of *verzuiling* and the long-time predominance of religious parties, the analysis so far has stressed the direct link between religion and politics. As has just been shown, when voters combine a religious identification, religious behaviour, and establish a cognitive link between religion and politics, a vote for a religious party is almost a certainty. When any of these factors is missing, support for religious parties declines. Since the process of secularisation has meant that fewer people have a religious identification and attend religious services less often, religious parties have suffered. With these changes it becomes more important to examine the less direct links between religion and politics. In the indirect link, parties take positions on the issues that have an appeal to people who may share Christian

Table 6.6 Voting for a religious party and religion as a good guide in politics, 1971–98

	1971		*1977*		*1981*		*1986*	
	Religion as a good guide?		*Religion as a good guide?*		*Religion as a good guide?*		*Religion as a good guide?*	
	yes	*no*	*yes*	*no*	*yes*	*no*	*yes*	*no*
Secular	14	1	8	2	3	3	26	6
Secularised	19	3	29	8	21	5	38	14
Adherents	40	15	50	25	51	26	54	36
Practitioners	80	49	89	56	89	68	85	52

	1989		*1994*		*1998*	
	Religion as a good guide?		*Religion as a good guide?*		*Religion as a good guide?*	
	yes	*no*	*yes*	*no*	*yes*	*no*
Secular	11	7	4	3	2	2
Secularised	34	13	19	3	9	2
Adherents	60	35	45	21	43	14
Practitioners	88	63	82	36	87	74

values, even if they are not strongly religious or involved in organised religion. The first step in the analysis is to establish which issues might have such an impact.

Sartori (1976: 335) labelled the Netherlands as one of the few two-dimensional party systems. The predominant dimension throughout most of the twentieth century has been the socio-economic left–right dimension, and this is found not only in the Netherlands but also in the other countries included in this volume. In the Netherlands, however, a secondary dimension based upon a nineteenth century definition of left–right (Lipschits 1969), that is, based upon the religious–secular distinction can still be found (Irwin *et al.* 1987). It is this dimension that has been revived at the end of the twentieth century to serve as the basis for the so-called 'purple' coalition between (red) Labour and (blue) Liberals (and Democrats 66), excluding the Christian Democrats, in 1994 and 1998.

In previous analyses of voting behaviour in the Netherlands, we have utilised this two-dimensionality to describe an issue space consisting of heartlands of support for the three major parties (Labour, Liberal, Christian Democrats) and a 'battlefield' in which they fight for votes (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 1989b; 1997). In terms of political issues, this space is defined by the question of reduction of differences in income (representing the social-economic dimension) and abortion or euthanasia (representing the religious-secular dimension). Those who are opposed to abortion and euthanasia define the heartland for religious parties. Within this heartland, the CDA must compete with the smaller religious parties. If the CDA is to win votes via an indirect relationship with the voter, that is because of the issue positions of the party rather than directly via religious identification, issues related to this dimension must play some role.

The analyses based upon the heartland model will not be repeated here, but the two-dimensionality of the system can be demonstrated in another fashion as well. Since 1977 issue questions have been posed in the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies based upon seven-point scales. Survey respondents are presented a scale for which the two endpoints are labelled and asked to place themselves on one of the points on the scale. Table 6.7 presents the degree of association between these scales and the four category religious typology that was employed earlier.[5]

Abortion and euthanasia are the only political issues that show strong statistical associations with the religious typology. For all other issues the differences in opinions found among the four types are so small that the association is quite weak: Practitioners have views that differ little from the Secular. If the CDA is to win votes on the basis of issues it must formulate positions that will be acceptable to its most traditional supporters, the Practitioners, while attempting to draw extra votes from the other groups. The only issues for which this seems possible are issues associated with the religious–secular dimension, such as abortion and euthanasia. In Table 6.8, the percentages of each group opposing abortion and euthanasia are reported for each of the years in which the questions were asked.

The percentages in Table 6.8 show that the indirect link between voters and the religious parties adds little to the direct link. By no means all of the Practitioners are opposed to making abortion or euthanasia available under certain circumstances. Only about 60 per cent of this group have generally opposed such measures. This is less than the percentage found in Tables 6.5 and 6.6 for the percentage of the group votes for a religious party. There are thus Practitioners who vote for a religious party that does not oppose liberalisation of abortion or euthanasia.

Outside this group the picture is even bleaker. Among Adherents, only in 1977 was the percentage opposing abortion more than even half that of the Practitioners. In that year, 35 per cent opposed abortion, but that percentage declined during the following decade, and the percentage opposing euthanasia has declined even further. This decline is also found among the other groups. The

Table 6.7 Association (asymmetric Somer's d) between religious typology and issue position, 1977–98

Issue	*1977*	*1981*	*1986*	*1989*	*1994*	*1998*
Abortion	–0.363	–0.409	–0.383	–0.389		
Euthanasia			–0.360	–0.412	–0.287	–0.324
Income differences	0.149	–0.92	–0.133	–0.100	–0.60	–0.41
			–0.150			
Nuclear power	–0.54	–0.148	–0.175	–0.82	–0.60	0.92
			0.008			
Crime					–0.73	
Defence	0.152					
Asylum seekers						0.34
European unification						0.51
Ethnic minorities						0.81
Social benefits						–0.14

Table 6.8 Percentages among various religious groups opposing abortion and euthanasia, 1977–98

	1977	*1981*	*1986*	*1989*	*1994*	*1998*
	Abortion					
Secular	12	11	6	12		
Secularised	16	16	10	7		
Adherents	35	26	26	23		
Practitioners	55	62	66	72		
			Euthanasia			
Secular			10	4	4	5
Secularised			15	8	8	5
Adherents			24	23	15	18
Practitioners			60	66	55	61

Secularised group began at about 16 per cent and has declined to less than 5 per cent; the Secular group began lower at about 12 per cent but has now declined to the same level.

Our conclusion is that the process of secularisation that was found in religious identification and behaviour can also be found in position on 'religious', ethical issues. The Secularised and Adherent groups have increased in size during the past three decades. Yet the percentages holding views that might lead them to support a religious party on the basis of its policy views have declined. In 1998 there were very few voters other than the most religious Practitioners who adopted such a position.

In their own view

The direct link between religious voters and religious parties is more important in the Netherlands than the indirect link. This conclusion receives support if the voters 'speak for themselves'. In each of the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies, voters have been asked why they voted for the party of their choice. The responses on this open-ended question that were received most often for the CDA and the smaller religious parties are reported in Table 6.9.[6]

The dominance of the direct link is obvious. With the exception of 1986, religion is by far the most frequently given response for the smaller parties and comes no lower than second as the most frequently given response for CDA voters. Such voters identify with a specific denomination and translate this directly into support for the associated party. There are signs, however, that this link is weakening for CDA voters. Since 1981[7] the responses referring directly to religion have dropped to second place. In the two most recent elections, 'tradition' has replaced 'religion' in the top spot. Although additional research is still needed, this would seem to indicate a weakening of the link between voter and party; the voter no longer links his religious beliefs with the party, but votes for the party because he has always done so.

Table 6.9 Most frequently mentioned vote motivation for religious parties, 1971–98

		CDA		*Small confessional parties*
1971	1)	religion	1)	religion
	2)	tradition	2)	principles
	3)	principles	3)	tradition
1977	1)	religion	1)	religion
	2)	principles	2)	principles
	3)	tradition candidates	3)	tradition
1981	1)	religion	1)	religion
	2)	government coalition	2)	principles
	3)	principles	3)	programme issues
1986	1)	government coalition	1)	principles
	2)	candidates	2)	religion
	3)	programme	3)	tradition
1989	1)	government coalition	1)	religion
	2)	religion	2)	principles
	3)	candidates	3)	issues
1994	1)	tradition	1)	religion
	2)	religion	2)	programme
	3)	principles	3)	principles
1998	1)	tradition	1)	religion
	2)	religion	2)	programme
	3)	programme	3)	principles

Note: The motivations of voters of KVP, ARP and CHU have been combined here under the heading CDA. Under small religious parties the following parties have been included: in 1971 SGP and GPV; in 1972 and 1977 SGP, GPV en RKPN; in 1981 and 1982 SGP, GPV, RKPN and RPF; and after 1986 SGP, GPV and RPF.

Source: Based on van Holsteyn (1994; 2000).

Indications of support based on the party position on political issues are rare; these are not reported frequently enough to make it to the three most frequently given reasons for support. Voters do not indicate that they are attracted to the religious parties because of the policy positions they take. The elections of 1986 and 1989 show deviations in the responses given. In the tables above, we have seen that the percentages voting for the CDA were higher in those years than in other years, particularly outside the group of Practitioners. Here we see that the reasons given were those connected with the governing coalition and individual leaders. Earlier we noted that these were the years in which the CDA Prime Minister, Ruud Lubbers, was at the height of his popularity. In 1986 the party slogan was 'Let Lubbers finish his job', calling on voters to support the Prime Minister and his coalition (van Holsteyn and Irwin 1988; Van Der Eijk and Van Praag Jr. 1987). The success of this appeal is seen in these responses. We return to this particular point in the conclusion.

Conclusion

During the second half of the twentieth century dramatic changes took place in the Netherlands in the relationship between religion and politics. Whereas religious parties could once count on the solid support of large numbers of religious supporters, now this can only be said to be true for the smaller religious parties. The CDA has seen its electoral support decline and as a result has lost its position of dominance in Dutch politics. The processes that underlie this decline have been described in this chapter.

Of considerable importance is the fact that an increasing percentage of the Dutch population does not identify with one of the religious groups – Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed, and *Gereformeerd* – which formed the core of traditional support. Due to the secularisation of society, now less than half of the Dutch population claim a religious identification. Within these groups, substantial numbers who were raised in a religious tradition have lost their identification, while those who maintain identification attend services less frequently than in the past. Fewer people in the Netherlands believe in the more orthodox interpretations of the Bible and fewer now see it as a necessity that organisations be based upon religious principles. Religion has become more a personal commitment, although the percentage believing that religion serves as a good guide in political matters has fundamentally remained unchanged.

As a result of the processes of secularisation and deconfessionalisation voting for the major religious party, the CDA, has declined. In an analysis published following the 1994 election, we concluded that the 'structured' model of Dutch voting, based on religion and social class, was dying. It was no longer of much use as a guide to understanding the voting behaviour of voters under the age of forty (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 1997; Andeweg 1995). Nothing in the analysis here has indicated that the age range cannot simply be raised by another four years. Voting by means of a direct link between religion and politics has reached close to its minimum level.

Attracting voters by means of an indirect link, that is, issue positions, does not provide much hope for the CDA either. The electorate of the Netherlands can be described in terms of a two-dimensional issue space. It is along the religious-secular dimension that the party distinguishes itself from the secular parties. Yet the percentage of the population opposing liberalisation of abortion and euthanasia has declined. A majority of religious practitioners oppose liberalisation, but even among this group there are voters for the religious parties who do not take this stand. Outside these Practitioners, the percentages holding such views are insufficient to provide substantially more support for the CDA.

Two possibilities exist for the CDA. One is that it resigns itself to its minority position and becomes more or less similar to the smaller Protestant religious parties. It can continue to rely primarily upon its direct links with the three religious denominations and draw its support from the practitioners of these denominations. It can then expect to continue to decline somewhat in size until its minimum level has been reached.

The CDA does, however, have an important difference in tradition that separates it from the small Protestant parties: for three-quarters of the twentieth century it was a major governmental party. It could rely upon this history to generate support at elections. This was seen earlier in the responses as to reasons for vote choice given at the 1986 and 1989 elections. If it can capitalise on this tradition and generate a desire in the electorate that it returns to power, it can perhaps increase its vote. To return to power will, however, require the co-operation of other parties; the CDA can no longer dictate who will join the Cabinet.

With its traditional sources of support – the direct link and continued participation in government – the CDA has become a party similar to other parties. It can also not expect to gain large numbers of voters on issues such as abortion and euthanasia. Nevertheless, there is a glimmer of hope. Forty per cent of Dutch voters still feel that religion is a good guide in politics. The CDA may have become a party like all the others, but more than Labour or the Liberals, it can claim to be the protector of Christian values. If its position on issues can appeal to these values, it may possibly have an asset that other parties lack.

Finally, a popular leader could generate support for the CDA. The popularity of Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers was one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for voting for the party in 1986 and 1989. The personal appeal of party leaders is becoming of increasing importance in understanding the popularity of political parties in the Netherlands (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 1998; Irwin and Van Holsteyn 1999), and the CDA is no exception to this. However, Lubbers gained his popularity as Prime Minister, and this requires participation in the national Cabinet. Producing a popular leader nevertheless seems vital if the party is to increase its vote in the future. Barring a religious revival in the new Millennium the overall electoral outlook appears bleak for the CDA.

Notes

1 In this and subsequent tables, primarily for reasons of space, two elections have not been included. These are early elections, 1972 and 1982, which took place only approximately a year following regularly scheduled elections. Eliminating these elections leaves us with estimates at approximately three to five year intervals.
2 The percentages in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 do not correspond exactly because those with 'other' identification have been omitted and some respondents did not reply to the questions concerning church attendance and/or religious upbringing. In addition, a small number of respondents report conversion either from one religion or from a non-religious upbringing to a religious identification.
3 Undoubtedly less, since about 10 per cent of the sample have not been included in the Table; see also note 2.
4 It has a slight disadvantage in that it is possible for a respondent to refer to others, rather than oneself: Religion is a good guide . . . but not for me. Most respondents, however, seem to refer to their own situation when responding; if reference is to others, this still implies an acceptance of religion in politics that is stronger than that for respondents who reject the statement.
5 Both variables are treated as ordinal scales, and the measure reported is Somer's d with the issue position as the dependent variable.
6 See Van Holsteyn (1994) for a discussion of the use of open-ended questions to obtain

information concerning the motivation of voters, and for information on how the responses were coded.

7 To be more precise since 1982, but see note 1.

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7 Religious voting in a secular France

Pierre Bréchon

Introduction

The idea that a religious vote exists in France has a long pedigree. Historians have shown that Catholicism has been in conflict with the Republic since the French Revolution and throughout the nineteenth century (Rémond 1963; Cholvy 1991). Religious and political choice thus overlapped very closely. Good Catholics voted for the right and non-Catholics (or Catholics who had turned away from their Church) for the left. The left–right cleavage overlapped widely with the debate about the 'two Frances': on the one hand, Catholic France, and on the other hand, anti-religious France. Right-wing voters were in favour of a return to monarchy or a conservative Republic which would recognise the Church's power. To be left-wing meant both to be in favour of secularism and to argue for less clerical power.

The problem of Catholicism – which was the largest religion and which had legal status within the framework of the concordat negotiated between the Pope and Napoleon the First – was the major issue of political debate at the end of the nineteenth century (Beaubérot 1990; Bréchon 1995). To build a political system based on democratic ideals, on the pursuit of progress and reason, the radical left of the Third Republic thought it was essential to remove the Church's power and status. This meant in particular removing its power over young people's education. Additionally, the left believed that the Church should become a private institution, independent of the State. The 1905 law on the separation of Church and State realised this objective but it was also highly traumatic for Catholicism. Until the Liberation, this law, which recognized the individual's religious liberty while depriving Catholicism of its status as a recognised religion and the financial support it was receiving from the State, was not really accepted by Catholicism. Nevertheless the enforcement of this law was carried out in a flexible manner and in time, many arrangements were found which give a certain number of *de facto* advantages to Catholicism (and sometimes to Protestantism and Judaism).[1]

An example of this is the system of recognised denominations (*les cultes reconnus*) as specified by the concordat of 1801 which has continued to function in Alsace-Moselle; a territory which was occupied in 1905 by Germany and

which finally became French again after the First World War. In the same way, the clergy is entitled to make use of the social security system and Catholic schools are heavily subsidised by the State. Chaplains can operate in secondary schools, the army, prisons and hospitals; they are even paid by the State. The major religions are entitled to a few hours of broadcasting on public television, with part of the programmes being subsidised. Owing to these arrangements, the debate on the status of Catholicism is now peaceful and almost outmoded.

Nevertheless, we must note that the intensity of religious debates on the political stage has not given rise to a deep structuring of the French party system around this question (Mayeur 1980). France has never had a large Catholic party such as in Germany or Austria and Christian democracy has not had the same impact as in Italy. The French Catholics who were active in the field of politics split into different right-wing parties, and after the Second World War some of them also made their way towards the non-communist left and the socialist party. At the beginning of the 1950s, the electorates were still very differentiated from a religious point of view, as shown in Table 7.1.

The first works of electoral sociology, and particularly that of André Siegfried (1913), insisted on the stability of political outlooks. Each French region had its own political mindset, as was apparent in every election, while the right's areas of strength were also the areas where Catholicism was strongest. For Siegfried, in areas where the social order was controlled by the nobleman and the clergy, all other explanatory factors were insignificant; the vote there was massively directed towards the right. In this way, attention was drawn early on to the significant effect of the religious factor on voting decisions.

Mentalities have changed during the course of the twentieth century. The religious question is no longer at the centre of political debate, and Catholics seem to have become more autonomous in their electoral choices. It seems that they are no longer waiting for Catholicism to impose their political choices. In their view, the Church should not tell them how to vote. For large numbers of Catholics, voting expresses a political orientation, independent of their religion. Among active Catholics, new tendencies emerged, mostly after the Second World War, insisting that Christians should be politically committed and stressing the connection between faith in Jesus Christ's Gospel and left-wing political commitment. Finally, after the Vatican II Council, the French bishops thought

Table 7.1 Mass attendance of the different electorates in 1952 (horizontal %)

	Devout	*Observer*	*Weak mass attendance*	*No church attendance at all*
Communists	0	13	10	77
Socialists	9	24	21	46
Gaullists	50	26	12	12
Independents	56	29	9	6
Christian Democracy	73	23	2	2

Source: IFOP opinion poll on baptised Catholics, *Sondages*, 14, 4, 1952: 40.

long and hard about the links between religion and politics. This resulted in a declaration of the French episcopal conference (Matagrin 1972) which recognised the political pluralism of Catholics, even if it was clear that this pluralism has its limits and it was not admitted that a Catholic could vote and commit himself to a politics based on anti-evangelical values. Catholic pluralism does not go so far as to legitimate a communist vote, given that this ideology implies the recognition of atheism.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the left-wing militant tendencies of French Catholicism were thus very active. Among observers of French political life, there was much discussion as to whether Catholicism was moving to the left. Certain arguments seem to bear witness to this movement. The left made electoral progress during the 1970s and obtained some particularly good results in the 1977 municipal elections, even in some cities of western France, renowned for being Catholic territory. In fact, analysis of the opinion polls of the period (Peyrefitte 1978) leads us to the conclusion that Catholics were practising less and less. If some traditionally Catholic areas moved to the left, it is because Catholicism was less influential there. But during this period, practising Catholics remained massively orientated towards the right.[2] Thus, we are in a situation where priests and bishops make fewer and fewer political pronouncements during an electoral period, where believers think bishops are going beyond their role if they make such statements and where left-wing Catholic activists are more numerous than before. At the same time, the Catholic vote massively remains orientated towards the right.

To account for this apparent contradiction, some French political scientists point to the ways in which Catholics perceive the outside world. It is the Catholics' deeply conservative ideology that explains their largely constant and stable right-wing vote (Michelat and Simon 1977). Other political scientists have a more nuanced view. They explain that Catholics' world views are increasingly varied. There are different ways of being a Catholic and of expressing religious, ethical and political views (Donegani 1993).[3]

Secularisation and construction of a religious identity

One element of the debate must not be forgotten. From an historical and cultural point of view, France is both a secular and a Catholic country (Willaime 1998). But nowadays, France is one of the most secularised countries in Western Europe. Table 7.2, based on data from the 1998 International Social Survey Programme, shows that the three most secularised countries in Europe are Britain, France and the Netherlands.

Catholicism is losing its grip on the French people. The portion of French people with a strong Catholic identity, which influences all aspects of their life (and therefore their political and ethical choices), is increasingly limited, as shown in Table 7.3. The indicator of religious practice remains a very good overall measure of Catholic identity and of the degree of integration into Catholicism (Michelat 1990). It is strongly linked to the level of Catholic beliefs

Table 7.2 Secularisation in Europe and USA (1998 ISSP survey)*

% of secularised people according to various indicators	*Great Britain*	*France*	*Netherlands*	*Germany*	*Sweden*	*Norway*	*Spain*	*Portugal*	*Austria*	*Italy*	*Ireland*	*USA*
No religious denomination	*60*	*45*	*58*	26	29	11	17	8	13	10	14	19
Never attend religious services	*49*	*48*	*60*	14	27	34	22	8	21	20	6	19
Never pray	32	*41*	*40*	37	*46*	37	29	15	21	16	7	10
Feel not religious (4 to 7)	*58*	36	26	*42*	39	20	*43*	18	23	22	12	7
Do not believe in God	25	*38*	34	*43*	*37*	30	17	8	18	12	7	7
Do not believe in life after death	*50*	*42*	34	*49*	41	39	39	27	36	24	23	17
Bible is only a human book	*44*	42	30	34	*63*	*44*	24	18	29	12	25	16

Notes: *For each indicator, we put in italics the three highest percentages.

According to this understanding, Great Britain and France are, on five of the indicators, the most secularised countries.

Table 7.3 Integration into Catholicism as measured by church attendance

	1974	*1986*	*1994*
Regular attending Catholic	21	16	13
Occasional attending Catholic	18	15	15
Non-attending Catholic	48	50	39
Other religions	4	3	8
No religion	10	15	24

Source: in 1974, a SOFRES opinion poll; in 1986 a SOFRES opinion poll for *Le Monde*, *La Vie* and *France-Inter*, in 1994, a CSA opinion poll for *Le Monde*, *La Vie* and *ARM*. Both of the last two studies were carried out under the scientific direction of Guy Michelat, Julien Potel, and Jacques Sutter.

(more than in the past). Only about two French people out of three will currently admit to being Catholic, and only 13 per cent of the French go to mass at least once a month.[4] The 1952 opinion poll, already quoted, indicated that 37 per cent of the Catholics attended mass each week (compared to 9 per cent today). Conversely, an increasing number of French people (today at least one out of four) will admit to being without religion.

There is an increasing number of French people with extremely fluid beliefs, who build a universe of belief by borrowing both from old Catholic foundations and from other traditions. Non-practising Catholics however, have only loose beliefs that do not generate a strong identity which shapes their daily life. The religious impact on the vote is therefore more likely to be felt at the very end of a scale of integration into Catholicism, among people with strong Catholic beliefs and among those without religion. Today only a minority of French people possess a religious identity that marks all their attitudes, but a lot of people have a non-religious identity, one even sometimes constructed in opposition to religion. Furthermore, it is necessary to add that declining integration into Catholicism is largely a generational phenomenon. Old generations remain far more Catholic than young people (in 1994, approximately 3 per cent of the eighteen to twenty-four year old cohort practise at least once a month, while 36 per cent admitted to being without religion).

We must also add a word on the other religions in France. The second religion is incontestably Islam, religion of the immigrants coming from countries of the Maghreb. They are often omitted from opinion polls. They represent 5 to 6 per cent of the population, the Protestants 2 per cent, the Jews 1 per cent and all others about 1 per cent. Catholicism's prominent position makes it impossible to deal with the electoral behaviour of other religions from representative national opinion polls.[5]

In recent years, in France as in other countries, the paradigms of electoral analysis have evolved. The weight of so-called 'core' variables (cultural and social variables such as social class or religious identity) has increasingly been discussed (Habert and Lancelot 1988). Voting is said to depend on short-term factors and rational appreciation by the voters in each electoral context. The idea prevails that

Table 7.4 Percentage of left-wing vote in French elections (according to post-election surveys)

	Presi. 1965 1st ballot	*Legis. 1973 1st ballot*	*Presi. 1974 1st ballot*	*Presi. 1974 2nd ballot*	*Legis. 1978 1st ballot*	*Presi. 1981 1st ballot*	*Presi. 1981 2nd ballot*	*Legis. 1986 ballot*	*Presi. 1988 1st ballot A*
Mean	43	46	44	49	43	47	52	44	46
RPC	8	17	19	23	15	16	20	17	8
LPC	30	48	43	49	32	36	40	35	33
NAC	49	61	67	74	50	55	61	47	50
Without religion	72	79	79	86	70	76	88	75	69

	Presi. 1988 1st ballot B	*Presi. 1988 2nd ballot A*	*Presi. 1988 2nd ballot B*	*Legis. 1988 1st ballot*	*Legis. 1993 1st ballot*	*Presi. 1995 1st ballot A*	*Presi. 1995 1st ballot B*	*Presi. 1995 2nd ballot A*	*Presi. 1995 2nd ballot B*	*Legis 1997 1st ballot*
Mean	42	54	60	49	31	38	38	47	48	41
RPC	25	27	34	21	12	22	18	29	20	17
LPC	34	44	49	35	21	30	28	32	33	32
NAC	47	58	66	55	33	38	42	49	51	42
Without religion	60	75	86	80	50	55	60	69	71	60

Notes:
RPC means 'regularly practising Catholics', IPC 'irregularly practising Catholics' and NAC 'non-attending Catholics'. 'Regularly practising Catholics' are generally described as attending at least once a month, except for 1965 and 1973 and perhaps 1974 (attending once a week). Irregularly practising Catholics are those who go to mass several times a year.

For the first ballot of the 1974 presidential election, only the votes for François Mitterrand are taken into account and not the whole left-wing vote: 2.3% for Arlette Laguiller (Extreme left), 1.3% for René Dumont and 0.4% for Alain Krivine (Extreme left). This probably does not modify the results for the group of regularly practising Catholics but it does effectively underestimate the left vote of the 'without religion' category.

Data are always from SOFRES post-election polls, except for 1965 (IFOP poll). For 1988 and 1995, two polls are presented to show there can be some differences in the voting recall according to the categories of practice (B polls are CEVIPOF post-election studies). For 1997, the data are from the electoral survey (CEVIPOF, CIDSP, CRAPS) carried out between the two ballots.

The main reference used for this table is François Platone, *Les électorats sous la Vème République*, Cahiers du Cevipof, 2nd edition, September 1995.

Data of French post-election surveys and of some electoral polls are available at the CIDSP-BDSP (socio-political data bank), IEP of Grenoble, BP 48, 38040 Grenoble cedex 9. E-mail: cidsp@cidsp.upmf-grenoble.fr.

the weight of the core variables has not disappeared but that they are less and less important: individuals make up their mind independently and not according to long-standing loyalties. There is certainly some truth in this type of approach. Religious and social identities do not automatically produce a political identity; absorbing a right or left ideology cannot guarantee that people will vote in a

particular way (or indeed not vote at all, because abstention is important in certain elections). Nevertheless, the weight of the religious variable has by no means disappeared (Mayer and Perrineau 1992), as the rest of this chapter tries to show.

Left-wing voting and integration into Catholicism since 1965

If the religious variable no longer had any impact, Catholics would vote similarly to the rest of the French people. The percentage of left-wing voting among Catholics, particularly among practising Catholics, would come close to the period of the most important elections of the French Republic, the left-wing vote according to the degree of integration into Catholicism. Table 7.4 allows us to measure over the period of the most important elections of the Fifth Republic, the left-wing vote according to the degree of integration into Catholicism. We clearly see that integration into Catholicism remains an important factor influencing the vote throughout the period. For the first ballot of 1995 and 1997, approximately one regularly practising Catholic out of five voted for the left, a very close proportion to the one that was observed in the 1970s. At the other end of the scale, among people without religion, the left vote is, in contrast, very dominant: often around 80 per cent of people without any religion vote for the left.

We must, however, also note a fall in this level during the recent period, here this percentage has been around 60 per cent. This can be explained by both structural and circumstantial reasons. The structural reason relate to the fact that people without religion are far more numerous than in the past and are certainly less specific, ideologically speaking. Claiming to be without religion in a situation where Catholicism was far more dominant and where to be Catholic seemed natural was a strong stand and indicated a will to assert one's opposition to conservative and traditional religion. The circumstantial reasons are that the left was at its lowest point at the beginning of the 1990s and a certain number of left-wing voters, notably among the popular classes, were disappointed by fifteen years of socialism and were about to migrate towards abstention or towards other political forces, including the extreme right (either for a one-off vote or more permanently). In addition, there were certainly people disappointed with socialism among those without religion.

Claiming to be without religion has become easier nowadays in a climate of secularisation. People who declared themselves in the past to be without religion had also internalised a rejection of traditional values and were attached to secularism and to left-wing values. The universe of values of people without religion is more composite nowadays. Some of those unconcerned by religious values, have not especially internalised an opposition to traditional values or to Catholicism.

We can use the method of odds ratios (see Table 7.5) and try to measure more precisely the weakening of the effect of integration into Catholicism on the vote. This method consists of calculating a 'ratio of a ratio'.[6] For example, in 1965, a regularly practising Catholic had 29.6 more chances of voting for the right wing than someone without religion. Let us explain the

Table 7.5 Table of odds-ratios

	Ratio right/left for RPC		*Ratio right/left for no religion*	*Odds-ratios*
1965 Presidential election 1st ballot	(92/8=11.5)	/	(28/72=0.3888) =	29.6
1973 Legislative election 1st ballot	(83/17=4.8824)	/	(21/79=0.2658) =	18.4
1974 Presidential election 1st ballot	(70/19=3.6842)	/	(15/79=0.1899) =	19.4
1974 Presidential election 2nd ballot	(77/23=3.3478)	/	(14/86=0.1628) =	20.6
1978 Legislative election 1st ballot	(81/17=4.7647)	/	(13/81=0.1605) =	29.7
1981 Presidential election 1st ballot	(81/16=5.0625)	/	(16/76=0.2105) =	24.0
1981 Presidential election 2nd ballot	(80/20=4)	/	(12/88=0.1364) =	29.3
1986 Legislative election	(81/17=4.7647)	/	(23/75=0.3066) =	15.5
1988 Presidential election 1st ballot (A)	(76/20=3.8)	/	(27/69=0.3913) =	9.7
1988 Presidential election 1st ballot (B)	(71/27=2.6296)	/	(19/73=0.2602) =	10.1
1988 Presidential election 2nd ballot (A)	(73/27=2.7037)	/	(25/75=0.3333) =	8.1
1988 Presidential election 2nd ballot (B)	(66/34=1.9412)	/	(14/86=0.1628) =	11.9
1988 Legislative election 1st ballot	(78/21=3.7143)	/	(20/80=0.25) =	14.9
1993 Legislative election 1st ballot	(76/12=6.3333)	/	(32/50=0.64) =	9.9
1995 Presidential election 1st ballot (A)	(75/22=3.4090)	/	(39/55=0.7091) =	4.8
1995 Presidential election 1st ballot (B)	(81/18=4.5)	/	(38/58=0.6552) =	6.9
1995 Presidential election 2nd ballot (A)	(71/29=2.4482)	/	(31/69=0.4493) =	5.4
1995 Presidential election 2nd ballot (B)	(80/20=4)	/	(29/71=0.4084) =	9.8
1997 Legislative election 1st ballot	(77/17=4.5294)	/	(30/60=0.50) =	9.1

simple calculation worked out for each election, always taking 1965 as an example. A regular practising Catholic had 11.5 more chances of voting for the right than for the left wing, whereas someone without religion only had 0.3888 chances of behaving in the same way. By dividing the two ratios, we obtain the figure of 29.6.

It appears however, that the election of 1965 is a unique case, linked to a very high numerator (only 8 per cent of the practising Catholics voted for the left). At the 1967 legislative elections, 16 per cent of practising Catholics voted for the left, while 79 per cent of those without religion adopted the same behaviour.

The chances of a regularly practising Catholic voting for the right rather than for the left are 20.1 times higher than for someone without religion (Cautrès 1997). The odds-ratios for the first ballot of 1978 (29.7) and the second ballot of the 1981 presidential election (29.3) are also very striking results. They are largely due to the denominator: almost all the people without religion voted for the left. If we put aside these particular cases, the odds-ratio generally remains between 15 to 20 until the middle of the 1980s. For the 1988 presidential elections it declines appreciably owing to a weak numerator. This is a circumstantial effect. Practising Catholics were no longer afraid to re-elect François Mitterrand. Mitterrand was no longer allied to the communists and on the contrary he presented himself as an open-minded candidate, a candidate of consensus; moreover, he was the outgoing president and could therefore attract the 'conformist vote' that is quite common among practising Catholics. The odds-ratio is weak again in 1993, 1995 and 1997, because of an increase in the denominator, for the reason mentioned earlier (the weakening of the political specificity of people without religion, which probably has both circumstantial and structural causes).

In fact, we can see that the method of calculating the odds-ratios is interesting because it allows us to measure simply and in summary form the effect of religious integration. But it is a very sensitive indicator, and we must be careful in our interpretations as a result. This is all the more so since we can see that for any one election, depending on which opinion poll we consider, we can produce odds-ratios with noticeable differences. The most interesting fact that seems to emerge from this is that since the 1970s, the left–right ratio among practising Catholics has not really changed. If the general odds-ratios are in decline, it is essentially through the increase in the denominator, brought about by an increase in the number of people without religion.

We felt it would be interesting to take into account the age of voters to see if the same effect of integration into Catholicism is observed whatever the generation. We did this for the first ballot of 1995 (Table 7.6a) and 1997 (Table 7.6b).[7] Both tables have a very similar structure. We also considered the possibility that young Catholics, in a context of secularisation and individualism, might have lost their political specificity. In fact it is clear that these peculiarities still remain very strong. Young Catholics do not vote more for the left than older Catholics. The generation of the 35 to 49 year old cohort, who were 20 at the beginning of the 1970s, is the generation that votes most often for the left. It is the generation that has probably been the most marked by the rise of the left during the 1970s. One striking development among the under thirty-fives is the increase in people without religion who vote left less often. The results presented in Tables 7.6a and 7.6b therefore essentially confirm our previous analyses earlier in the chapter.

Integration into Catholicism and socal class: two core variables of electoral behaviour

In France, integration into Catholicism is always the best variable for predicting voting. We have just seen that it is a little less predictive than in the past, owing

Table 7.6a Percentage of left-wing vote according to integration into Catholicism and generation (IFOP exit poll – 1st ballot 1995)

	Catholic attending once a week	*Catholic attending irregularly*	*Non-attending Catholic believer*	*Non-attending Catholic non believer*	*Without religion*	*Mean*
18 to 24 years old	19	15	30	40	51	37
25 to 34 years old	16	22	31	38	51	37
35 to 49 years old	24	32	32	45	63	42
50 to 64 years old	12	22	28	43	67	35
65 years old and more	18	11	24	40	64	28
Mean	17	23	30	42	57	37

Table 7.6b Percentage of left-wing vote according to integration into Catholicism and generation (1997 SOFRES electoral survey for CEVIPOF, CIDSP, CRAPS)

	Catholic attending once a month	*Catholic attending irregularly*	*Non-attending Catholic*	*Without religion*	*Mean*
18 to 24 years old	18	26	47	58	43
25 to 34 years old	20	33	37	53	43
35 to 44 years old	33	41	48	62	49
45 to 54 years old	16	36	37	67	40
55 to 64 years old	13	32	43	66	38
65 years old and more	16	23	40	61	32
Mean	17	32	42	60	41

to the fact that people without religion do not stand out quite so much. Electoral sociology has also shown that membership of a social group was quite a good indicator of voting. It is therefore important to assess the respective weight of these two variables. As Catholics tend to belong to particular social categories, the importance of the religious factor might only be an appearance, the social variable alone being the main explanation.[8]

When we cross-tabulate the results of the vote for the 1995 first ballot by social groups, we discover fairly intense relationships, which nevertheless fail to reach the level of the links between religion and vote. In 1995, the vote was *de facto* more linked to subjective class groups than to objective membership. We attempted to calculate the respective weights of the religious factor and of subjective class, while controlling for a possible age effect (see Table 7.7a). This analysis was applied to the right-wing vote.[9]

In order not to multiply the number of cells in the table and to keep a sufficient number of cases, age is split into two parts only, subjective class is presented in four categories and integration into Catholicism in three (as regards practising Catholics, those that attend mass each week and the occasionally practising Catholics have been put together, and similarly the two categories of non-attending Catholics have been put together).[10] The effect of age on the right-wing

Table 7.7a Percentage of moderate right-wing vote for the first ballot of the 1995 presidential election according to integration into Catholicism, subjective social class and age (IFOP exit poll)

Age/class	*Attending Catholics*	*Non-attending Catholics*	*Without religion*	*Mean*
18 to 49 years old				
Upper	79	56	33	57
Upper-middle	66	48	27	47
Lower-middle	54	43	23	39
Lower	36	30	14	26
Mean for 18 to 49 years old	55	41	22	39
50 years old and more				
Upper	79	60	27	64
Upper-middle	76	53	33	59
Lower-middle	80	50	33	58
Lower	42	27	5	27
Mean for 50 years and more	71	45	24	52
General mean	63	43	24	44

Table 7.7b Percentage of moderate right-wing vote for the first ballot of the 1997 legislative election according to integration into Catholicism, subjective social class and age (post-election survey).

Age/class	*Attending Catholics*	*Non-attending Catholics*	*Without religion*	*Mean*
18 to 49 years old				
Privileged and well off	59	37	13	38
Upper-middle	61	31	17	36
Lower-middle	43	28	13	28
Popular and underprivileged	22	13	8	13
Mean for 18 to 49 years old	49	27	13	29
50 years old and more				
Privileged and well off	73	48	0	54
Upper-middle	74	39	15	53
Lower-middle	64	47	13	49
Popular and underprivileged	47	18	10	26
Mean for 50 years and more	65	39	12	46
General mean	58	33	13	37

vote is weak, even if people aged over fifty vote a little more frequently on the right (the age effect exists only for practising Catholics). The effect of integration into Catholicism and of subjective class are on the contrary very strong (and of equal intensity). The most interesting observation is that the two effects are independent and act simultaneously. When an individual declares him- or herself to be without religion and considers him- or herself to belong to the lowest part of

Table 7.7c Percentage of moderate right-wing vote for the first ballot of the 1997 legislative election according to integration into Catholicism, subjective social class and age (post-election survey)

Age/class	*Regular and irregular attending Catholics*	*Non-attending Catholics*	*Without religion*	*Mean*
18 to 49 years old				
Farmer	70	35	0	63
Artisan, shopkeeper, industrialist	69	35	11	29
Executive, professional	56	39	8	37
Intermediate profession	52	29	14	29
Clerk	46	23	12	25
Working class	33	21	12	22
Mean for 18 to 49 years old	49	27	13	29
50 years old and more				
Farmer	84	50	52	74
Artisan, shopkeeper, industrialist	78	56	19	57
Executive, professional	66	45	16	48
Intermediate profession	66	46	0	51
Clerk	55	33	13	38
Working class	51	22	8	28
Mean for 50 years and more	65	39	12	46
General mean	58	33	13	37

the social scale, the chances that the person will vote for the right are very weak (approximately 10 per cent of such people vote for the right). On the other hand, if the person is a practising Catholic (even occasionally) and knows that he or she belongs to the favoured categories, there are approximately 80 chances out of 100 that the individual will vote for the right. Taking these two dimensions into account provides a very powerful predictive indicator of the vote, while the effects of religion and social class on the vote, taken independently, crumble slightly in the elections of the early 1990s (Heath and Cautrès 1996).

The same kind of table has been constructed for 1997. Table 7.7b shows that, in 1997, subjective social class and integration into Catholicism are always two variables strongly related to voting. But there was a slight weakening of the link: the right-wing vote goes from 73 per cent among the old, practising Catholics of upper classes to 8 per cent among the young without religion from the lower classes. The new phenomenon for 1997 is the strengthening of the objective social class effect (Table 7.7c). At the beginning of the 1990s, a short-term period effect weakened the relation between objective social class and voting: the popular classes were disappointed by the left and voted more frequently for the right. In 1997, the swing is particularly high for these categories: the right-wing vote lost 13 percentage points among the white-collar workers and 9 points among the workers (compared with 1995).

Table 7.8a Vote for the first ballot of the 1995 presidential election (IFOP exit poll) according to integration into Catholicism

	Laguiller	*Hue*	*Jospin*	*Voynet*	*Balladur*	*Chirac*	*De Villiers*	*Le Pen*	*Left*	*Ecologist*	*Right*	*Extreme right*
Mean	5	9	24	3	18	20	5	15	33	44	16	16
Attending once a week	2	3	13	1	40	21	11	9	17	1	72	9
Attending irregularly	3	4	16	3	26	27	6	16	23	2	59	16
Non-attending believer	4	7	19	2	19	23	5	20	30	2	48	20
Non-attending (non-believer)	5	10	26	3	14	21	4	16	42	3	39	16
Other religion	5	9	35	4	14	18	3	12	49	4	35	13
Without religion	9	17	32	5	8	12	4	14	57	5	24	14

Note: The first eight columns of the figures give the valid votes for each candidate, except for those of M. Cheminade (0.4% of votes). The following columns group the votes into four categories: the left, ecologist, moderate right, and extreme right votes (in this last column, votes for Cheminade are added to those of Jean-Marie Le Pen).

Table 7.8b Vote for the first ballot of the 1997 legislative election (SOFRES electoral survey for CEVIPOF, CIDSP, CRAPS) according to integration into Catholicism

	PCF and far left	*PDs and allied*	*Greens and ecolo.*	*Moderate right*	*FN*
Mean	13	28	7	37	16
Attending once a month	2	16	6	69	8
Attending irregularly	10	23	6	49	13
Non-attending	11	30	7	33	19
Other religion	11	34	7	35	13
Without religion	25	35	10	13	17

If we compare the impact of subjective and objective class for 1997 as set out in Tables 7.7b and 7.7c, we can say that the latter had almost as strong an effect on voting as the former.[11]

The effect of integration into Catholicism on each electorate in 1995 and 1997

Up until now we have presented aggregated results concerning the 1995 presidential election. In fact there were nine candidates, and it is interesting to look at the Catholic vote for each of these candidates (see Table 7.8a). Three candidates represented the left: Arlette Laguiller, on behalf of 'Lutte Ouvrière', a small extreme left party; Robert Hue, national secretary of the Communist Party, and Lionel Jospin, candidate of the Socialist Party. Arlette Laguiller had a clearly better result than for her previous candidatures. She probably attracted people disappointed by the left, perhaps some protest votes. However, she obtained a very weak result among practising Catholics and was far stronger among people without religion. The same phenomenon can be observed for Robert Hue. As Catholics well integrated into their Church traditionally reject communism and the far left, it is not a surprise to observe this result. The largest part of the Catholic left vote is therefore a socialist vote, for a moderate left candidate.

In Table 7.8b we can observe the same tendencies as in 1995 for the last national election in 1997. Clearly, practising Catholics very often vote for the moderate right. When they vote for the left, they are in favour of a moderate left and not the PCF. They rarely support the National Front. As far as the areligious people are concerned, they are very often supporters of the left (PCF and PS), they are also overrepresented in the support base of the Greens, and they are now frequently in favour of the far right. They are more often supporters of the far right (17 per cent) than of the moderate right (13 per cent).

On the right wing, the situation was particularly complex in 1995. There were two RPR candidates (Jacques Chirac, leader of the Gaullist Party and Edouard Balladur, the outgoing Prime Minister), while none of the candidates truly represented the UDF (Union for French Democracy – Union pour la Démocratie Française), which is the other large right-wing tendency (Bréchon 1994, 1998; Perrineau and Ysmal 1995). It is clear that a good part of the UDF's electorate voted in favour of Edouard Balladur. The very strong vote of practising Catholics in favour of Edouard Balladur could be explained insofar as he carried the hopes of the non-Gaullist right and was supported in particular by the CDS (Social Democratic Centre – Centre des Démocrates Sociaux), the heir of Christian democracy. This explanation seems very doubtful if we compare the results of the different right-wing candidates in the 1988 and 1995 Presidential elections (Table 7.9). In 1988, Jacques Chirac was the outgoing Prime Minister, opposed in particular to Raymond Barre, the candidate of the UDF and of Christian democracy. The practising Catholics more clearly favoured Jacques Chirac, while in 1995 they favoured Edouard Balladur. The

Table 7.9 Right-wing vote for the first ballot of the 1988 and 1995 presidential elections

	1988 (BVA)			*1995 (IFOP)*			
	Chirac	*Barre*	*Le Pen*	*Chirac*	*Balladur*	*De Villiers*	*Le Pen*
Mean	20	17	14	20	18	5	15
Attending Catholic attending once a week	**40**	**30**	12	21	**40**	**11**	9
Catholic attending irregularly	**26**	**23**	17	**27**	**26**	6	16
Non-attending Catholic believer	21	14	17	23	19	5	**20**
Non-attending Catholic (non-believer)	16	14	15	21	14	4	12
Without religion	6	9	11	12	8	4	14

Note: The figures in bold indicate a strong over-representation.

explanation has to be sought in the conformist vote of practising Catholics (who are mainly old, and age probably strengthens this tendency to the conformist vote). In each election the incumbent Prime Minister seems to have an advantage among Catholic voters when they have to choose between different right-wing candidates.[12] The Catholic vote is a conformist vote.

The situation on the right wing was made even more complicated in 1995 by the candidature of Philippe de Villiers, member of Parliament and president of the Regional Council of Vendée (Conseil Genéral de Vendée), a member of the Republican Party until the end of 1994 but who had already been critical for several years of his own side. In autumn 1994, he launched the *Mouvement pour la France*. Its programme was liberal in economic terms, nationalist and anti-European, and it defended traditional values. He only obtained 5 per cent of valid votes but it is interesting to note that his electorate was old and that he collected 11 per cent of the vote of practising Catholics. Regarding Jean-Marie Le Pen, who took 15 per cent of the vote, he is nowadays very popular and his electorate is not very marked from a religious point of view.

Two facts are particularly noticeable: the weak interest of practising Catholics in voting for the far right and the high level of the extreme right among those without religion (Jean-Marie Le Pen is not underrepresented among people without religion).

Ideological representations and integration into Catholicism

If the Catholic vote is conformist, it is also ideological. The links between the voters' ideological representations and integration into Catholicism also clearly appear through the data collected in the 1995 CEVIPOF post-electoral survey. Table 7.10a presents some summary results. We have built six attitude scales as follows:

Table 7.10a Ideological attitudes according to integration into Catholicism (post-election survey SOFRES-CEVIPOF 1995)

	Economic liberalism	*Egalitarianism*	*Xenophobia*	*Anti-authoritarianism*	*Civic moralism*	*Sexual liberalism*
Regular Catholic	57	34	49	31	60	23
Irregular Catholic	55	32	54	33	43	39
Non-attending Catholic	46	34	52	36	37	53
Other religion	43	42	36	53	38	45
Without religion	35	50	36	59	24	71
Mean	47	37	48	41	38	50

1 A scale of economic liberalism which comprises 47 per cent of respondents who judge in a very positive manner competition, profit and privatisations.[13]
2 A scale of egalitarianism, from two indicators: the negative or positive judgements associated with the words 'equality' and 'solidarity'.[14]
3 A scale of xenophobia, from four questions: to feel French rather than European, to assert that native French no longer feel at home, and that there are too many immigrants in France, to refuse to let Muslims living in France have mosques.[15]
4 A scale of authoritarianism made up of people who appreciate the value of the word 'authority' (very positive or quite positive), who wish for the re-establishment of the death penalty (strongly agree or agree somewhat) or who consider that school should above all instill a sense of effort and discipline.[16]
5 A scale of civic morality, based on five acts of incivility and of distance from social norms. Thirty-eight per cent of the sample condemn these five practices: issuing dud cheques, squatting illegally in an unoccupied flat, going through a red light, stealing from a shop and travelling on public transport without a ticket.
6 A scale of sexual liberalism based on two questions (thinking that homosexuality is acceptable and that resorting to abortion is normal) which identifies 50 per cent of the sample as having the most liberal position.[17]

These six ideological dimensions are correlated with the right–left dimension and with party identification. We can see here that they also have links with integration into Catholicism. People without religion are always rather different from practising Catholics. They support economic liberalism rather feebly but defend social egalitarianism, they are the ones who are less xenophobic, the most opposed to authority, the most relativistic in sexual and civic matters. They therefore clearly uphold left-wing values.[18]

The intensity of the relationships is however different according to the dimensions which are taken into account. It is strong for sexual liberalism and civic morality. The more someone is integrated into Catholicism, the more he or she adopts attitudes of civic morality and the less relativistic he or she is in

Table 7.10b Ideological attitudes according to integration into Catholicism (1997 electoral survey SOFRES for CEVIPOF, CIDSP and CRAPS)

	Economic liberalism	*Xenophobia*	*Anti-authoritarianism*	*In favour of Europe*
Regular Catholic	49	52	25	51
Irregular Catholic	53	52	26	48
Non-attending Catholic	44	53	23	43
Other religion	49	40	34	56
Without religion	32	31	44	43
Mean	44	47	29	45

sexual matters. It is on these ethical dimensions that Catholics most clearly support the values of the right wing. There is also a relationship of average intensity with economic liberalism: integration into Catholicism correlates with stronger economic liberalism. On the other hand, the effect of integration into Catholicism is rather weak for xenophobia, egalitarianism and the anti-authoritarian attitudes. On these three dimensions, there is no significant difference according to whether someone is practising or non-practising. Perhaps we can see here the result of contradictory pressures and of cognitive dissonance for practising Catholics. Given their system of values oriented towards the right, they should in theory be characterised by a high level of xenophobia and a low level of egalitarianism. But these are dimensions on which Catholic discourse has long been very open-minded. There are numerous declarations by bishops and Catholic associations on the sharing of goods and work, as well as on the need to welcome foreigners. These speeches did not make practising Catholics clearly favourable towards egalitarianism or towards the rejection of xenophobia, but they seem to have had some effects. Let us finally notice that on all the dimensions of Table 7.10a, the followers of other religions come near to the left-wing values showed by people without religion. They are however too politically insignificant for this result to be meaningfully interpreted.[19]

The questionnaire of the last post-electoral study (1997) does not allow us to build identical attitude scales. But it was possible to build similar indices for economic liberalism,[20] xenophobia[21] and anti-authoritarianism.[22] Table 7.10b shows that the links with integration into Catholicism are stable. We added a scale of European attitudes.[23] As in other surveys, it appears that there is no link between support for Europe and integration into Catholicism. This European scale is strongly related to the level of qualifications (as is xenophobia), slightly related to age and not related to Catholicism.

Conclusion

Religious issues are no longer at the centre of French political life. France is well on the way to becoming secularised. Nevertheless, integration into Catholicism

is still a very important factor in French electoral behaviour. Practising Catholics exhibit electoral behaviour scarcely different from that of thirty years ago. The rise of religious indifference simply means that people without religion are slightly less clearly marked by left-wing ideology. Today, a small part of them is even favourable to the far right. This kind of link between vote and religious attitude has to be explained by the universe of values and of ideas internalised by individuals since their childhood. Catholic culture is based on the sense of order, hierarchy, authority, duty and loyalty. The culture of secularism and the rejection of religion is more individualist, relativist and egalitarian. Each person can change their values during their life, but they can also re-think their attitudes more generally. The orientation of any vote is strongly linked to the system of values. In this system, the religious or non-religious dimension remains very important. The majority patterns always associate integration into Catholicism and rightist values, or rejection of religion and leftist values. Some minority patterns exist. But the leftist Catholics always constitute a small group, rather less activist than in the 1960s. It is the minority model of the rightist without religion which has been increasing in France since the beginning of the 1980s.

Notes

1 Emile Poulat (1988) explains that 'secularism of cohabitation' (*laïcité de cohabitation*) has progressively prevailed over 'fighting secularism' (*laïcité de combat*).
2 During the 1981 presidential elections, even in a left-wing urban area such as Grenoble, practising Catholics voted in the majority for right-wing candidates (Bréchon and Denni 1983).
3 Bréchon and Denni (1983) contributed to this debate by adopting an intermediate position: if Catholics' religious, ethical and political positions tend in the main to coalesce in a conservative direction, there are still models of minority behaviour in which these three dimensions combine in different ways.
4 It has to be admitted that, according to the way the question on religious belonging is asked, we do not obtain exactly the same results. The three surveys used in Table 7.3 employed the following wording: 'Can you tell me what religion, if any, you belong to?' On the contrary, in the tradition of the Values surveys (and also of Eurobarometers), the question is filtered thus: 'Do you consider that you belong to a religion? If yes, which one?' The percentage of Catholics is, then, 58 per cent in 1990, while people without religion climb to 38 per cent. This last wording (with a filter) invites replies according to personal choice, while the first wording can probably more easily be understood as a simple declaration of a situation of fact, linked to one's baptism and to one's religious education in childhood (Lambert 1993). The ISSP question is the same as the EVS question. In this 1998 survey, we recorded figures of 52 per cent of Catholics and 45 per cent of no religion.
5 We can analyse their attitudes from specific surveys. On Islam, see IFOP polls in *Le Monde* of 30 November 1989 and 13 October 1994. On Protestants, see Bréchon 1993; Dargent 1994, 1995. On Judaism, see Strudel 1996.
6 For these calculations, we have adopted two conventions: the green vote is not taken into account, and the moderate right and far right votes are aggregated together.
7 We used an IFOP exit poll comprising 5,467 individuals. On the mean line of Table 7.6, we see that the effect of integration into Catholicism is the same as what was observed in Table 7.4 with another survey. In the IFOP opinion poll, practising Catholics are defined in a narrower manner: Catholics practising each week are taken

and this is what probably explains that the left-wing vote is slightly smaller. Furthermore, a distinction is introduced between non-attending Catholic 'believers' and non-attending Catholic 'non-believers'. This distinction seems to be relevant, as it allows us to isolate a category of Catholics almost completely detached from their religious denomination, who vote more on the left than the non-attending Catholic believers.

8 The link between social group and integration into Catholicism is not very intense. In the IFOP survey used here, 20 per cent of workers are Catholics who attend at least occasionally, as against 33 per cent of executives and professionals.

9 We add the votes in favour of Jacques Chirac, Edouard Balladur and Philippe de Villiers. We do not take into account the extreme right vote, which is weakly linked to integration into Catholicism.

10 The respondents had to choose between six categories. 'The privileged' and 'well-off people' have been regrouped in the upper class, 'popular classes' and 'the disfavoured' in the lower class, 'upper middle classes' and 'lower middle classes' remain separate.

11 For this comparison, it is better not to take into account farmers, artisans, and shopkeepers and to compare only the four last categories which are salaried.

12 In the 1995 IFOP exit poll, several results confirm the conformist dimension of the Catholic vote. Well-integrated believers into their Church were far more ready than the others to express a positive view on the results of the Balladur government (67 per cent of the Catholics who practise weekly judge these results as being very good or quite good enough against only 22 per cent of people without religion). They said they had made their electoral choice rather according to the candidate's personality and to the values he represented. People without religion gave greater importance to political orientation when making their electoral choice. Among a list of qualities which could have influenced voters to choose a particular candidate, practising Catholics gave importance to manner, experience or capacity to decide. Catholics prefer to vote for well-known candidates rather than according to a political programme. This does not mean that the Catholic vote has no ideological dimension. Practising Catholics clearly support right-wing values. For example, while social inequality is a theme that people without religion identify as very important to their vote, France's position in the world is strongly chosen by practising Catholics.

13 It is a cumulative scale constructed from negative or positive judgements attributed to the words 'competition', 'profit', and 'privatization'. Each word is judged from 1 to 4 (from very positive to very negative), and the scale ranges therefore from 3 to 12. The liberal positions identified here correspond to scores of 3 to 6, and represent 47 per cent of the sample.

14 It is also a cumulative scale. Judgements range from 1 to 4 for each word, from very positive to very negative. The scale therefore goes from 2 to 8 and here, the egalitarian attitude, shared by 37 per cent of the sample, corresponds to a score of 2 (i.e. to people that judge the two words very positively).

15 It is again a cumulative scale. The question on French or European identity is a variable divided into six catgeories: to feel only French, more French than European, as much French as European, more European than French, only European, neither French nor European. The other questions offer a choice of four positions (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) with regard to three assertions: 'Now we do not feel at home as before', 'There are too many immigrants in France', 'It would be normal for Muslims living in France to have mosques to practice their religion'. The results of the last question have to be inverted to allow us to add up the sum of the scores. The scale goes therefore from 4 to 18. The 41 per cent of xenophobes thus identified have scores equal to or below 8.

16 The scale goes from 0 (persons who adopt none of the suggested positions) to 3 (those who hold the three positions simultaneously). Table 7.10 shows those who are hardly, if at all, authoritarian (having a score of 0 or 1).

17 The two statements are: 'Homosexuality is an acceptable way of living out one's sexuality' and 'It is normal that a woman could choose to have an abortion'. For each of these statements, individuals have four possible replies, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The cumulative scale goes therefore from 2 to 8. The 50 per cent of people showing the highest degree of sexual liberty have scores of 2 or 3.
18 This ideological specificity of people without religion can be verified, country by country, via analysis of European surveys (Bréchon 1996, 2000).
19 There are in this survey 2.3 per cent of Protestants, 0.4 per cent of Jews, 0.8 per cent of Muslims and 1.2 per cent people belonging to other religions. Muslims' underrepresentation is obvious, even if we take into account the fact that this survey was only completed by people saying they are registered on electoral lists.
20 A Likert scale with six indicators: to give priority in the future to the competitiveness of firms, to find the word 'profit' very or somewhat positive, the same thing for the words 'privatisation' and 'liberalism', to wish for a cut in the number of civil servants, and a cut in the social expenditure of firms.
21 A Likert scale with five indicators: strongly agree or agree to some extent with: 'Now we do not feel at home as before', 'There are races less gifted than others', 'There are too many immigrants in France'. Disagree somewhat or totally disagree with: 'People from the Maghreb who live in France will in the future be French people like the others', be strongly or somewhat in favour of maintaining the Pasqua-Debré law on immigration
22 A Likert scale with only two indicators: to wish to maintain the death penalty and to think that schools must above all instil a sense of effort and discipline. We separated out here those people who refused to answer the two items.
23 A Likert scale with seven indicators: to be in favour of a single currency, to want in the future a strengthening of the political power of the European Union, to think France has benefited from its membership of the European Union, to think the pursuit of European unification will be rather positive for social security, the French way of life, and economic growth, to think the European Union protects our country from risks deriving from economic globalisation.

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8 Religiosity and party choice in Spain

An elusive cleavage?

José Ramón Montero and Kerman Calvo

Introduction

Our journey across the relationship between religiosity and electoral behaviour tells us a story of decline in Spain, a Catholic country *par excellence*. The saliency of religious factors as an 'identity maker' is increasingly vanishing, and hence, the power of this variable to explain how Spaniards vote is becoming almost irrelevant. The main aim of this chapter is to show evidence of this decline, making extensive use of multivariate analysis of survey data.[1] We attempt to demonstrate here that the capacity of the religious factor to explain the vote for the two major competing parties on the left and the right has become steadily weaker during the 1980s and 1990s. Our analysis focuses upon three points in time (1982, 1993 and 1996), and discusses the influence of the religious variable for the explanation of the vote for the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) and for the *Partido Popular* (PP) (*Alianza Popular* (AP) in 1982), separately, and in relation to one another.

Our main explanation for this decline in religion underlines the relevance of political agency. We contend that it is largely explained by the way political elites handled the threats of a religious conflict at the initial moments of Spanish democratic transition in the late 1970s. At that time, certain long-lasting mechanisms were set out in order to downgrade the potential for a political conflict based on religious divisions. Spanish society might not have been crying out for the re-emergence of such a conflict, yet it could have been possible to activate it, at least to some extent. In the event, nothing of that sort actually happened. Consequently, the religious issue has increasingly been stripped out of the political agenda, a decision that has not been revoked since. Consequently, Spanish voters have not been appealed to on grounds of their religious identities, a fact that has run in parallel with a steady process of value and attitudinal change in relation to religiosity and the position of the Church.

It has often been argued that the relationships between religion and parties are multifaceted. They include, among other things, the religious features of a given party's ideology, the religious profiles of voters of both Christian Democrat and non-confessional parties, the religious criteria which ground voting choices, and the religiously-related attitudes that encapsulate stable alignments between certain

constituencies and specific parties (for instance Moyser 1991: 7 ff.; Broughton 1989: ch.1; Linz 1986).

Pitching the argument at the level of electoral politics, conventional works on religion and electoral behaviour proclaim the existence of a systematic and stable linkage between non-religious voters and left-wing parties. Likewise, it is assumed that religious voters systematically prefer right-wing parties. As we said before, we intend to test the linkages between religiosity and voters, examining the two main national Spanish parties. We take the PSOE as the major party on the Left and AP-PP as its counterpart on the Right. Our main goal is to unveil the extent to which the electorate of the former is different from that of the latter in terms of religiosity.

We will proceed as follows. First, we will run bivariate analyses of the relationship between religiosity and vote. This preliminary exercise is aimed at testing the waters of the relationship between those two major variables. Logistic regression models for the explanation of the vote for the PSOE and the AP-PP will provide afterwards an additional measure of the strength of the religious factor for each party as compared with other factors that also help to explain electoral behaviour. Lastly, these results will be complemented by a multinomial regression model designed to explain the vote for the left-wing parties *in comparison* to the vote for the right-wing parties. These two distinct exercises will allow us to look at the religious cleavage from two complementary perspectives. The logistic regression models address the research question in terms of the influence of a set of independent variables on the probability that a given respondent votes for a particular party as compared to not voting for it. This approach, however, is partially inadequate, in that it does not paint the whole picture of the electoral preferences of a given voter. We can discover whether or not they voted for a particular party; but if they did not, no further information is available as to what they did instead.

Multinomial regression modelling offers more detailed information in this respect, in the sense that it measures the probability of voting for a specific party (the PSOE), in comparison with the probability of voting for the party serving as the base category (AP in 1982, PP in 1993 and 1996). In Spain multinomial models are a particularly appropriate means of gaining an understanding of the impact of specific variables on the choice between pairs of parties: the two major parties have systematically received between 64 per cent (in the 1977 founding elections) and 79 per cent (in the most recent, 2000 elections) of the valid vote (see Table 8.1, and Linz and Montero (1999) for further details).

Political agency and the religious cleavage

Lack of space here prevents us from dealing in detail with the causal mechanisms underlying cleavage decline in Spain. However, let us sketch here what seems in our opinion to be the driving force for the weakening of the religious cleavage, an opinion that conflicts in part with established cleavage theory (Bartolini and Mair 1990: 212 ff; Knutsen and Scarbrough 1995: 494–5). According to such

Table 8.1 Votes and seats in the Spanish general elections for the Congress of Deputies, 1977–96 (in percentages)

	First period		*Second period*			*Third period*		
	1977	*1979*	*1982*	*1986*	*1989*	*1993*	*1996*	*2000*
	Votes (Seats)	*Votes (Seats)*	*Votes (Seats)*	*Votes (Seats)*	*Votes (Seats)*	*Votes (Seats)*	*Votes (Seats)*	*Votes (Seats)*
PCE/IU	9.3 (6)	10.8 (7)	4.0 (1)	4.5 (2)	9.1 (5)	9.6 (5)	10.6 (6)	5.5 (2)
PSOE	29.4(34)	30.5(35)	48.4(58)	44.6 (53)	39.9 (50)	38.8 (45)	37.5(40)	34.7(36)
CDS	—	—	2.9 (1)	9.2 (5)	7.9 (4)	1.8 (0)	—	—
UCD	34.6(47)	35.0(48)	6.5 (3)	—	—	—	—	—
AP/PP	8.8 (5)	6.1 (3)	26.5(30)	26.3 (30)	25.9 (31)	34.8 (40)	38.8(45)	45.2(52)
PNV	1.7 (2)	1.5 (2)	1.9 (2)	1.6 (2)	1.2 (1)	1.2 (5)	1.3 (1)	1.6 (2)
PDC/CiU	2.8 (3)	2.7 (2)	3.7 (3)	5.1 (5)	5.1 (5)	4.9 (3)	4.6 (5)	4.2 (4)
Other	13.4 (3)	13.4 (3)	6.1 (2)	8.7 (3)	11.0 (4)	8.9 (2)	7.2 (3)	8.8 (4)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	100(100)	100(100)	100(100)	100(100)	100(100)	100(100)

Note: Parties:

PCE/IU	Partido Comunista de España and (since 1986) the coalition Izquierda Unida.
PSOE	Partido Socialista Obrero Español.
CDS	Centro Democrático y Social.
UCD	Unión de Centro Democrático.
AP/PP	Alianza Popular and (from 1989) Partido Popular.
PNV	Partido Nacionalista Vasco.
PDC/CiU	Pacte Democràtic per Catalunya and (since 1979) the coalition Convergència i Unió (Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya and Unió Democrática de Catalunya).

theory, by virtue of secularisation formerly religious people cease to be so. This conveys a *blurring* of religious divisions at the societal level that is said to have an immediate impact on the formation of political identities. As there are no clearly defined religious social groups, religiosity can hardly be expected to determine people's understanding of politics. Consequently, confessional and religious parties (that is, the organisational expression of existing religious divides at the societal level) virtually eliminate their programmatic references to religious issues.

We see this schema as potentially flawed in one fundamental aspect. It tacitly suggests that cleavages solely reflect objective interests and identities. But how about the influence of political variables? How can we explain that in certain cases particular cleavages are activated, whereas in others they are not, and the differences in speed and/or in intensities in their evolution? Hence, is it wise to assume that elite preferences play no role in the consolidation of cleavages? It is our argument that it is not. The evolution of the religious cleavage in Spain suggests that *political* variables have played, and still do play, a fundamental role. At the time of the transition, the resolution of highly controversial issues such as Church–State relations, divorce, abortion, or education led many to see the resurgence of religious conflict on the horizon. In other words, there was a possibility for such a cleavage to be re-awakened, which however was not in fact activated. Since then, political parties (and the

Church) have deliberately by-passed the activation of Catholic (or non-Catholic) identities in the political arena. All this leads us to claim that *political agency* matters. Paraphrasing Przeworski and Sprague (1986: 10–11 and 143) and Kalyvas (1996: 8–9), religious conflicts are salient in a given society if, when, and only to the extent to which they are important to political parties which mobilise religious or secular citizens (see also Sartori 1969: 89).

In the 1970s, many surveys in Spain revealed a sharp division at the mass level around religious issues and a pronounced polarisation in attitudes towards the Church as well. At the level of parties, the two main parties on the left (the PSOE and the *Partido Comunista de España* (PCE)), parties still linked to anticlerical images, clashed with the two conservative parties (*Unión de Centro Democrático* (UCD) and AP) over the specific solutions to be reached in terms of a number of religious questions (Gunther and Blough 1981). However, and as a surprise for many, the very foundations of the religious cleavage were established in such a way as to increasingly diminish its potentially polarising and divisive consequences. Arguably, this outcome was to some extent the result of a combination of the changes that had already taken place within the Church itself (Linz 1993; Pérez Díaz 1993), and the constraining conditions derived from the secularisation process that Spaniards have experienced since the early 1970s.

The main explanatory factor however consists of the deliberate strategies followed by all the elites *not* to politicise conflicts around religious matters and, more particularly, the party and Church elites' strategic decisions *not* to mobilise voters around religious issues. If political parties adopted pragmatic agreements over their differences with the Church (Gunther, Sani and Shabad 1986: 221 ff.), the Church hierarchy undertook a major political change by definitively disassociating itself from its many years of legitimation of the dictatorship and clearly supporting the new democratic regime. As Linz *et al.* (1981: 308) have emphasised, the new positions adopted by the elites revealed the great effort they went to in order to achieve the religious *peace* that would characterise the transition. In other words, as Linz himself has put it (1993: 44), all agreed on a policy of *never again*.

Hence, it can be said that both the Church and the new party leaders had selective incentives to converge around strategies of moderation, restraint, and ultimately reconciliation. For the Church, such strategies were necessary to open a new phase of co-operative behaviour within the new democratic regime. For their part, the new parties, facing uncertain constraints about their fortunes within a largely unknown electorate, needed to maximise their chances in the forthcoming electoral competition through their participation in the politics of consensus (which also entailed *ex definitione* negotiations and agreements among themselves and with Church representatives in order to settle thorny religious issues).

For both the ecclesiastical and political elites, principled, ideological, and mobilisational strategies were deliberately abandoned in favour of the development of pragmatic, flexible, conciliatory stances. As in other cases, the interaction between the preferences and strategies chosen by self-interested

actors were thus conducive to moderation and moderation became self-reinforcing (Kalyvas 1998: 316–17).

Notwithstanding the episodes of religious controversy, the scenario that emerged during the first years of Spanish democracy has remained largely unchanged over the following two decades. Party elites continued to pursue deliberate strategies of religious moderation in terms of both policy processes and electoral contests.

Indicators and model specification

If the supply side of politics has been characterised by strategic commitments developed by parties to downgrade religious conflicts, to what extent is the religious cleavage vanishing in Spanish electoral politics? The case for the continuing salience of the religious cleavage should rest on empirical evidence provided by survey data that religious voters prefer right-wing parties, while the non-religious voters are linked to left-wing parties.

Survey indicators do not always make it possible to draw very fine distinctions between believers and non-believers, on the one hand, and among different types of Catholics, on the other (Broughton 1989: 11–13; Feldkircher 1998: 88). Given the indicators available, a useful typology would appear to be that proposed by Jagodzinski and Dobbelaere (1995), which distinguishes among 'nuclear Catholics', 'nominal Catholics', and 'non-believers'.

Nuclear Catholics are those who have a clear commitment towards religious beliefs and practices, attend religious services frequently, pray regularly, and hold conservative positions on the wide array of issues under the tutelage of the religious value system (Inglehart 1991: 198 ff.). Their political identities are said to be clearly connected with religious ones. Hence we can easily hypothesise that nuclear Catholics will vote for the AP-PP. In the case of *non-believers*, their association with the Church itself or with religious values and practices has come to an end. Non-believers share with the residual category of nominal Catholics a feeling of estrangement from all that religiosity traditionally means. What makes the former group different is that they have taken a more or less conscious decision to eliminate any possible influence of religion on their daily lives. This allows us to hypothesise that non-believers will vote for the PSOE. Finally, the category of *nominal Catholics* ('Catholics on paper', in the words of Geissbühler 1999) comprises those voters whose religiosity, while far from solid, still has some influence on the individual's social and political understanding of politics and society. For instance, they do not attend religious services regularly, but do so on special occasions; or they hold rather unorthodox religious beliefs, but nonetheless believe in God.[2]

In each of the logistic models included in this chapter (Tables 8.4, 8.6, and 8.7), the *voting variable* we have created takes the value of 1 when there is voting for the party selected and the value of 0 when there is not.[3] As far as the multinomial model is concerned (Table 8.8), the voting variable will be divided into two categories (vote for the main conservative alternative and vote for the PSOE;

other values have been coded as missing values of the variable). Our main independent variable is of course *religiosity*. In the 1982 and 1993 post-electoral surveys it is measured by an indicator of self-definition of religiosity with six categories ('very good Catholics', 'practising Catholics', 'not-very-practising Catholics', 'non-practising Catholics', 'indifferents' and 'atheists'.[4] The information is presented in dummy variable format. In contrast, the analysis of conservative voting (Tables 8.6 and 8.8) takes either those who define themselves as religiously 'indifferent' or the sum of both 'indifferents' and atheists as the base category. We have chosen this dual strategy, rather than taking the final category, that is, atheists, because in most cases that option would have led to 'zero-cell' problems, as well as giving rise to a not very large category: atheists never account for more than five percent of any sample.

Our models include a number of controlling variables. These are a dummy variable for the *gender* of the respondent (1 for males); a s*ize of community* variable, in which value 1 means living in major metropolitan areas; a variable subsuming *age* as the *cohort* the individual belongs to;[5] a variable referring to the *occupation* of the respondent;[6] an *educational* variable (measured as the maximum educational level achieved by the respondent, starting with a value of 1 for those with less than primary education); and, when possible, variables indicating whether the respondent is a *member of a trade union* (only for 1982),[7] and how the individual assesses the *economic situation* of the country or evaluates *governmental performance* in a number of policy fields. The set of controlling variables is complemented by two important political variables: the respondent's *self-placement on the ideological scale* and the respondent's *attitudes towards the leader of the party for which they voted*. In both cases, the variables take the form of ten-point scales, in which 1 implies, respectively, extreme left or very hostile attitudes towards the leader, and 10 means either extreme right or very favourable attitudes.

Religiosity and party choice

Over the last two decades, each party has had a specific kind of religious *character*, those of the parties on the left differing from those on the right. Table 8.2 offers information about these profiles, broadening our sample of cases to include also the PCE-IU and the *Centro Democrático y Social* (CDS, 1982 only).

Table 8.2 is interesting inasmuch as it unveils two noticeable findings. On the one hand, the heterogeneity of the religious character of the PSOE's electorate, divided almost equally between practising and not very frequently practising Catholics, on the one hand, and non-practising Catholics and non-believers (i.e., indifferents and atheists), on the other. What is most significant is that the former slightly outnumber the latter, and that the proportion of practising Catholics voting for the PSOE almost matched those voting for the PP. On the other hand, the decline in the differences in religious characteristics over time has to be noted. The indices of religiosity, which are also included in Table 8.2, summarise this process, which could be termed 'depolarisation': the distances between the

Table 8.2 Religious composition of party electorates in Spain, 1982 and 1993* (in percentages)

	1982				
Religiosity	*PCE*	*PSOE*	*CDS*	*AP*	*Electorate*
Very good and practising Catholics	8	24	47	62	37
Not-very-practising Catholics	13	30	33	26	27
Non-practising Catholics	16	27	18	11	19
Indifferents and atheists	61	19	2	1	14
(n)	(152)	(2,004)	(79)	(875)	(5,463)
Index of religiosity**	1.7	2.6	3.3	3.6	3.0
	1993				
Religiosity	*IU*	*PSOE*	*PP*	*Electorate*	
Very good and practising Catholics	10	32	51	31	
Not-very-practising Catholics	20	28	25	29	
Non-practising Catholics	35	27	18	25	
Indifferents and atheists	35	13	5	14	
(n)	(110)	(479)	(321)	(1,400)	
Index of religiosity**	2.1	2.9	3.3	2.8	

Notes:
* Columns may not add up to one hundred because other denominations and 'no answer' (around 1% each) have not been included in the table.
** The index of religiosity has been calculated by assigning the value of 5 to the 'very good Catholics', 4 to 'practising Catholics', 3 to 'not-very-practising Catholics', 2 to 'non-practising Catholics', and 1 to those who identify themselves as 'indifferents' or 'atheists'.

Sources: DATA surveys 1982 and 1993.

extreme parties (PCE/IU and AP/PP) have shrunk, and the initially very highly-defined religious profiles of all the parties (with the exception of *Izquierda Unida*) have become more diffuse. The figures shown in Table 8.3, which address the electoral preferences of each religious category, highlight these trends. Presenting the information in its lower level of aggregation, we can see that in 1982, AP slightly out-performed the PSOE in the competition for the vote of the 'very good Catholics' and of the 'practising Catholics'. A decade later, the PSOE competed on an exactly equal footing with the PP for the support of the latter category. These initial findings suggest that the religious factor may no longer be a predicting factor for the choice between the PSOE and PP, the two main parties in the 1990s.

Table 8.4 leads us to the multivariate analysis of the impact of religiosity on the vote for the PSOE. Contrary to what we initially hypothesised, but very much in accordance with what has just been said above, there is *no* robust association between being a non-believer and voting for the PSOE; or, to put another way, PSOE voters are more likely to be found in the religious categories, albeit in the 'softer' ones.

Table 8.3 Vote in the 1982, 1993 and 1996 general elections by self-definitions of religiosity (in horizontal percentages)

	Vote in 1982					
Religiosity	*PCE*	*PSOE*	*UCD*	*AP*	*Abstention*	*(n)*
Very good Catholics	2	29	10	34	21	(333)
Practising Catholics	1	33	10	39	13	(1,083)
Not-very-practising Catholics	2	57	6	21	11	(1,070)
Non-practising Catholics	3	67	2	11	15	(826)
Indifferents	11	66	—	2	20	(455)
Atheists	26	47	—	1	26	(168)

	Vote in 1993					
Religiosity	*IU*	*PSOE*	*CDS*	*PP*	*Abstention*	*(n)*
Very good Catholics	1	31	1	46	8	(80)
Practising Catholics	3	34	2	34	8	(377)
Not-very-practising Catholics	6	40	2	23	11	(342)
Non-practising Catholics	11	36	2	17	12	(348)
Indifferents	17	33	2	10	14	(145)
Atheists	28	24	—	4	20	(50)

	Vote in 1996				
Religiosity	*IU*	*PSOE*	*PP*	*Abstention*	*(n)*
Very religious	1	15	37	14	(354)
Quite religious	3	24	27	12	(1,047)
Neither religious, nor not-religious	5	27	18	14	(303)
Not very religious	10	26	17	17	(367)
Not religious	15	25	10	19	(396)

Notes: Non-answers have been excluded from the base of percentages. Rows may not add up to 100 because the vote for other parties has not been included. In 1998, categories of religiosity were different.

Sources: DATA surveys 1982 and 1993; and ISSP-CIS (# 2,301) survey on religiosity, conducted in November 1998.

The electoral earthquake of 1982 provoked a massive movement of voters among the main parties, and radically transformed the party system and each of its components (Linz and Montero 1986). The PSOE achieved an outstanding victory, the PCE suffered a major setback, and the governing UCD simply collapsed. In turn, this collapse facilitated the consolidation of the very conservative AP as the second party. But contrary to the predominantly optimistic expectations of AP leaders, there was no automatic transfer of religious voting from the UCD to AP (Montero 1986). Many of those who identified themselves as practising Catholics held negative preferences towards AP (as will be seen in Table 8.4), and many more did not feel attracted by a party that represented both a very traditional position on religious issues and an extreme conservatism in public policies. In this context it is easy to understand why the PSOE outdid all its rivals in virtually all the religious

Table 8.4 Logistic regression model to explain the vote for the PSOE, 1982–96

1982	
Variables	*Odds ratio*
Practising Catholics	*RefC*
Not-very-practising C.	1.4*
Non-practising C.	2.4***
Indifferents	2.3***
Atheists	0.9
Ideology	0.7***
Evaluation of González	2.1***
White collars	0.5**
Skilled workers	0.9
Unskilled workers	*RefC*
Sex	1.3
Age (in cohorts)	0.8**
Size of community	0.9***
Education	0.7***
Trade union membership	0.8
Pseudo R^2 =	0.41
n = 1,395	

1993	
Variables	*Odds ratio*
Practising Catholics	*RefC*
Not-very-practising C.	3.5**
Non-practising C.	1.7
Indifferents	1.7
Atheists	1.1
Ideology	0.4***
Evaluation of González	1.4***
White collars	0.4*
Skilled workers	0.5
Unskilled workers	*RefC*
Sex	1.1
Age (in cohorts)	0.9
Size of community	0.9
Education	0.6*
Economic policy	0.6
Employment policy (0–1)	0.4**
Pseudo R^2 =	0.54
n = 400	

1996	
Variables	*Odds ratio*
Nuclear Catholics	*RefC*
Nominal Catholics	1.7**
Non-believers	1.6**
Ideology	0.38***
White collars	0.6*
Petty bourgeoisie	0.8
Farm workers	0.9
Skilled and unskilled workers	*RefC*
Sex	0.9
Age (in cohorts)	1.1
Size of community	0.9
Education	0.6***
Pseudo R^2 =`0.35	
n = 875	

Notes:
* Significant at the 0.1 level
** Significant at the 0.05 level
*** Significant at the 0.001 level

Sources: DATA surveys 1982, and 1993; for 1996, ISSP-CIS (#2,301) survey on religiosity, conducted in 1998.

categories. In those elections, not only non-practising Catholics, but also the not-very-practising and the indifferents displayed a greater propensity to vote for the PSOE; this support was also statistically significant (only at the level of 0.1 in the case of the not-very-practising Catholics). With no alternatives available, both nominal Catholics and non-believers voted for the PSOE. This accentuated the dividing line between them and the most religious nuclear Catholics, who preferred the more conservative alternatives.

During the 1980s, the adoption of catch-all policies and the parallel development of pragmatic, negotiated stances on the resolution of religious conflicts encouraged a process of change that further intensified the heterogeneity of the Socialist voters. The PSOE obtained a significant echo within all religious categories. This contributed much to narrow the gap with the AP (PP from 1989 onwards), a party that was at the same time starting to veer towards the centre of the political spectrum. Although indifference towards religion was still more likely to run hand-in-hand with voting for the PSOE in 1993, it was clear that the main base of support for the then governing party came from nominal Catholics, who accounted for 54 per cent of the Spanish population (Montero and Calvo 1999; Table 8.3). In the 1993 elections, only the movement from practising Catholics towards not-very-practising Catholics had a relevant statistical impact, once again confirming the 'soft' religious character of the Socialist voters. Not surprisingly, the religiosity variable as a whole exerted little total influence.

In the 1996 elections, we expected a high degree of continuity in the relationship between religiosity and the Socialist vote, if only because no event, at the political level, suggested a significant change in these relations. However, the type of indicators included in the 1998 survey makes it difficult to say whether this was indeed the case.[9] With this caveat in mind, the 1996 results shown in Table 8.4 appear to suggest that the effect of religiosity remained quite unimportant when explaining the Socialist vote. Regardless of the significance of these particular results, the size of the variation in the odds is insufficient to suggest noticeable changes in religious relationships. In fact, even though on that occasion the PP did do slightly better among nominal Catholics, the distribution of religious preferences within the Socialist electorate for 1996 was largely as it had been in 1993.

Our previous comments have referred to the relationships between religiosity and party choice in positive terms, that is, the extent to which different levels of religiosity have favoured, or hampered, the probabilities of voting for the PSOE. Before analysing the vote for the AP-PP, it is worth considering the relation between religiosity and *negative preferences* towards specific parties. Fortunately, some of our surveys included a question asking the respondent to identify the party for which they 'would never vote'. Through these 'negative party preferences' or even 'negative vote', citizens express their hostility towards particular parties, to the point of ruling out the mere possibility of voting for them (Crewe 1976: 52–3; Richardson 1991: 759–60). It is not unreasonable to believe that political antagonism is related to religiosity: parties on the left would be more often and more intensively rejected by the most religious groups, whereas conservative parties would be so by non-practising Catholics and non-believers.

However, as Table 8.5 confirms, the PSOE does *not* generate negative feelings among the different religious constituencies. Only 13 per cent of the most religious in 1982, and 20 per cent in 1993, declared that they would never vote for the PSOE, a strikingly small figure when compared with the 73 per cent of indifferents who in 1982 affirmed that they would never vote for AP. In the case of the PSOE, the relation between these two variables is less robust: even in 1993 (when negative preferences toward the PSOE slightly increased in comparison to 1982) the relation was significant only at the level of 0.1. The results for AP-PP, however, tell a different story: the party's image among the least religious is particularly negative. In 1982, the negative preferences of virtually all the atheists and an overwhelming majority of the indifferents crystallised in AP. It is more surprising to find that even 20 per cent of the very religious and 35 per cent of the practising Catholics declared that they would never vote for a party that defended the most traditional and/or religious values.

To what extent has the AP-PP been able to garner support from the most religious voters? Broadly speaking, data included in Table 8.6 show that in Spain religious voters prefer right-wing alternatives. This conclusion stands even for the 1996 elections. Two important trends however qualify this particular relationship. First, the strength of the association between religious and conservative voting seems to be on the decline. Second, the relationship between religiosity and voting is *not* a direct one. Take for instance the data for the 1982 elections, which portrays the impact of religiosity on the vote for AP. The first column in Table 8.6 reveals a highly surprising result. Contrary to all expectations, religiosity seems to have had *no* influence at all on the decision to vote for the main conservative party, a result that to a large extent contradicts the outcome of the bivariate analysis reported above. According to the data shown in Tables 8.2 and 8.3, a remarkable, almost 90 per cent, of conservative voters was religious or very religious, and the party outdid the PSOE among practising Catholics. What, therefore, explains the lack of statistical significance of religious variables in the 1982 elections?

The common problems associated with indirect relationships are at play here. Our reading of the results for AP-PP in general, and for AP in 1982 in particular, suggests that the intermediate effect of political controls, and especially ideology, is responsible for the apparent, but deceptive, lack of statistical strength of the religious variable in these models. In the case of AP in 1982 above all, we believe that the influence of religiosity did become *indirect,* in the sense that to a large extent it virtually determines both individuals' self-placement on the left-right scale and their evaluation of party leaders, two variables which, in turn, are ranked among the most powerful explanatory factors for the voting decision. In other words, in these elections and for this particular party more than any other, being religious almost always meant choosing a centre-right or right-wing position on the ideological continuum and giving one of the highest scores to the conservative leader on a sympathy scale. And, at the end of the day, these were the most important explanatory variables in the decision to vote for the Right.[10]

Far from being antagonistic realities, religiosity and ideology actually complement each other. In more technical terms, they *interact.* The former

Table 8.5 Negative party preferences by religiosity, 1982 and 1993

Negative party preferences	*Very good and practising Catholics*		*Not-very-practising Catholics*		*Non-practising Catholics*		*Indifferents*		*Atheists*		*Electorate*	
	1982	*1993*	*1982*	*1993*	*1982*	*1993*	*1982*	*1993*	*1982*	*1993*	*1982*	*1993*
PSOE	13	20	6	15	6	13	8	17	19	21	10	20
											Chi2=82.5†	Chi2=8.55*
AP/PP	20	27	34	39	53	53	73	58	90	81	40	42
											Chi2=976.0†	Chi2=113.84†

Note: figures refer to the percentages of people who declare they would never vote for a given party.

* Significant at the 0.01 level.

† Significant at the 0.001 level.

Sources: DATA surveys 1982 (n = 5,333) and 1993 (n =1,417).

Table 8.6 Logistic regression model to explain the vote for AP (1982), and PP (1993 and 1996)

1982 (AP)	
Variables	*Odds ratio*
Practising Catholics	1.6
Not-very-practising C.	1.2
Non-practising C.	2.8
Indifferents and atheists	*RefC*
Ideology	3.4***
Evaluation of Fraga	1.9***
White collars	1.8**
Skilled workers	0.7
Unskilled workers	*RefC*
Sex of respondents	1.3
Age (in cohorts)	1.2
Size of community	0.9
Education	1.22
Trade union membership	0.7
Pseudo R^2 =	0.72
n = 1,286	

1993 (PP)	
Variables	*Odds ratio*
Practising Catholics	3.4
Not-very-practising C.	1.7
Non-practising C.	3.9*
Indifferents	*RefC*
Ideology	3.5***
Evaluation of Aznar	1.4***
White collars	1.3
Skilled workers	0.9
Unskilled workers	*RefC*
Sex of respondents	1.3
Age (in cohorts)	0.8
Size of community	1.0
Education	1.7
Economic policy	0.6
Employment policy (0–1)	2.8**
Pseudo R^2 =	0.69
n = 417	

1996 (PP)	
Variables	*Odds ratio*
Nuclear Catholics	2.4**
Nominal Catholics	1.2
Non-believers	*RefC*
Ideology	3.5***
White collars	1.7**
Petty bourgeoisie	1.0
Farm workers	1.4
Skilled and unskilled workers	*RefC*
Sex of respondents	1.4**
Age (in cohorts)	0.9
Size of community	1.0
Education	1.4**
Pseudo R^2 =	0.49
n = 905	

Notes:
* Significant at the 0.1 level
** Significant at the 0.05 level
*** Significant at the 0.001 level.

Sources: DATA surveys 1982 and 1993; for 1996, ISSP-CIS (#2,301) survey on religiosity, conducted in 1998.

provides a system of meaning through which the latter may shape the individual's political identity. Here we contend that the stronger the association between religiosity and ideology, the less the chances for religiosity to show statistical significance in regression models. This is because regression tools cannot disentangle indirect effects: they assume that all explanatory variables are at the same level of causation, something that is in practice rarely the case (Tacq 1997, ch. 1).[11] As a consequence, if for whatever reason we remain tied to regression analysis, (as we in fact do), but at the same time suspect that indirect relations may exist within our models, we must necessarily proceed to a two-stage analysis: the first involves running a model that assesses the influence of the variables that appear at the beginning of the causal chain (that is, socio-structural variables such as religiosity, social class, gender, or age); the second involves the inclusion of political control variables in the analysis.

Table 8.7 shows the results of this two-stage analysis.[12] The findings are clear: once political controls are removed from the models, the influence of religiosity again becomes significant. Both in 1982 and 1993, and for both the PSOE and AP-PP, the second specification (that is, without controls) reveals that the variation in the odds caused by religiosity is stark in size, and strong in statistical health. Nevertheless, it is also clear that this effect was much more pronounced in the case of AP and for the 1982 elections: in the model with controls applied, the variation in the likelihood of voting for AP when the respondent belonged to the category of practising Catholics was 1.6, a result that was statistically insignificant. However, when political controls are removed, the odds of voting for AP increase to a spectacular 34.7, statistically significant at the level of 0.000. The same is true in the case of the PSOE, but to a lesser extent.

Hence we contend first, that ideology *shadows* the impact of religiosity more often and more strongly in the case of right-wing than in that of left-wing parties; and second that this is not the case because ideology explains poorly the vote for the left-wing parties, but rather because the association between religiosity and ideology is apparently much more robust among conservative parties.

In 1989, AP converted itself into the PP after many years of electoral stagnation, factional rivalries and ideological clashes (García Guereta 1996). The results for the 1993 elections included in Table 8.5 suggest that religiosity was not a good predictor for explaining the conservative vote: the odds ratios were relatively small, and many of them were statistically insignificant. This result can be attributed again to the indirect character of the influence of religiosity on the vote. It is also possible however that changes in the character of the PP's electoral support may be explained by the still incipient decline of the influence of religiosity on conservative voting. In fact, the PP's extraordinarily good results in the two consecutive elections in 1993 and 1996 seem to be best explained by other variables such as negative evaluations of the PSOE government's policies (particularly economic policies) or the impact that corruption scandals had on well-informed segments of the Spanish electorate (Maravall and Przeworski 1998). Although ideology and party leadership are still relevant variables for explaining the conservative vote, they certainly seem to be losing some of their previous explanatory power.

Table 8.7 Logistic regression model to explain the vote for PSOE and AP-PP, with and without political controls, 1982 and 1993

PSOE 1982	*With political controls*	*Without political controls*	*PSOE 1993*	*With political controls*	*Without political controls*
Practising Catholics	*RefC*	*RefC*	Practising Catholics	*RefC*	*RefC*
Not-very-practising C.	1.4*	2.1***	Not-very-practising C.	3.5**	2.2**
Non-practising C.	2.3***	4.1***	Non-practising C.	1.7	2.0*
Indifferents	2.3***	5.6***	Indifferents	1.7	3.7**
Atheists	0.9	2.2**	Atheists	1.1	8.0**
Ideology	0.6***		Ideology	0.4***	
Leader's evaluation	2.1***		Leader's evaluation	1.4***	
White collars	0.5**	0.5***	White collars	0.4*	0.4**
Skilled workers	0.9	0.7	Skilled workers	0.5	0.5**
Unskilled workers	*RefC*	*RefC*	Unskilled workers	*RefC*	*RefC*
Sex of respondents	1.3	1.1	Sex of respondents	1.1	1.1
Age (in cohorts)	0.8**	0.9	Age (in cohorts)	0.9	0.9
Size of community	0.9**	0.9	Size of community	0.9	0.9
Education	0.7**	0.6***	Education	0.6*	0.6**
Trade union membership	0.7	1.0	Economic policy	0.6	
			Employment policy	0.35**	0.2***
n=1,395	Pseudo R^2= 0.41	Pseudo R^2= 0.11	n=400	Pseudo R^2= 0.54	Pseudo R^2= 0.32

A*P 1982*	*With political controls*	*Without political controls*	*PP 1993*	*With political controls*	*Without political controls*
Practising Catholics	1.6	34.7***	Practising Catholics	3.4	12.2***
Not-very-practising C.	1.2	12.3***	Not-very-practising C.	1.7	5.3***
Non-practising C.	2.8	7.5***	Non-practising C.	3.9*	3.8**
Indifferents and atheists	*RefC*	*RefC*	Indifferents and atheists	*RefC*	*RefC*
Ideology	3.4***		Ideology	3.5***	
Leader's evaluation	1.9***		Leader's evaluation	1.4***	
White collars	1.8**	2.8***	White collars	1.3	1.7
Skilled workers	0.7	1.0	Skilled workers	0.9	1.2
Unskilled workers	*RefC*	*RefC*	Unskilled workers	*RefC*	*RefC*
Sex of respondents	1.3	1.2	Sex of respondents	1.3	1.2
Age (in cohorts)	1.2	1.1	Age (in cohorts)	0.8	0.9
Size of community	0.9	0.9*	Size of community	1.0	1.1
Education	1.2	1.5**	Education	1.7	1.3
Trade union membership	0.7	0.3**	Economic policy	2.8***	4.1***
			Employment policy		
n=1,286	Pseudo R^2 = 0.72	Pseudo R^2= 0.23	n=417	Pseudo R^2= 0.69	Pseudo R^2= 0.27

Notes: see Table 8.6. Sources: DATA surveys 1982 and 1993.

Hence we suspect that the lack of relevance of religiosity in 1993 is not only a consequence of the persistence of indirect effects; it can *also* be attributed to a major decrease in its real explanatory weight. There is some evidence to this effect. Table 8.3 shows that in 1993 the PP managed to obtain a good result within the least religious groups. Also of significance is the extraordinarily intensified competitiveness between the two major parties, which reinforced the conservative party's commitment to strategies designed to shake off images (such as its religious connections) associated with electoral stagnation in the 1980s, as well as to boost its appeal among voters with less pronounced religious identities than those who have traditionally supported the party since the 1970s. Thus, as the counterpart to what was argued earlier with respect to the PSOE, it can be suggested that since the early 1990s the conservative party has also embarked on a process of religious de-identification and, consequently, religious depolarisation.

If our assessment of the saliency of the religious cleavage largely depends on the extent to which religious divisions at the societal level are translated into political conflicts, and if in addition most voting decisions rest on the electoral choice between the two major parties, we would be well-advised to move on from the models examined so far to a model capable of revealing the influence of religiosity in terms of the actual *competition* between the two major parties. In this vein, Table 8.8 shows the results of a multinomial regression model designed to explain a two categorical voting variable (vote for the AP-PP (value 1); vote for the PSOE (value 2)).[14] The model displays *risk ratio rates*. These measures resemble the odds ratio given by logistic models (Hamilton 1998: 246), and therefore reflect the extent to which each single independent variable, holding the rest constant, affects the probability of in our case, voting for the PSOE in comparison to voting for the reference category (AP in 1982, and the PP in 1993 and 1996).

In 1982 the model shows that a decrease in the level of religiosity increases the odds of voting for the PSOE (rather than the AP) by 1.3 points, a result that is significant at a level of 0.01. Given that the further the 'risk ratio rate' diverges from a value of 1, the greater the influence of this variable is said to be, we could easily conclude that this particular effect is far from impressive. From 1982 onwards, the influence of religiosity has progressively weakened as a factor dividing the two major parties (although it remains a relevant factor when explaining the differences between AP-PP and PCE-IU voters). The results for 1993 lend weight to the hypothesis of converging trends in the religious composition of PSOE and PP voters. They also imply that more and more voters may pay less and less attention to the differences in this regard between these two parties and hence consider them to be, to some extent, interchangeable alternatives.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have attempted to provide both empirical evidence and theoretical reasoning for an analysis of the declining religious cleavage in Spain. More particularly, a close look at the religious variable within multivariate models clearly supports the conclusion that in the 1990s, the competition

Table 8.8 Multinomial regression model, AP-PP and PSOE, 1982–96

PSOE 1982	*RRR*	*PSOE 1993*	*RRR*	*PSOE 1996*	*RRR*
Religiosity	1.3*	Religiosity	1.4	Church attendance	1.2†
Ideology	0.3†	Ideology	0.2†	Ideology	0.2†
González	2.1†	González	1.2**		
Carrillo	1.2**	Anguita	0.9		
White collars	0.4*	White collars	0.5	White collars	0.5**
Skilled workers	2.1	Skilled workers	0.7	Petty bourgeoisie	0.8
Unskilled workers	*RefC*	Unskilled workers	*RefC*	Farm workers	0.6
				Unskilled workers	*RefC*
Age (cohorts)	0.8	Age (cohorts)	1.0	Age (cohorts)	1.0
Sex	0.6	Sex	0.7	Sex	0.7
Community size	0.9	Community size	1.0	Community size	0.9
Education	0.8	Education	0.8	Education	0.6**
Trade union membership	2.4	Economic vote	0.4**		

Notes:
The reference category (*RefC*) is vote for AP (1982) and PP (1993 and 1996). RRR means 'Risk Ratio Rates' (see text, p. 131).
* Significant at the 0.1 level
** Significant at the 0.05 level
† Significant at the 0.001 level.

Sources: DATA surveys 1982 and 1993; for 1996, ISSP-CIS (#2,301) survery on religiosity, conducted in 1998.

between the two major parties did *not* pivot around religious issues. To put it another way, being religious, or not being religious at all, matters little when deciding whether to vote for either the AP-PP or the PSOE, the two major Spanish parties. Further research should clarify the extent to which the seemingly paradoxical assertion which points at the similarities of conservative and Socialist voters in terms of religiosity might be explained because of their distinct personal identification with religion; in other words, by the co-existence of two types of religious voters.

It can plausibly be suggested that most PP voters hold a more or less traditional understanding of religiosity, in which religious beliefs, moral principles and rates of church attendance are linked to standard criteria of political behaviour. In contrast, it is also likely that many PSOE religious voters may be more attracted by a less public and more individualistic understanding of religiosity, much closer to a sort of *à la carte* spiritual understanding of the world, and certainly detached from any external, institutionalised guidance for their political behaviour. If this is indeed the case, it is clear that existing indicators may have lost a good deal of their validity, since they would appear to bring together under a common heading markedly distinct and even opposing constructions of what religiosity signifies.

These conclusions are not particularly groundbreaking. In fact, they largely confirm what was, and still is, the standard argument regarding the relationship

between religiosity and electoral behaviour in Spanish politics: the religious depolarisation of voters is responsible for the declining salience of the religious cleavage (Montero 1993). Non-religious people are less tied to left-wing positions, at the same time as more religious voters display some preferences for the left.

However, we do believe that the analysis presented here enriches this argument in at least two ways. First, by grounding the whole issue in analyses of more systematic and consistent empirical evidence; second, by providing a new perspective from which to consider the process of religious depolarisation – one that acknowledges that the process itself is *not only* the result of a profound societal transformation in terms of social and political values, but *also* the successful outcome of a deliberate and, we argue, well-thought out process of strategic decisions at the elite level. Thus, after a traumatic past of religious polarisation during the 1930s and the long involvement of the Church with the authoritarian regime, Spanish party elites were able to keep the religious conflict off the *political* agenda in spite of the sporadic clashes over the implementation of a number of relevant policies. Voters have increasingly ceased to display discernible and persistent electoral preferences related to their particular religious features. The religious profiles of the PSOE and PP, as the main competing parties, have also become increasingly blurred with time. Weak since the birth of the new democracy because of the strategic commitment of party and Church elites not to mobilise religious versus secular identities, the religious cleavage has increasingly become even weaker.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank Paloma Aguilar, Millán Arroyo, Juan J. Linz, Francisco A. Orizo, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, Stathis N. Kalyvas, Paolo Segatti, and Mariano Torcal for their helpful comments, Justin Byrne for his assistance, the Center for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, Institute Juan March, for its facilities, and the Comisión Interministerial de Ciencia y Tecnología (CICYT) and the Department of Education and Research, Basque Government, for their financial support.

Notes

1 Our empirical data mainly come from post-electoral surveys conducted by DATA in April 1979 (Gunther, Sani and Shabad 1986), October 1982 (Linz and Montero 1986), and May–June 1993 (Montero 1994). We have also used the September 1998 International Social Survey Program (ISSP)-Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) survey, devoted to religion (stored at the CIS databank, #2301). For a map of the evolution of electoral politics in Spain, with detailed accounts of phases, periods and trends of continuity and change, see Linz and Montero (1999), and for a more detailed analysis of religion and politics in Spain, see Linz (1986, 1993), Montero and Calvo (1999), Montero (1993), González Blasco and González-Anleo (1992) and Pérez Díaz (1993).

2 In our case, the category of *nuclear Catholics* is made up of the sum of 'very good

Catholics' and 'practising Catholics'. We will label this category 'practising Catholics' in the models. In this respect, it should also be noted that although these indicators apply for the 1982 and 1993 surveys, for the 1998 survey (which contains information on the 1996 elections) we unfortunately had to define nuclear Catholics in terms of different indicators. The categories of 'indifferent' and 'atheists' in the aforementioned tables comprise the *non-believers* category. Finally, both 'not-very-regularly-practising Catholics' and 'non-practising Catholics' would correspond to the category of *nominal Catholics*. However, given their peculiarities, we prefer to keep these two categories distinct in our models. Common sense dictates that non-practising Catholics might be more inclined towards the left than their not-very-practising counterparts, but we would also not be surprised if the former exhibited higher levels of electoral volatility.

3 To avoid misleading results, in the PSOE model (Table 8.4) the voters for the PCE-IU have been left out from value 0. Following a similar logic, value 0 of the AP-PP variables (Table 8.6) does not incorporate the preferences of voters of nationalist parties. In all the models, the voters for Herri Batasuna (HB), the Basque anti-system coalition, have been treated as missing values.

4 In a bid to avoid misleading interpretations, we have adopted a systematic pattern in the selection of the categories of reference (indicated in the models as Ref C). Following Hardy (1993:10 ff.), we worked out the comparisons (inherent to any model using dummy variables) from a reference category that was, first, relatively large in terms of size, and second, coherent in meaning. Hence, in the explanation for the vote for the PSOE (Table 8.4) and in the multinomial model, the category of reference will be the first one, that is, practising Catholics (constructed by combining 'very good Catholics' and 'practising Catholics'), since the main hypothesis with respect to these parties is that a decrease in religiosity increases the chances of voting for the Left.

As regards the ISSP-CIS 1998 survey, there are difficulties derived from the idyosincracies in the construction of the indicator. This allows the respondent to choose between the categories of 'very religious', (14 percent of the sample), 'rather religious' (42 percent), 'neither religious, nor non-religious' (12 percent), 'slightly religious' (15 percent) and 'non-religious' (16 percent). Given the biased distribution of the variable (for instance, almost half the respondents identified themselves as 'rather religious', that is, the second category in the five-point scale), we decided to use the rates of *church attendance* in 1998 as an alternative indicator for this survey. We have coded church attendance in these three categories: 'nuclear Catholics' (36 percent) are those who declare that they go to church at least two or three times a month; 'nominal Catholics' (31 percent), those who attend church several times a year, normally on social occasions; and 'non-believers' (32 percent), those who declare that they never go.

5 Even though we will assume that the variable is measured at interval level, we have grouped the original continuous variable measuring the age of the respondent into different age cohorts, following the criteria proposed by Torcal (1995).

6 When possible, we attempted to follow Erikson's and Goldthorpe's (1992) five item classification.

7 Several studies have found that trade union membership was an influential variable in the 1979 elections (Gunther, Sani and Shabad 1986, 202 ff.; Gunther and Montero 1994). We will therefore work with a dummy variable, in which value 1 means belonging to a trade union.

8 The maximum value (and therefore the highest level of religiosity) on the index is 5, and the minimum 1. The values of the electorate as a whole were 2.47 in 1977, 2.94 in 1979, 2.98 in 1982, and 2.82 in 1993 (Montero, 1993: 241).

9 The 1998 ISSP-CIS survey which we have been forced to use to analyse the 1996 elections suffers from important deficiencies. Not least, it does not include any

question on attitudes towards party leaders; this is why the fit of our models for this year are rather poor and, we suspect, the 'comeback' in the statistical relevance of religious variables. More importantly, as noted above, we have had to rely on a different indicator of religiosity, namely church attendance, given the noted problems posed by the indicator of self-perception of religiosity.

10 We have cross-tabulated the attitudes towards the leaders of AP in 1982 (Manuel Fraga) and the PP in 1993 (José María Aznar) by religiosity (data not shown here). We found a close association between these variables, although it was much more evident in the case of Fraga: almost 90 percent of those who ranked him in position 5 and above were religious. In fact, the association between religiosity and feeling towards the political leader of a given party was best illustrated by the case of AP in 1982. The Chi square in this case was 924, whereas in the case of the PSOE's leader (Felipe González) it was only 212, more than four times lower.

11 See also (if in a different context), Mainwaring and Torcal (1999).

12 Table 8.7 gives the results of logistic regression models for the explanation of the vote for AP-PP and the PSOE *with* and *without* political controls (that is to say, ideology and leadership). Only the results for the 1982 and 1993 elections are shown.

13 Unfortunately, we cannot extend this argument beyond this point here. See Montero and Calvo (1999) for a longer discussion (and also for some additional data) regarding the relationship between ideology and religiosity in Spain. See also Linz *et al.* (1981, 289 ff) and Montero (1993).

14 For the purpose of these analyses, we assumed that the religious variable is continuous, since when considering the problem in terms of competition among parties we are only testing the changes in the significance of the variable.

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9 Italy

A dramatic case of secularisation?

Mark Donovan

Introduction

This chapter is in four parts. In the first part, it outlines the strong resonance of the secularisation thesis in post-war Italy and contrasts two views of its relevance to the new party system. It then puts these views in context by outlining the changed religious face of Italy in the 1990s, highlighting different dimensions of secularisation. It then considers the religious identity of Italy's new political parties especially in terms of their electorates. Finally, in examining the debate about the impact of religion on electoral behaviour in the 1990s it identifies the need to specify the impact of different dimensions of 'religion'.

Secularisation and party system change

In 1959 the Vatican confirmed its excommunication of socialists and communists. At the same time, the proportion of Catholics thinking that a good Catholic could not be a Marxist was shrinking dramatically (see Table 9.4) provoking Pasolini's observation that: 'Everybody in Italy is a marxist, just as everybody in Italy is a catholic' (Baranski and Lumley 1990: 5). In fact, while regular church attendance was an effective discriminant of voting behaviour in the so-called 'First Republic', the Christian Democratic party (DC) fused its religious identity with anti-Marxism, access to state resources, and the defence of democracy and political stability. Over time, the limitations of perceiving the DC as a party for Catholics, let alone a Catholic party, became increasingly clear. Equally, it came to be recognised that many Catholics had always voted for other parties. While the distinction between Catholic self-identification and practising Catholicism went a long way to resolving this issue, arguably it was never entirely satisfactory. Since 1994 attention has focused on the formation of the 'post-DC' party system. Conflicting views of the impact of religion on electoral behaviour suggest that it is necessary to study the interaction of different dimensions of 'religion' on voting if any analytical progress is to be made.

Since the foundation of the Republic in 1948, Italian society has been transformed. Then still a predominantly agricultural country, it became an industrial one via the 'economic miracle' of the late 1950s and early 1960s and by the

1980s was 'post-industrial'. These rapid shifts were accompanied by attitudinal and behavioural changes widely described in terms of 'secularisation', a process broadly agreed to have provided the preconditions for significant party system change.

However, a major conclusion of recent studies of Italian voting behaviour is that only the *potential* for change was created. Actual change required that there was also innovation in the political offer, that is in the party elite, the 'supply side' of the electoral equation, and/or change to the electoral system, that is to the institutional intermediation of electoral supply and demand. In the 1990s, both these conditions were dramatically met. In 1992 the Northern League burst upon the parliamentary scene as a new mass party and since 1994 all the parties contesting elections are either wholly new or have been substantially repackaged. Simultaneously, a major, albeit contested and unconsolidated shift towards plebiscitary and majoritarian electoral logics has placed the supporters of proportional representation (PR) on the defensive, where, it has to be said, they occupy some strategic high ground. Prominent among the defenders of PR are the small parties, many with strong historical identities, not least the principal successor party to the Christian Democrats, the Italian Popular Party (PPI). These parties have resisted the 'homogenising' impact of electoral reform.

The prominence of the concept of secularisation in the study of electoral change in Italy is not surprising. The DC dominated the so-called 'First Republic' (1946–94) and it was strongly religiously connotated. Its collapse and that of the First Republic coincided. Yet the concept has also been more widely applied so as to embrace the crisis of Marxism: the decline, or transformation of Italy's 'Red' sub-culture (see Table 9.1 on the DC and PCI vote). Changed electoral behaviour, in particular the rise of so-called 'opinion voting' and the decline of the vote of sub-cultural 'belonging' – both Catholic and Marxist (Parisi 1995) – might be regarded as fitting a Weberian understanding of secularisation: the rise of 'rational' voting being linked to disenchantment from collective, Catholic and Marxist myths. However, it has also been linked to the rise of post-modernism (Baranski and Lumley 1990: 6, 178–91). From a psephological perspective, secularisation in this latter sense is identified as 'dealignment' (Dalton, Flanagan and Beck 1984), namely the enduring and permanent failure of political discourses to mobilise and organise on a semi-permanent basis a segment of the electorate thus forming a 'cleavage'. Dealignment may, however, only be short-term, a cyclical phenomenon followed by realignment according to new, or revivified myths.

One leading hypothesis concerning Italy's party system since the 1990s is that religion does partially underpin its new, imperfect, bipolar structure; religious attitudes and behaviours being identified with the right. The alternative view interprets things very differently. After the DC fell apart, its formal successor party, the PPI and an array of other post-DC fragments proved so weak that it was thought that they might not survive. The new party system might take on an entirely secular structure dominated by the class cleavage – despite this possibly

Table 9.1 Chamber of Deputies share of valid vote

	1946	*1948*	*1953*	*1958*	*1963*	*1968*
DC	35.2	48.5	40.1	42.4	38.3	39.1
PCI	18.9	18.6	22.6	22.7	25.3	26.9
	1972	*1976*	*1979*	*1983*	*1987*	*1992*
DC	38.7	38.8	38.3	32.9	34.3	29.7
PCI	27.2	34.4	30.4	29.9	26.6	16.1

Note:
The 1992 figure refers to the PDS. Communist Refoundation gained 5.6 per cent.

seeming anachronistic in a comparative historical framework (Pisati 1997; Segatti *et al.* 1999).

However, secularisation is not a sufficient explanation of the dramatic transformation of the structure of Italian party politics. Long-term change in mass attitudes and behaviour over three or four decades was reflected neither in the resilience of the DC through the 1970s and 1980s nor in the precipitate nature of its collapse in 1993. The question thus arises as to whether the new and not-so-new parties of the right, in particular Forza Italia (FI), represent some continuity of a 'religious vote'. Certainly Silvio Berlusconi, Forza Italia's leader, strove to inherit a presumed religious vote, and his party's entry into the European People's Party (EPP) in 1999 strengthened his claim to it. Nevertheless, the EPP had also changed its identity in the 1990s as its leaders set about constructing a broad centre-right alliance and the identification of the Catholic vote with the right in Italy was open to question.

Arguably, in 1994, it was the weak centre bloc of political forces, most notably the PPI, which was identified with the religious vote. When this broke up in 1995, large parts allied with the left. Thus, the continuing PPI became a key component of the new Olive Tree alliance while the United Christian Democrats (CDU), which refused to follow it, oscillated to the right (1995–98), left (1998–99) and then right again. Like the PPI, Mario Segni, the ex-DC champion of electoral reform allied with the Olive Tree although he too flirted with the right, not least the National Alliance (AN) in the 1999 European parliamentary election. Finally, like the PPI, Lamberto Dini's religiously connotated quasi-party Italian Renewal, formed a steadfast alliance with the left, albeit one that was expressly provisional. While these shifts compounded the disorientation among Catholic voters, they ended the much weakened yet persisting taboo on religious identification with the left. Consequently, the alternative view of the impact of religion on the party system is that religion is being articulated in different ways so as to influence both left and right. As a consequence, Catholicism may be strengthening its difficult embrace of 'liberal pluralism' in the sense argued by Isaiah Berlin (Hausheer 1998). This view makes the identification of 'a' religious influence on electoral behaviour tapped by a single indicator (such as frequency of attendance at Sunday service) misconceived.

Italy in the 1990s: a secularised nation of emergent multi-culturalism

In 1988, 97.9 per cent of (57.4 million) Italians were baptised Catholics. As against this impressive homogeneity, however, some ten per cent of adults did not profess any confessional identity. Of these, about one third (3.2 per cent) were atheist, two per cent indifferent and the remaining half-agnostic.[1] Studies of the 1994 electorate more specifically found 'only' 78 per cent self-identified as Catholic, seven per cent self-identified as non-believers and 14 per cent self-identified as 'Christians' (Diamanti 1997). The non-Christian but religiously identified population is small but has grown greatly in significance so that by the end of the 1990s Italy was coming to a belated recognition, led in many respects by John Paul II, that it too faced the challenges of multi-culturalism. Traditionally, two other confessions were recognised in Italy, both small and geographically circumscribed: Jews (35,000) concentrated in cities, especially Rome and Milan, and Waldensians (30,000), half of whom live in Piedmont mountain valleys. Non-Catholics traditionally were mostly irreligious, but this is no longer the case. Garelli indicates well over two million religiously identified non-Catholics in Italy, more than double that reported in the 1991 national census (Garelli 1996a). That census identified some 300,000 Muslims, mostly recent immigrants concentrated in Rome and Milan, and Islam has the highest faith growth rate in Italy. This may remain less relevant than in other European countries given the high turnover of this immigrant category (Zincone nd) but because of Italy's extremely low birth-rate, one quarter to one-sixth of births 'in some cities' in the late 1990s were to immigrants (*Il Manifesto*, 5 February 1997).

If Italy is now religiously plural in a way that it was not before the 1990s, Catholicism remains sufficiently dominant in some senses for it to be seen as providing an integrative glue to Italy in ways that the state has not (Cartocci 1994). This view warns against any over-simplification of how secularisation is perceived. Certainly, the respect currently shown to the Church by left- as well as right-wing party leaders and intellectuals seems to confirm the view that the Church remains a powerful social and cultural force in Italy. Garelli (1996b) thus contrasts the strength of organised religion in Italy with the weakness of faith. Throughout the 'First Republic', trust in the Church remained at high levels (typically 50–60 per cent), approximately double that found in political institutions (excepting the police and judiciary). In the 1990s, with the Italian State in crisis, the Church prominently defended national unity against the Northern League. It also provided a degree of innovative – and in some respects modernising – ethical leadership. The Church also has the resources to influence a large part of Italian society: one Italian in ten is religiously 'mobilised' in the sense that they participate in an association which has an explicitly Christian inspiration, and over one quarter attends church every week; *Famiglia Cristiana* has the second largest circulation (over a million) of any weekly paper (having recently been overtaken by a TV programme listing); and Catholic social organisations are significant welfare providers. The Catholic media embrace 250 radio

stations, 35 local television stations, over 200 publishing houses and around 130 diocesan weeklies (Ceccarini 1999).

Perhaps it is not surprising that while Italy has the lowest birth-rate in the world, it has very low figures for single-parent families (8.2 per cent in 1989 compared to 14 per cent in the UK, most of these being 'traditional' i.e. widows/widowers) and for children born out of wedlock – 6.3 per cent in 1990 compared with 27.9 per cent in the UK (Ginsborg 1994a).

Despite this institutional strength, however, faith is weak (Garelli 1996b). What it means to be Catholic has been transformed (Allum 1990). The proportion of the adult population attending church weekly declined sharply in the years of the post-war economic boom: from 69 per cent in 1956 to about 30 per cent by the end of the 1970s since which time it has stabilised (Leonardi and Wertman 1989: 177; Garelli 1996a). At the other extreme, 16 per cent never go to Church and a further 22 per cent attend only at Christmas and Easter. In contrast to the stabilisation of weekly attendance, other indicators of religious influence show continuing decline. In 1970, civil weddings formed a mere 2.3 per cent of the total. By 1981 they were 11 per cent and by 1991 17 per cent (Cartocci 1994:174). The social and geopolitical dimensions of these shifts can be seen with regard to weekly attendance which is above-average in the north and especially low in cities: a mere 4 and 8 per cent in Bologna and Florence (in the 'Red belt'); 15 per cent in Rome and Naples and 19 per cent in Milan (Riccardi 1994a: 338). A 1995 survey demonstrated only 20 per cent of Milan's new-born to be baptised (*Corriere della Sera*, 16 June 1995).

In this changed context, Catholic religiosity has come to be identified with a community of believers identified as a minority of the population as well as with respect for the ecclesiastic institutions. This distinction makes clear the need to distinguish different meanings of 'religion'. Cartocci (1990: 161) cites the identification of four aspects of the religious phenomenon: experiential, ritualistic, ideological and consequential, and a variety of typologies of religiosity have been developed in Italy in recent years (Garelli 1996b: 124). The major distinction that tends to be made is between church practice that is religiously motivated and that which is ritualistic. However, consistent separation of the various dimensions of religion in an attempt to uncover their linkages with electoral behaviour does not seem to have been carried out even though 'it could lead to further internal differentiation (*divaricazioni*) and different outcomes, including political' (Cartocci 1994: 168).

A recent example of the categorisation of Italians on the basis of experiential, ritual and behavioural religious indicators (the importance attached to religion in private life, frequency of attendance at religious services and participation in religious associationalism) divided the population into five groups (Garelli 1996b: 59–124). The first two comprised the 'religious minority' with strong motivations: about 12 per cent of religious activists plus about 20 per cent of regularly practising Catholics. These are contrasted with about 10 per cent of non-believers and about 20 per cent 'critical and detached' from the Church and religious values most of whom (86 per cent) nevertheless describe themselves as Catholic.

In between are approximately 40 per cent of occasional and discontinuous Church attenders whose motivations are historical and environmental, or ethno-cultural, as much as religious. In sum, two-thirds of Italians are identified as either external to the official Catholic faith, critical of and detached from religion and the Church, or as having an essentially irreligious motivation for Church attendance.

The challenge of secularisation was perceived by leading Church figures as early as the late 1950s, long before its electoral impact became a matter of concern in the 1970s. They recognised that from the outset of the Republic 'Catholics' were voting for Marxist parties, despite the excommunication this implied. Indeed, from the outset the religious identity of the new Republic was ambiguous (Riccardi 1998). In its first decade (1948–58) it had appeared in many respects to be a confessional state dominated by the Church and the DC. However, that state co-existed with an often militantly anti-clerical Marxist sub-culture, which many feared was strong enough to topple the new democracy. Perhaps more significantly, the DC itself had determined to govern in coalition in order to combat the influence of clerico-conservatism. The DC thus helped democratise the non-democratic mass and elite political cultures of Catholicism, opening it up to a pluralist conception of public behaviour. For Riccardi (1998), the Republic's ambiguity was clamorously resolved by the 1974 referendum. This saw devout Catholics prominent in the campaign to retain the new divorce legislation while, to immense and near universal surprise, only 40.7 per cent voted to abrogate the new divorce legislation. In 1981 an even smaller minority (32.5 per cent) voted against recent abortion legislation.

Catholic party politics: from predominance to tenuous survival

Despite this secularisation of the nation, one indication of the continuing relevance of the religious factor in electoral behaviour is the persistence of parties with an electorate comprising significant proportions of regularly practising Catholics (see Tables 9.2–9.4). However, Table 9.2 shows that the very survival of these parties is tenuous, which contrasts markedly with the DC's still obtaining 30 per cent of the vote as late as 1992.

The primary religiously connotated parties in the 1994 and 1996 elections were, on the left: the Network, the Christian Socials, the PPI, Segni's Pact and Dini's Italian Renewal. The Network was formed in 1990 by the dissident DC mayor of Palermo and took on a radical left-wing law-and-order identity. Since 1998 it has associated with the Italy of Values movement of the chief prosecution protagonist in the corruption trials of the early 1990s, Antonio Di Pietro. Together, these latter helped found Prodi's Democrats whose success in the 1999 European Parliament election gained them entry to the D'Alema II government formed in December 1999. The Christian Socialists allied with the PDS (Democratic Party of the Left) in 1994 and, with other party fragments, formed the PDS-dominated DS (Left Democrats) in February 1998. The PPI is the

Table 9.2 Parties, quasi-parties and electoral alliances associated with Catholicism

	Chamber PR result 1994	*Chamber PR result 1996*	*Chamber PR result 1999*
Pact for Italy	15.9	–	–
Network	1.9	–	With Democrats
Christian Socialists	With PDS	With PDS	With DS
PPI	See Pact for Italy	See For Prodi	4.2
For Prodi	–	6.8	–
Democrats (Prodi)	–	–	7.7
Dini/Italian Renewal	–	4.3	1.1
CCD-CDU	–	5.8	See separate entries
CCD	With FI	With CDU	2.6
CDU	–	With CCD	2.2
UDEUR	–	–	1.6

Notes:
Most of these groups/parties were too weak to field candidates independently in the parliamentary elections given the four per cent threshold. Pact for Italy comprised the PPI (which split in 1995), Segni's Pact and the PRI. For Prodi: PPI for the most part, plus Maccanico's Democratic Union, the South Tyrol Peoples' Party (PPST/SVP) and the Italian Republican Party (PRI). Segni was allied with Dini (RI) in 1996. For all other references, see text as well as Table 9.6.

formal successor party of the DC and was the PDS's major ally in the construction of the Olive Tree in 1995–6. That alliance prompted the departure of the CDU. Segni's Pact now comprises no more than a handful of Segni's allies. Dini's quasi-party was formed in early 1996 while he was still PM in order to bolster the Olive Tree. It capitalised on Dini's premiership of the entirely technocratic government which, supported by the left and LN, followed the collapse of the Berlusconi government. In 1999, the UDEUR, like the Democrats, joined the left parties via the European election. The origins of the UDEUR were complex. In 1998, former president Cossiga formed the UDR (Democratic Union for the Republic) essentially from the CDU and part of the CCD. The UDR supported the formation of the D'Alema government in an attempt to reaggregate the Catholic parties. When this initiative collapsed given the refusal of the PPI to break with the left, Clemente Mastella founded the UDEUR, which remained loyal to D'Alema.

On the right the primary religiously connatated parties are the CCD and CDU. The Centre Christian Democrats split away when the PPI was created in January 1994, joining Forza Italia. They did not stand independently in the 1994 election. The CDU emerged from the split in the PPI, following its failure in the 1994 election. It should be noted that the CDU moved right in order to enhance the centripetal dynamic of the right-wing coalition which was seen as in danger of falling under the sway of the National Alliance (AN). In 1996, only the PPI (in the electoral alliance 'For Prodi') and the CCD-CDU put up candidates independently in the PR part of the parliamentary elections, both barely surmounting the four per cent threshold. In 1998 the CDU joined Cossiga's UDR, but when this

failed, it stood alone in the European parliamentary election and thence returned to alliance with the Freedom Pole alongside the CCD.

While all these parties struggle to survive at the national level, their strong social implantation through local party and local government organisation makes them major actors in local and regional government alliances as well as significant allies nationally. Moreover, at national level, the major parties are keen to maintain the support of all the minor parties, given the evenly balanced electoral support they obtain. Their value for their religious connotation is also clear, as shown by Table 9.3.

The majority of PPI and CCD-CDU voters are clearly religiously connotated. The Dini list also features prominently in this respect, perhaps thanks to its inclusion of Segni and his followers, perhaps reflecting the significant Catholic presence in his government (*Corriere della Sera*, 18 January 1995). The electorate of the three major parties of the centre-right (FI, AN and the LN) is not strongly connotated on a weekly attender measure, but is so on a less demanding indicator. This is discussed in the next section. It should be noted that given the size of these parties, only a minority of regular church attenders, however defined, votes for any one of them. In this sense, just as the DC was both more and less than a Catholic party, increasingly a disappointment even as a party for Catholics and never a Catholic party, so there is no Catholic party now, nor any single party for Catholics.

Religion and voting behaviour: towards a 'true' Catholic pluralism?

As a Catholic party the DC was a disappointment. Italy's bishops recognised this almost immediately. By the 1970s, the party was an object of scandal even for the country's conservatives and the Italian Church, only recently constituted as an independent, national body, moved to assert its autonomy of the DC and a

Table 9.3 Proportion of 'practising Catholics' in party electorates, 1996 election

	Weekly[1]	*Regularly*[2]
PPI	66	68.8
CCD-CDU	63	76.7
Dini list	42	51.4
Forza Italia	22	45.5
PDS	19	28.7
National Alliance	19	42.2
Communist Refoundation	13	15.3
Northern League	11	40.4

Notes:
1 Garelli (1996a: 890), timing not precisely specified ('spring'). The category comprised 27.5 per cent of the population.
2 Diamanti (1997: 348), based on a pre-electoral survey. The category (defined as at least 2–3 times per month) comprised 46 per cent of the population.

primarily religious mission. The Church nevertheless maintained its privileged relationship with the DC right up to the 1990s crisis. That the DC disappointed as even a party for Catholics is linked to the fact that its half-century hegemony was not rooted uniquely in its religious identity. Rather, the DC fused this with anti-socialism, access to resources, and the defence of democracy and political stability. Given the emphasis of more political understandings of party system structuration on competition between parties rather than an overly sociological focus on social cleavages (Donovan and Broughton 1999), this fusion of cleavages and issues is extremely important. Italian electoral studies have confirmed that party system structuration *per se*, primarily the DC/PCI confrontation, did influence Italian voting behaviour in the heyday of the First Republic (Corbetta *et al.* 1988). Nevertheless, the DC's aggregate national vote was not achieved in a uniform fashion. Thus, survey analysis of the impact of religion on politics needs to be more regionally sensitive than is usually the case (Cartocci 1994: 168).

In the so-called 'White' northeast of Italy the DC obtained over 50 per cent of the vote between 1946–72 thanks to its exploitation of that region's Catholic sub-culture. The roots of this lay in the construction of a religious (church–state) cleavage organised around Catholic associationalism as dominant in the late nineteenth century. Much of the support that the DC gained there, however, derived from its anti-Marxist role and, once established as the regionally hegemonic party, its territorial representation role. From the 1970s, the DC's northeastern vote weakened and in 1992 the Northern League (LN) decisively undid it. The DC's hegemony was undermined because Veneto Catholicism failed to provide the politico-administrative leadership that the region's booming economic model required, and by 1992 a Catholic bulwark against the left was no longer necessary (Messina 1997). The LN vented the area's *anti*-clerical dimension, which had manifested itself sporadically in the 1980s via the leagues and the 1981 abortion referendums (Gangemi and Riccamboni 1997). Even in the 'Catholic' Veneto the DC vote was never simply a religious one. Now, the expressly Catholic vote in that region is a minor one.

The other main area of DC strength, the south, was associated with two forms of voting. On the one hand a church-influenced vote rooted in a conservative form of ritualistic church observance; on the other the so-called 'regime' or exchange vote, that is, clientelist votes given to government parties in return for favours. In the longer term the latter was usually held to be particularly significant. Nevertheless, the former might still be relevant. In 1994, for example, the (centre) Pact's largest regional plurality vote was in Basilicata (Melchionda 1995: 196–7) which has a significant religious infrastructure.

The divorce referendum of 1974 and PCI advances of 1975–6 prompted a renewal of electoral studies in Italy. Hitherto, electoral behaviour had been seen as dominated by two mobilised sub-cultures producing hyper-stable voting behaviour (Galli and Prandi 1971). Barnes had concluded that 'organisational and sub-cultural ties are more important variables than the commonly emphasised variables of social status, region and sex' (1974; see also 1977). Now the

fear was expressed that galloping secularisation could undermine the DC, thus plunging Italy into turmoil. In fact, electoral stability persisted. Sani identified institutional reform, generational turnover and period effects as the cause of a mid-1970s surge in progressive voting. In 1974 the voting age had been reduced to eighteen so that the mean new vote in 1976 was 9.2 per cent: some 5.5 million new voters, double the 4.8 per cent average of 1946–72 (Sani 1991). These new voters were greatly influenced by the leftwards mobilisation of Italian society.

Despite continuing electoral stability particularly among Catholic voters, new methodologies applied to old data suggested that individual volatility may always have been high (a figure of between 25–35 per cent in cities), yet cancelled out in aggregation (Allum and Mannheimer 1985). As a result of the new emphasis on individual electoral behaviour a more mobile voter was identified whose characteristics fitted the secularisation thesis neatly: better-educated, more politicised, more secularised and of higher economic status. Rising education levels were a characteristic of the period. Allum and Mannheimer stressed also the importance of the Second Vatican Council (VCII) in breaking down ideological vetoes. For example, the response to the question can a good Catholic be a Marxist changed dramatically in the wake of VCII, as it did again from the 1980s.

The new emphasis on individual behaviour also led to a typology of voter motivation. Thus, the vote of 'belonging' (*appartenenza*) referred to votes shaped by membership of a sub-culture; exchange voting (*scambio*) was instrumental voting including clientelism, while the new phenomenon was the 'opinion' voter (Parisi and Pasquino 1979). In 1995 Parisi operationalised this typology confirming the importance of the growth in opinion voting. Parisi estimated that a half of young voters (those born after 1965, thus first voting in a general election in 1987) were opinion voters compared to one fifth of the oldest generations (Parisi 1995).

The 'discovery' of degrees of individual volatility (ranging from viscous to fluid) and the distinction of this level from the aggregate outcome (stable or unstable) was pursued via a re-examination of the history of Italian elections by Corbetta *et al.* (1988). This criticised the sub-cultural thesis of staticity, of being overly sociological, and of denying the relevance of Kirchheimer's depolarisation thesis to Italy. Stressing the pervasiveness of electoral volatility, they noted that when the concept of 'stable instability' had originally been introduced in 1958 it had referred specifically to electoral behaviour. Subsequently, however, it had become used to indicate alleged electoral and party system immobilism in contrast to a turbulent politics. Corbetta *et al.*'s dynamic model of electoral behaviour identified three phases in post-war aggregate electoral behaviour:

1 1948–63: the progressive capture of the right-wing vote by the centre-right thanks to the mobilising and aligning election (DC/PCI) of 1948
2 1963–76: left growth
3 1976–83: centrifugation as, although 1976 was a mobilising election, it was (I interpret) the last gasp of the DC/PCI confrontation and led quickly to

another demobilising election, in 1983, but this time 'of the system' rather than within it.

In writing up their research for publication, they tentatively built on their view of the 1983 election extrapolating from their research to suggest that the 1987 election was one of re-mobilisation around the DC/PSI confrontation. Now, the issue was no longer defending the system but competition for the centre voter. One might argue that this development underlies the emergence of a roughly bipolar party system in the 1990s. Certainly new ways of analysing the structuration of electoral behaviour emerged. These showed that the significance of left–right identification was declining (Schadee 1995), and with it the logic of Sartori's model which emphasised the shaping of electoral dynamics by the tripolar (left-centre-right) structure of the party system. In particular the new approach uncovered juxtapositions between old parties and new parties, government parties and opposition parties (Biorcio and Natale 1989; Alisi *et al.* 1991; Gasperoni 1995). In 1990, electoral surveys also showed that the willingness of the electorate, particularly the Catholic electorate (Parisi and Schadee 1995), to consider changing their vote was very high. In 1990, therefore, religious identity was significant and a spur to potential electoral realignment. Consequently the potential for electoral change and possibly even party system change was high.

Despite this developing emphasis on electoral fluidity, the perception of continuing aggregate electoral stability in the 1980s encouraged the belief among reformers that Italy's immobile political system *could not* be regenerated by party strategies and electoral behaviour. It is still now widely argued that the level of aggregate electoral *movement* has been very limited despite the transformation of the party system and two cases of government alternation, if Berlusconi's triumph in 1994 is thus regarded. Rather, the different outcomes have resulted from supply-side changes, that is, changing electoral alliances (notably the left-centre Progressives of 1994 being replaced by the centre-left Olive Tree in 1996) and thus, indirectly, electoral reform. In fact, a major debate is taking place about the nature and extent of the restructuring of the electoral aspect of the party system (Bardi 1996) with voter studies identifying an 'early freeze' (Cartocci 1996) and emphasising voter stability in an unstable party environment (Segatti *et al.* 1999).

Table 9.4 Can a good Catholic be a Marxist/vote communist?

	1953	*1963*	*1968*	*1974*	*1985*	*1990*	*1994*
Yes	21	28	nk	45	nk	nk	nk
No	67	56	39	41	27	19	15
NK	12	16	nk	14	nk	nk	nk

NK = not known

Source: DOXA data quotes in Wertman (1982: 99); Segatti *et al.* (1999: 32).

This latter analysis suggests that the continuing tripolar structure of the party system in 1994 allowed voters fundamentally to stand still. If most Socialist (PSI) and DC voters switched to Forza Italia (and to a lesser extent AN) this did not amount to voter realignment. The supply side changed but the demand side stayed essentially as it had been before. The switch to the pole appears to have seen a translation of a pro-government, anti-left vote into a pro-Berlusconi, anti-left vote (Segatti 1997). Equally, it is not entirely clear that there was realignment of the remainder of centre voters who, having voted Pact for Italy in 1994, voted for The Olive Tree in 1996. Certainly there was a political shift, but again it was not so much the voters that moved, but rather those they identified with. These voters did not realign so much as were realigned. Nevertheless, while realignment may have been elite-led, there is evidence of voter realignment. Thus, in terms of voter self-placement on the left–right scale the proportion of the electorate identifying with the Centre has shrunk, there is bipolarisation or 'de-centring' (Diamanti 1997: 345–6). Attitudes are following the changed structure of competition, which has become more markedly bipolar (and, where it was tripolar, as in northern Italy in 1996, the third pole was a territorial one). In 1994, the two major electoral alliances accounted for 68 and 75 per cent of the Chamber and Senate votes. In 1996, these proportions increased to 85 and 82 per cent respectively.

The role of religion in all of this is unclear. According to Pisati (1997: 174), three major cleavages underlay electoral behaviour in 1994 and 1996: the voter's geo-political zone of residence, the frequency of religious practice (discriminating between those who attend at least two to three times per month, and those who attend less often), and social class. In the same edited volume, however, Diamanti (1997: 352) concludes that 'in general, there no longer registers any single or several specific aspects of a religious orientation able clearly and unequivocally to show an effect on electoral preference structures'. Thus, frequency of religious practice and religious self–identification discriminate only minimally (*pochissimo*) between electoral alignments and only slightly (*poco*) between parties. While using additional indicators of religious influence (trust in the Church and associational participation) leads to various combinations of religious attitudes which do reveal differences, these are marginal and tend to be largely negative. Thus, regular practice and trust in the Church increase the likelihood of voting PPI (whereas neither associational involvement nor self-identification are significant), whereas non-believers and non-practising Catholics are more likely to vote PDS; non-believers are less likely to vote FI or AN while believers distrustful of the Church are more likely to vote FI; and the LN is not supported by non-believers, but sees its vote increase in line with non-participation in Catholic associationalism and distrust of the Church. Diamanti concludes that cultural attitude, or civil religion rather than any organised, institutional sub-culture determine electoral behaviour (Diamant 1997). Certainly no one 'home' for 'the Catholic vote' can be identified (see Table 9.5).

If we aggregate the figures for weekly practising Catholics, we find all but

Table 9.5 Distribution of 'practising Catholics' among parties

	Weekly[1]	*Regularly*[2]
Non or spoilt vote	29	N/A
PPI + CCD-CDU	23	13 + 6
Forza Italia	12	20
PDS	11	20
AN	8	17
Dini list	5	5
Communist Refoundation	5	3
Northern League	3	8
Other (Greens, Network etc.)	3	–
Pannella list	2	–
Other	–	8
	101	100

Notes:
1 Garelli (1996a: 891). Definition as per Table 9.3.
2 Diamanti (1997: 348). Definition as per Table 9.3.

a half voting for explicitly lay parties (all except PPI, CCD-CDU). Diamanti's less discriminating indicator shows nearly three-quarters of regularly practising Catholics voting for lay parties. Among weekly practitioners, there is a slight but clear preference for the lay right (FI, AN, LN and Pannella: 25 per cent) rather than the lay left (PDS and RC 16 per cent, plus Greens and Network) or the centre (LN, Dini at 8 per cent). The preference for the right is more marked among the broader definition of regular attendees given by Diamanti. Here, 37 per cent vote for the lay right; only 23 per cent plus for the lay left; 13 per cent for the centre (LN and Dini). Nevertheless, even on this measure the left vote is 41 per cent if the PPI and Dini votes are counted for the left, while the right (including LN) gains 51 per cent, and 8 per cent is not known. It is possible that those who attend church frequently (two or three times a month), but not every week are more ritualistic in their behaviour and more identified with the centre-right for politico-cultural than religious reasons.

Garelli (1996a: 893–4) reports a similar finding from a different perspective. Examining only those most readily identified as Catholic (according to five categories: voluntary sector activists, such as priests, nuns; participants in ecclesiastically based associations; regular church attendees; and convinced and earnest activists), Garelli found that left–right self-identification spanned the spectrum in all cases, although identification with the centre dominated. Thus, across the five categories, identification with the left ranged from 3 to 4 per cent, the centre-left 9 to 16 per cent; the centre 56 to 62 per cent, the centre-right 16 to 20 per cent and the right 7 to 10 per cent. In sum, contrary to one view, welfare activist Catholics do not appear to be predominantly left-wing. Those voters most clearly categorised as 'Catholics' still appear to identify with the centre and to prefer the right to the left.

Table 9.6 The main Italian political parties

Right	
National Alliance (AN)	'Post-fascist' party allied with Forza Italia since 1994. Led by Gianfranco Fini.
Forza Italia	Silvio Berlusconi's new centre-right, 'media party'.
Centre Christian Democrats (CCD)	In alliance with Forza Italia since 1994. Led by Ferdinando Casini.
Northern League (LN)	Led by Umberto Bossi – allied with Forza Italia in the 1994 elections it formed part of Berlusconi's short-lived government but brought it down and then stood independently in 1996.
Left	
Communist Refoundation (RC)	Left successor to PCI (Italian Communist Party), it was allied with the PDS in 1994 but independent in 1996. It supported the minority Prodi government until November 1998.
Democratic Party of the Left (PDS)	Main party on left, successor to PCI. Renamed the DS in 1998.
Italian Popular Party (PPI)	Independent in 1994 in an attempt to construct a centre pole, in 1996 it allied with the PDS. These two parties formed the core of the Olive Tree alliance. The PPI is the main successor party to the DC.

Note:
Several smaller parties exist, notably the Greens and the various Catholic fragments: only the two most enduring post-DC parties are identified here. See Table 9.2.

Conclusion

Post-war Italy has seen the pluralisation of Catholic identity, the laicisation of the state and the secularisation, in some senses at least, of Italian society. More recently, since 1993 and especially in and since 1996, it has seen a process of electoral bipolarisation. These processes make several things clear. It is no longer adequate, and perhaps never was, to talk of a Catholic vote, a Catholic party nor even a party for Catholics. Several parties, and none, can be considered parties for Catholics: the PPI, CCD and CDU most obviously, but also AN, FI and the DS given the large proportion of the total of 'regularly' practising Catholics that they attract. Perhaps Prodi's Democrats can be added to the list if they survive. Finally, if different religious motivations have been absorbed into a wider political fabric so that Catholics support different parties ranging across the left–right spectrum, it does not necessarily mean that Catholicism or religion is no longer a motivation for voting. More sensitive qualitative surveys of the

different dimensions of religion in people's lives such as that undertaken by Garelli (1996b) which tap deeply into personal beliefs and experiences rather than focusing on the institutional dimension of religion, need to be linked to studies of specific electoral behaviour (in its many arenas, geographical and functional). Finally, then, it may be the case that religious identification has become genuinely politically plural. While there is evidence that this is a factor of some considerable disorientation in what used to be called the 'Catholic world', it might benefit a society beginning to come to terms with multi-culturalism where political integration has been weak. The Church appears to be shifting towards a position of supporting national cultural unity while simultaneously promoting ecumenism and multi-culturalism. Such a 'nationalist' integration may be a circle which cannot be squared. Yet such an approach may mean that the Church can serve Italy as a weak, less exclusionary and more pluralist social integrator. In any case, there is much evidence still to suggest that Italy's 'secularisation' is not yet definitive.

Note

1 Unless otherwise indicated, data are from the three articles by Andrea Riccardi in Ginsborg (1994b), which draw on a variety of survey sources.

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10 Religious and clerical polarisation in Hungary

Zsolt Enyedi

Introduction

The interaction of politics and religion took the most extreme forms in twentieth century Hungary. The country went through phases of clericalism and atheism and it also learned the similarities and differences between red and white dictatorships. The period after 1990 lacked these extreme situations, but government composition varied from monochrome 'Christian' to ex-Communist-secular liberal coalitions. The volatility of the context made religion a potentially powerful determining factor of political attitudes and behaviour.

The political 'meaning' of religiosity is special in Eastern Europe. Until 1989 it was associated with latent anti-regime, anti-Communist orientation. After 1989, as happened with other forms of opposition under Communism, religiosity became convertible into 'political capital'. As different political forces tried to obtain this capital, religion became associated with a number of different values: conservatism, nationalism, Western orientation and solidarity with the lower classes for example. There were, of course, many public actors, including a number of Churches, who appealed for a politically neutral understanding of religiosity. Ten years after transition to democracy, there can be no doubt that these forces have been defeated. Today, mainstream religiosity and active membership in the established Churches is associated with the right-wing political block.

Elite political discourse does not always of course determine partisan affiliations at the mass level. There are in fact many indications that citizens do not regard elections as appropriate means of expressing their religiosity and they do not rank clerical/anti-clerical conflicts as the most relevant political issues. Until the country lags behind the pre-1989 era in terms of economic output, social equality or welfare provisions, it is likely that the social costs of the political transformation since 1989 will have priority for most Hungarian citizens. The state of mind of a citizen and of a voter however do not necessarily coincide. When citizens turn into voters, they must consider all the specific offerings of the electoral arena, including the alternatives presented by the elites. Politicians, journalists or Church leaders may use their agenda-setting power to replace certain issues with others.

Religiously coloured issues have an in-built advantage compared with many other issues. While the regulation of inflation, of agricultural subsidies or of the national health service involves a lot of technicalities that are difficult to grasp by the ordinary voter, it is rarely a problem to distinguish the atheist or anti-clerical politicians from those who are committed to religious causes. Furthermore, while the responsibility for the previous issues is divided between national and international authorities, gestures in favour or against religious symbols or church interests are within reach of all politicians. Finally, while social problems may be regarded as more important, religious questions may evoke stronger sentiments and, therefore, are likely to play a prominent role in shaping party choices.

The aim of the present chapter is to explain the patterns of religious polarisation in Hungary with the help of secondary analyses of attitude surveys. First I will present data on the stratification of the Hungarian population in terms of religiosity and I will describe the major trends. The discussion of the available data is organised around the question of whether Hungarians are becoming more or less religious. The second part scrutinises the linkages between politics and religion, establishes the religious profile of the major political parties and contrasts religiosity with other explanatory variables of voting behaviour. These variables include socio-demographic characteristics and attitudes that are closely tied to, but not identical with, religiosity. The inclusion of the latter variables make it possible to analyse how much attitudes are determined by, on the one hand, religiosity, and, on the other hand, by party politics and to assess how important is the role they play in linking the two spheres together.

The principal source of information utilised below is provided by the International Social Survey Programme's data, particularly the 1991 and the 1998 data sets. The comparison of the two data-files enabled me to compare the first phase of multi-party democracy in Hungary with the most recent developments.

The operationalisation of religiosity raises a number of apparent methodological problems. The standard question about church attendance is insensitive to the different requirements of different denominations. Yet, for a number of reasons (such as greater possibilities for international comparisons and for statistical analysis) most scholars (cf. Róbert 1994) prefer it. The questions referring to self-identification raise other concerns. One must decide, for example, how to code the large number of 'don't know' answers and how many alternatives to offer to the respondents.[1] A five-point scale ('I am religious according to the teaching of the church', 'I am religious in my own way', 'I can't tell whether I am religious or not', 'I am not religious', 'I have other beliefs') is probably the most widely used indicator of religious identity in Hungary. The results obtained with this instrument have highlighted the fundamental differences between the political and religious orientation of the first two categories. While people belonging to both of these groups consider themselves 'religious', the ones who are religious 'in their own way' doubt many of the religious dogmas, rarely go to church and hardly differ in their political behaviour from the average Hungarian citizen, while the followers of the churches' teaching constitute a culturally and politically much more homogeneous group (Tomka 1990, 1996b).

For the present analysis, religiosity was measured by ten items: church attendance (from never to several times per week, nine categories in all), frequency of praying (from never to several times per day, eleven options), belief in God (from 'do not believe' to 'believe without doubts' via four intermediary options), approach to the Bible (from 'word of God that should be taken literally' to 'is not my concern' on a four-point scale), belief in life after death, heaven, hell, religious miracles (all on four-point scales), and finally, agreement with the items: 'There is a God who concerns personally Himself with every human being' and 'Life is meaningful only because God exists' (on five-point scales). These items refer to faith and practice, but do not tap other possible dimensions of religion like religious (spiritual) experience, religious knowledge and the levels of everyday religion (Glock and Stark 1965). Even with these restrictions, many would argue that the measured elements of integration into the church culture and degree of belief in religious dogmas, do not form a uni-dimensional phenomenon. Yet, the principal component analyses and the scale-tests indicate that the respective dimensions are closely related, so that they can be treated without large distortions of reality as components of one single phenomenon. In 1991 the first (and only) extracted (unrotated) factor explained 61 per cent of the variance, and had an alpha scale reliability of 0.93; in 1998 the explained variance of the first factor was 0.60 and the alpha reached 0.85. In both cases all the items had a high loading on the respective factors, therefore they were employed as indicators of religiosity.

The ISSP data allowed me to create three attitude scales that were supposed to correlate with religiosity and form the attitudinal expression of it. The first (and only) principal component of items expressing a patriarchal view of family life (women should stay at home, husband should work), and the rejection of extra-marital and pre-marital sex and homosexual relationships was the 'conservative family' scale (five items); approval of the religious leaders' interference in politics and perception of churches having too much power created an anti-clericalism scale (three items); while the third scale comprised the rejection of health-related and financial justifications of abortion (two items). Pearson correlations indicated an increasingly strong relationship between religiosity and clericalism (0.14, 0.32) and views on abortion (0.09, 0.35), while conservative family values were the closest correlates of religiosity in both 1991 and 1998 (0.41, 0.37). The strength of these correlations warns, however, against regarding these attitudes as being very closely linked to religiosity.

Differences and trends in religiosity: the stilted revival

Religious stratification

The Hungarian denominational landscape is dominated by Roman Catholics. On the territories that belonged to Hungary before 1918, Roman Catholics were only slightly above fifty per cent but after the Treaty of Versailles the weight of non-Catholic denominations radically decreased. Since then the proportions have remained relatively constant: Catholics around 70 per cent (including the Greek

Catholics comprising about 2 per cent), Calvinists around 20 per cent, Lutherans around 5 per cent. If there was some change in the proportions, it was the moderate shift from Protestants to Catholics, a process that had started in the nineteenth century (Tomka 1996b). The real cleavage can be drawn however, between those who actively practise their religion and those who do not, the former group being in the minority.

The relatively high level of secularisation in present day Hungary, a country whose social and political life had one of the most religious outlooks in Europe in the first part of the century, is the result of two separate factors. The first is the social modernisation process that manifested itself in Hungary in much the same way as in the West, destroying many of the fundamental structures of traditional life. The second is specific to Eastern Europe, and it is the overt oppression of religion during the four decades of Communist rule. In the Stalinist period religiosity was regarded as a sign of backward, reactionary and potentially subversive orientation and those leaders of the churches who voiced even the slightest criticism against the atheist regime were jailed or forced to emigrate. Known churchgoers were deprived of any serious career advancement. As the regime became more liberal under the rule of János Kádár (first secretary from 1956 to 1989), religiosity gradually ceased to be a dangerous stigma even though it continued to be incompatible with membership in the political elite. The large, established denominations were not persecuted any longer and the aggressive anti-religious propaganda of the 1950s was replaced with a paternalistic discourse in which tolerance for the churches was regarded as a fundamental feature of the new model of 'goulash-communism'. Religiosity was treated as a sort of understandable and forgivable human weakness that mainly characterised the older generations. The government could afford to maintain this benevolent image only because the Machiavellian power games played against (and sometimes together with) church leaders were largely successful. The higher echelons of the churches accepted the new deal offered by the Kádár government, especially since the Communist party directly manipulated appointments within the church hierarchies. The deal involved the public support of the regime by religious authorities and the limiting of church activities to spiritual matters.

Due to the unfavourable atmosphere surrounding religion, the validity of the survey results from the years of Communism is obviously suspect. It is still significant that, either because of the ongoing liberalisation or because of a genuine religious revival, the number of those who identified themselves as religious started to grow at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s. As opposed to the early 1970s, when only a numerical minority claimed (or dared to claim) to believe in God, by the time of the regime change (1989–90) the proportion of believers had reached two-thirds of the total population. Most of them (around fifty-five per cent of the total population), however, claim to be religious 'in his or her own way' and only about one sixth 'according to the teachings of the church' (Tomka 1991a, 1991b; Tamás 1997). But the change in the latter category is also remarkable: from a mere eight per cent in 1978 it increased to approximately 16 per cent in 1991 (Tomka 1991a). The increase, however, halted in

those years, disappointing the churches that hoped for the continuation of the religious revival. The proportion of the avowedly 'non-religious' segment of the population continues to hover around 25 to 30 per cent. These figures, as well as the regular church attendance, which has stabilised at around 15 per cent, place Hungary among the more secularised European nations (Kelley and De Graaf 1997; Szántó 1992). The Christian intelligentsia initiated subcultural organisations in almost all spheres of social life after 1989 and appeared as an important political current on the Hungarian political scene (Enyedi 1996). But the significance of social or cultural church-related activities is far from that experienced in old democracies and certainly lags behind the pre-war level (Tomka 1996a).

The negative correlation between religion and social status further weakens the social strength of the religious population (Fischer 1997). The bulk of the practising Christians live in smaller settlements and women are more religious than men (Central Statistical Office 1993; Tomka 1990, 1997). Finally, while the religiosity of the oldest age cohorts is comparable to Western European standards, the middle-aged and the young are less religious than in most European countries (Tomka 1996a). While the older generations are almost without exception nominal Christians (i.e. they regard themselves as belonging to one of the denominations), about one quarter of those who are under the age of twenty-five are not baptised (Tomka 1997).

Value inertia and value change

When discussing the relevance of religion in politics one inevitably comes to the functional role of a set of attitudes typical of the religious population and institutions. Hungary's social value system did not offer much room for the respective values. The Kádárist era was often characterised by the label of 'negative modernisation', meaning the simultaneous lack of traditional community life and of the modern forms of group co-operation. Abortion and divorce were widely available and public discourse lacked references to the 'sacredness' of life or marriage, although the conventional model of family life was officially promoted. According to the ISSP data, Hungarians maintained their libertarian attitude towards abortion throughout the 1990s: about four-fifths of them stated that it is 'never wrong' to carry out abortion for health reasons and about half of them accept poverty as a legitimate reason for an abortion.

In other areas, where Hungarians held rather conservative values (Heath *et al*. 1993), a moderate shift towards permissiveness could be witnessed between 1991 and 1998 (Table 10.1). Even more painfully for the churches, 'clericalism' has decreased during the 1990s. At the beginning of the decade the churches commanded a high level of support, even though they were not expected to play an explicit political role (Róbert 1994). This high trust has weakened during the years: in 1998, 30 per cent expressed distrust in churches, as opposed to 22 per cent in 1991. In 1991, 13 per cent regarded the churches as being too powerful, in 1998 the respective figure was 21 per cent. The number of those who accept as legitimate the churches' influence on voters decreased from 15 per cent to 8 per cent.

At the same time, seemingly contradicting the processes cited above, spiritualism (as opposed to materialism) gained in strength during the 1990s. The majority of people categorically rejected the existence of life after death, heaven, hell and miracles in 1991. By 1998 all of the respective figures had dipped under fifty per cent with almost half as many respondents doubting 'definitely' the actual presence of God in everyday life than seven years earlier (Table 10.2). From the point of view of the official teaching of the churches there are still disappointingly few who believe in religious dogmas but the sensitivity towards the existence of supernatural phenomena has considerably increased and fundamental religious concepts have gained widespread acceptance.

Trends can be analysed not only on the basis of data sets from different timepoints but also, although with less certainty, on the basis of cohort differences within one single data set. Both the 1991 and the 1998 ISSP data indicate that the differences between generations in terms of religious identification, church attendance or degree of belief are considerable.

The covariation of age and religiosity was analysed with the help of the aforementioned religiosity and attitude scales. The relationship between religion and age was close to linear in 1991 (Table 10.3). But the correlation of religiosity with the modified age variable, which represents the distance of each respondent from the average age, was also significant, highlighting the fact that the decline of religiosity stops among the younger cohorts. The pattern is the same with conservative family values. The younger one is, the less attachment one shows

Table 10.1 Approval and rejection of attitude items, 1991 and 1998

	Year	*Approve without reservation %*	*Categorically object %*
Sexual relations between adults of the same sex	1991	5	77
	1998	12	61
The husband should earn money and the wife should look after the family	1991	48	9
	1998	27	8
The full time work of women is dangerous for the family	1991	54	5
	1998	33	4

Source: 1991 and 1998 ISPP data.

Table 10.2 Proportion of the population who definitely do not believe in various religious propositions

	1991 (%)	*1998 (%)*
Life after death	50	42
Heaven	54	42
Hell	66	48
Miracles	51	46
'There is a God who concerns Himself personally with every human being'	41	26

Source: 1991 and 1998 ISPP data.

Table 10.3 Pearson correlation between age and aspects of religious orientation, 1991 and 1998

	Religiosity		*Conservative family values*		*Anti-abortion attitudes*		*Clericalism*	
	1991	*1998*	*1991*	*1998*	*1991*	*1998*	*1991*	*1998*
Age (sig.)	0.39	0.25	0.45	0.40	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.03
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	0.00)	(0.08)	(0.43)	(0.18)	(0.29)
Distance from	0.14	0.11	0.12	0.05	0.07	0.09	0.05	–0.02
Mean age (sig.)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.11)	(0.03)	(0.00)	(0.14)	(0.62)

Note: Age refers to the euclidean distance of the respondents from the sample mean of age.

Sources: 1991 and 1998 ISPP data.

towards patriarchal attitudes, although the middle aged are somewhat less conservative than expected. Attitudes towards abortion and clericalism, however, hardly depend on age. That means that the political aspects of religiosity are less bound to generational differences than religiosity itself. In the case of abortion, a U-shaped curve fits the data better, indicating that the younger respondents share some of the values of the older generations.

In 1998 one could again observe an increase in religiosity by age, but at this time the relationship clearly applied only to those aged over fifty. Here one can glimpse traces of a cohort effect as well, since the least religious generation of 1991, those in their thirties, stayed the least religious cohort in 1998 as well. The previously observed pattern re-occurred: religiosity and conservatism appeared as more a function of age than abortion and clericalism. On the basis of these data one may conclude that the general decrease in clericalism during the 1990s was not so much a consequence of the entry of new generations (generational replacement) but more of the changing mood in the public at large (period effect). The religiosity and the abortion variables highlighted again the fact that the people at the two ends of the age continuum are slightly less likely to be religious or to have pro-abortion attitudes.

These data do not refute the basic claim that secularisation is in progress, younger generations being, by and large, less religious in their life styles and in their social views than the older cohorts. But they warn that generational replacement will not lead to a monotonic decrease of religiosity in Hungarian society, and that the phenomenon of atheism has the strongest roots among those who were socialised during the Communist era.

Religion enters politics: religious and atheist parties

Party politics and religious politics in the first decade of democracy

In spite of its overall relevance in party politics, the religious factor has an ambiguous position in the Hungarian electoral behaviour literature. Hungarian

Table 10.4 Hungarian parties and percentage distribution of list votes in Hungarian parliamentary elections, 1990–8

		1990	*1994*	*1998*
FIDESZ	Alliance of Young Democrats, after 1994 Fidesz-MPP: Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party	8.95	7.02	29.45
FKGP	Independent Smallholders' Party	11.73	8.82	13.14
KDNP	Christian Democratic People's Party	6.46	7.03	2.31
MDF	Hungarian Democratic Forum	24.73	11.74	2.80
MIÉP	Party of Hungarian Justice and Life	–	1.59	5.47
MSZP	Hungarian Socialist Party	10.89	32.99	32.89
SZDSZ	Alliance of Free Democrats	21.39	19.74	7.57

opinion poll companies regularly publish reports on the social composition of the party electorates. These reports, as well as the analyses that follow them, concentrate on age, education, gender, occupation and level of urbanisation, but they rarely refer to religion. One of the reasons for the reluctance of political scientists to focus on the religious factor is probably the assumption that in a largely secular society, attitudes towards religion cannot be a major guiding principle. Religiosity seems to be attributed a secondary role in spite of the fact that already in the first years of transition it was shown (Tóka 1992a, b, c) that church attendance was an important determining factor of post-socialist mass political behaviour, predicting the vote better than other social background variables such as occupation, education, urbanisation and income. Moreover, as Körösényi has observed looking not only at mass data but also at the biographies and attitudes of the political elite, religion can be regarded as a genuine cleavage that sharply differentiates between the opposing political camps (Körösény 1996).

The studies that have so far analysed the role of religion in voting behaviour (Angelusz and Tardos 1995; Gazsó and Stumpf 1995, 1997; Gazsó and Gazsó 1993; Róbert 1994; Tóka 1992a, 1992b, 1992c) all arrived at the conclusion that the Hungarian party system can be divided into a more religious camp where the right-wing, conservative parties belong and into a secular side, consisting of the socialist and liberal parties. The only substantial change in this pattern is the once secular liberal Fidesz's cautious move towards the religious right.

At the level of party identities and coalition building, religion had an obvious relevance starting from the first elections. The rationale for the coalition of the FKGP (Smallholders), MDF (Hungarian Democratic Forum) and KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party) that was formed after the 1990 election was not their common programme, nor the mutual sympathies of their voters, but the contention that they (and only they) formed the Christian-National camp. The opposition of the day, namely the ex-communist MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party) and its earlier arch-enemies, the liberal SZDSZ (Alliance of Free Democrats) and Fidesz (Alliance of Young Democrats, later Fidesz-MPP) took an anti-clerical stand. The government–opposition divide was perceived as a religious–secular cleavage throughout the period, even though issues linked to

the cosmopolitan–nationalist ideological opposition often overshadowed this interpretation.

The paradox that observers of Western European politics face consists of the relatively strong influence of religiosity on party choice, despite the declining relevance of church-related issues in party politics. On the contrary, in Hungary, the polarisation of parties along religious lines was fuelled by a number of issues that affected the role and power of churches directly, prompting the parties to take sides on the clerical–anti-clerical divide. One major issue was the regulation of religious education, while another concerned how and to what extent churches should be financially supported by the government. The dependence of the Hungarian churches on the state is determined to a large extent by the fact that most of their property was nationalised after the Second World War. The state was supposed to return many thousands of buildings to the churches, but the specifics of this process depend on the party composition of the cabinet and of the local councils involved. The overall state support to church institutions is largely determined by the cabinet and by the parliamentary majority, even though some means of support independent of the government were set up recently (for example, the taxpayers can offer one percent of their income tax to the churches).

Church–state relations change according to changes in government composition. Under the 1990-94 coalition of the three 'Christian' parties the government was publicly supported by the Catholic, and to a lesser degree, by the Protestant churches. After the investiture of the Socialist-SZDSZ government in 1994, this intimate relationship was instantly at an end, though the new government parties, especially the Socialists, proved to be very cautious in questioning the privileges obtained by the churches under the previous government. Moreover, the left-wing government reached an agreement with the Vatican that ended the disputes over church property in a generous way. The Free Democrats protested against this agreement, claiming that it created a privileged position for the Catholic Church and that it discriminated against the public (non-church) schools. The Socialist Prime Minister defended the contract, hoping that the Catholic clergy would behave in a neutral if not benevolent way towards his party in the election campaign. As he himself conceded after the 1998 election defeat, these expectations were not fulfilled. The clergy made its right-wing preferences public through a number of symbolic gestures. Moreover, in a circular issued before the elections, the clergy asked its flock not to waste votes on small parties. That was widely understood as the withdrawal of support from their previous ally, the KDNP, and a gesture towards Fidesz-MPP. The head of KDNP protested immediately after the circular was issued, but this simply made the party's pariah status clear for the public.

After the Christian-National first, and the left-wing and secular but pragmatic second government, the third cabinet (Fidesz-MPP, FKGP, and MDF) presented another new pattern of relationships between religion and politics. The paradoxical nature of the new situation was the fact that the main party of the new right-wing government was an originally secular liberal party. The Fidesz-MPP not only managed to woo with its newly found clericalism a

large portion of the right-wing voters but it was accepted as a credible integrator of the respective political field by the right-wing political parties and by the leading conservative social circles too. The latter groups, which included the historical Christian churches, were ready to forgive the radical-secular past of the party. Fidesz-MPP won their support first with lip service paid to the positive role of churches in Hungarian society and history, and then, in power, with elevating Christian politicians to government positions, and satisfying the requests of the churches – whether material or symbolic in nature – almost without exception.

While the first two coalitions appeared as almost natural outgrowth of the parties' sociological background, the third coalition highlighted the fact that taking a stand on the clerical–anti-clerical cleavage is more a political than a sociological act. The appearance of Fidesz-MPP in the right-wing camp might have blurred the religious contrast between the major party alternatives, but it certainly did not eliminate the religious factor from Hungarian politics. Moreover, it became clear that an entry into the Hungarian right-wing camp requires the symbolic support given to and received from those who possess religious legitimisation.

The religious character of the parties' electorate

Despite unusually high electoral volatility, the religious character of the parties' electorate is stable. In 1991 (Table 10.5), two groups of parties could be distinguished. The Christian Democrats, the MDF and the Smallholders composed the religious group. This camp had two layers, however, the 'ultra-black' being represented by the KDNP, whose electorate was significantly more religious than all the other constituencies. The remaining three parliamentary parties of the time, the Socialists, the Free and the Young Democrats made up the secular camp. In 1998 (Table 10.6), the pattern was largely reproduced, but the Fidesz-MPP left the secular camp while the MIÉP joined it. If the latter, rather surprising, result is not simply the artefact of the low number of MIEP supporters in our sample (N=20), one may conclude that this party, though defining itself as a Christian

Table 10.5 Religiosity by party preference, 1991

Mean	*Party*	*MSZP*	*SZDSZ*	*FIDESZ*	*MDF*	*FKGP*
–0.40	MSZP					
–0.31	SZDSZ					
–0.28	FIDESZ					
0.38	MDF	*	*	*		
0.58	FKGP	*	*	*		
1.09	KDNP	*	*	*	*	*

Notes: ANOVA post-hoc analysis.
* indicates significant differences between the means of the two parties

Source: ISSP data from 1991.

Table 10.6 Religiosity by party preference, 1998

Mean	*Party*	*MIÉP*	*MSZP*	*SZDSZ*	*Fidesz-MPP*	*FKGP*	*MDF*
–0.31	MIÉP						
–0.24	MSZP						
–0.02	SZDSZ						
0.16	Fidesz-MPP	*	*				
0.20	FKGP		*				
0.32	MDF						
1.48	KDNP	*	*	*	*	*	*

Notes: ANOVA post-hoc analysis.
* indicates significant differences between the means of the two parties

Source: ISSP data from 1998.

party, attracts voters who are not much different from the typical Western European extreme-right electorate: usually male and non-religious.

While it is possible to speak of a Christian camp in the Hungarian party system, the Christian Democratic People's Party was the only truly religious/Catholic subcultural party (Enyedi 1996). Its supporters were much more distant on the religiosity dimension from their fellow countrymen than is usually the case with the Western Christian Democratic parties (Enyedi 1997). Asking about the motives of voting for a particular party, Stumpf (1994: 42) found that 30 per cent of KDNP voters cited explicitly religious motives. This group forms 97 per cent of those who mentioned religious reasons in the whole sample. In another data set (Tamas 1997), the respondents assigned the role of 'ally' or 'opponent of the churches' to parties and other organisations. KDNP was seen by 70 per cent of the respondents as an ally, the other two Christian parties by 40 to 50 per cent, while the liberals and the socialists by less than 20 per cent each.

The KDNP's electoral decline in the second half of the 1990s was associated with the party leadership's increasingly extremist rhetoric. By 1998 the party became isolated, only the two populist right-wing parties, the FKGP and the MIÉP supported (temporarily) the Christian Democrats' new orientation. At the end of this road, the party was abandoned by the church, by the Western sister parties, and finally the voters, not being able to surpass the 5 per cent electoral threshold in 1998. The disappearance from the parliament of the 'natural' party of the religious made it clear that religious capital cannot be possessed by a single party. The pattern of religious party politics, as with party politics in general, moved towards a two-block competitive structure.

The parties of the 1990–4 government (KDNP, MDF, and FKGP) were ahead of the opposition parties in terms of religiosity both in 1991 and 1998, and the KDNP was continuously on the extreme fringe. Against this background of overall stability the only significant change was the transformation of the Fidesz's electorate, which was one of the least religious parties in 1991, which moved to the centre in terms of religiosity.

In order to sort out the influences of religiosity and religiously-influenced

political attitudes, in the next step I correlated the readiness to vote for particular parties with religiosity and with three attitude scales: the scales of anti-abortion attitudes, of clericalism and of conservative family values. According to Table 10.7, in 1991, religiosity correlated significantly with the vote for all of the parties. As above, the preference for the Christian Democrats and for the FKGP were especially strongly related to religiosity, but the government-opposition (MDF, FKGP, and KDNP versus MSZP, SZDSZ) divide was the most meaningful partisan difference in religious terms. The attitude scales were less closely linked to party preferences. Anti-abortion attitudes seemed to have no role whatsoever; clericalism mattered only in the case of FKGP, while conservative views on family affected the vote for the SZDSZ, the FKGP and the Fidesz. Both latter attitude scales significantly correlated with the preference for government versus opposition parties (Fidesz-MPP, FKGP, and MDF versus SZDSZ, MSZP).[2]

Since the attitude scales are possible manifestations of religiosity, I controlled their correlations with party preferences for religiosity. Those relationships that stayed significant after controlling for religiosity are marked with an asterisk in Tables 10.7 and 10.8. According to this exercise, the net effect of clericalism on party vote, as opposed to the one of conservative family orientation, is in fact not significant. In other words, in 1991 next to religiosity only the traditionalist character of the FKGP and the libertarian attitudes of Fidesz had an independent impact on the vote.

In 1998 (Table 10.8) only the preferences for the Socialists, the Fidesz-MPP and the Christian Democrats could be related to religiosity. MIÉP preference was not correlated with religiosity, but as soon as one controlled for the attitude scales the relationship turned significant: among the voters with the same level of clericalism and conservatism, the less religious preferred MIÉP. Preferences for the

Table 10.7 Pearson correlations between the scales of religiosity, anti-abortion, clericalism, conservative family values and party preference, 1991.

	MDF	*SZDSZ*	*FKGP*	*MSZP*	*FIDESZ*	*KDNP*	*Government vs. opposition*†
Religiosity	0.12	–0.09	0.15	–0.07	–0.12	0.23	0.42
Sig.	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Anti-abortion	–0.04	–0.04	–0.02	–0.02	0.05	0.03	–0.03
Sig.	0.25	0.22	0.45	0.63	0.15	0.40	0.47
Clericalism	0.00	–0.04	0.08	–0.05	0.01	0.06	0.10
Sig.	1.0	0.22	0.01	0.15	0.71	0.07	0.03
Conservative Family values	0.04	–0.08	0.14*	–0.02	–0.15*	0.06	0.29*
Sig.	0.16	0.02	0.00	0.43	0.00	0.07	0.00

Notes: In the case of the three attitude scales* indicates a relationship that stays significant after controlling for religiosity.
† MDF, FKGP, KDNP vs. SZDSZ, MSZP

Source: ISSP data from 1991.

Table 10.8 Pearson correlations between the scales of religiosity, anti-abortion, clericalism, conservative family values and party preference, 1998.

	Fidesz-MPP	*MSZP*	*FKGP*	*SZDSZ*	*MIÉP*	*KDNP*	*Government vs. opposition*†
Religiosity	0.12	–0.18	0.04	–0.01	–0.06	0.22	0.19
Sig.	0.00	0.00	0.32	0.86	0.14	0.00	0.00
Anti-abortion	–0.04	0.10	–0.02	0.02	–0.03	–0.12	–0.10
Sig.	0.28	0.01	0.71	0.56	0.50	0.00	0.02
Clericalism	0.13*	–0.19*	0.08	–0.04	0.08*	0.04	0.21*
Sig.	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.38	0.06	0.34	0.00
Conservative Family values	–0.04*	–0.05	0.11*	–0.02	0.01	0.14	0.04
Sig.	0.33	0.23	0.01	0.71	0.74	0.00	0.40

Notes: In the case of the three attitude scales* indicates a relationship that stays significant after controlling for religiosity.
† Fidesz-MPP, FKGP, MDF vs. MSZP, SZDSZ

Source: ISSP data from 1998.

competing blocks were less based on religiosity than in 1991. Views on abortion gained some relevance but, together with conservative family values, lagged well behind the re-politicised issue of clericalism. The newly gained importance of clericalism is due to the markedly different stands taken on this dimension by the two largest parties, the Fidesz-MPP and the MSZP.[3] The fact that religiosity's role declined indicates that the polarisation on the clericalism issue is a primarily political phenomenon. It also indicates that the transformation of the religious divide from a sociological (structural) into a political (institutional) cleavage happened not only at the level of the government coalitions but at the level of the voters as well.

An earlier non-significant relationship, the one between MIÉP and clericalism, became significant after controlling for religiosity. The low religiosity of MIÉP supporters suppresses the fact that the preference for this party indicates a higher level of clericalism. The Fidesz voters, on the other hand, turned out to be more liberal in family and sexual norms than the non-supporters after one corrects for their above average level of religiosity.

The observed relationships between religiosity and party preference are, of course, mediated through specific attitudes. But the 'associated' attitudes are, in fact, less 'associated' than one might expect. They seem to 'work', to a certain extent, independently of religiosity. This is indicated also by the fact that none of the significant correlations between party preferences and religiosity lost their significance after controlling for the three attitude scales. The increased relevance of clericalism as opposed to the declining role of religiosity points also towards the autonomy of party strategies. The irony is that this new clerical–anti-clerical opposition is linked to the rise of a party that was originally neither religious nor clerical.

Finally, in order to assess the ideological profile of the religious electorate, one must contrast religiosity with the left–right 'super-issue'. The latter, as a summary

measure of one's fundamental political orientations, might in the long run be more important for electoral behaviour than the present party preferences. In 1998, the religiosity scale's correlation with the left–right self-identification was –0.32. Taking into account the fact that the bulk of the voters placed themselves in the middle of the left–right scale, this must be considered as a relatively strong relationship. This correlation decreased to 0.16 but stayed significant after controlling for clericalism, indicating again that religious integration has a direct, non-mediated effect on ideological identification next to the impact transmitted by clericalism. In fact, clericalism was less related to left–right position, with the Pearson coefficient only being –0.18. While in 1998 party preference reflected clericalism slightly better than it did religiosity, left–right identification seems to be more a function of religiosity than of clericalism. But the general picture is clear-cut: rightist political preferences, religiosity, clericalism and, as shown elsewhere (Enyedi 1997), nationalist orientation, tend to interact and overlap.

Causal mechanisms linking religion to vote

According to the literature on the topic (Milbrath and Goel 1977; Oppenhuis 1995) religious people can be expected to turn out at an above average level at elections, either because they perceive the stakes to be higher or because they have a stronger sense of duty. The 1991 and 1998 ISSP data confirm this observation, since in both surveys there was a ten per cent difference in favour of frequent churchgoers as far as readiness to participate in the next election is concerned. Moreover, regressing readiness to vote at the next election on gender, age, education, trade union membership, subjective class identification, income and religiosity, only income and religiosity proved to be significant

Table10.9 Logistic regression of readiness to vote on seven socio-demographic variables, 1991 and 1998

Variable	*1991*				*1998*			
	B	*Sig.*	*R*	*Exp(B)*	*B*	*Sig.*	*R*	*Exp (B)*
Religiosity	0.33	0.00	0.11	1.40	–0.21	0.04	–0.05	0.81
Income	–0.05	0.01	–0.06	0.96	–0.00	0.37	0.00	1.00
Subjective class identification	–0.03	0.56	0.00	0.97	–0.18	0.01	–0.07	0.84
Gender	0.26	0.10	0.03	1.30	0.29	0.14	0.01	1.34
Education	–0.04	0.15	–0.01	0.96	–0.11	0.07	–0.04	0.90
Urbanisation*	–0.05	0.17	0.00	0.95	–0.04	0.64	0.00	0.96
Trade union Membership	–0.08	0.38	0.00	0.92	0.53	0.09	0.03	1.71
Age	–0.00	0.46	0.00	1.00	–0.00	0.48	0.00	1.00
Constant	0.48	0.41			–1.40	0.13		

Note: * In 1991 measured on a seven-point scale, according to settlement size, while in 1998 on a four-point scale, according to status of settlement.

Source: 1991 and 1998 ISSP data

predictors in 1991 (Table 10.9). In 1998, only the effect of class-identification reached the level of statistical significance, but religiosity was also close to it (sig.=0.04). In actuality, though the composite religiosity scale has always yielded results very similar to the church attendance variable, in this case church attendance would have been the more influential variable, reaching the significance of class identification.

According to the ISSP data, religious people are not especially likely to participate in other political actions, even though they are more involved in charity and religious activities. Therefore, the high relevance of religiosity for turnout is probably better explained by the special weight that elections carry for religious people or by the relative ease with which associated parties take stands on religion-related issues than with the religious electors' strong sense of duty.

Regressing age, education, income, trade union membership, subjective class identification, gender, urbanisation and religiosity[4] on the vote for government versus opposition parties, the latter variable clearly came first in 1991, ahead of the level of urbanisation. In fact, no other included variable had a statistically significant effect (Table 10.9). Since in 1998 the right-wing votes concentrated on a secular party, the expectation was that we would observe a declining role of the religious factor. The smaller correlations between religiosity and party vote reported above pointed in that direction. But the logistic regression coefficients show that the impact of religiosity again clearly surpassed the effect of all the other variables (Table 10.10).

These results indicate not only that religion is more influential than the other potential socio-cultural factors,[5] but also that religiosity is not simply transmitting the effect of age, urbanisation, and the other variables, as is often assumed, but it has its own effect. Had explicitly political variables like left – right identification been introduced into the explanatory model, the power of

Table 10.10 Logistic regression of preference for goverment versus opposition on seven socio-demographic variables, 1991 and 1998

Variable	*1991*				*1998*			
	B	*Sig.*	*R*	*Exp(B)*	*B*	*Sig.*	*R*	*Exp (B)*
Religiosity	0.71	0.00	0.23	2.03	0.44	0.00	0.15	1.55
Urbanisation*	–0.21	0.00	–0.15	0.81	0.03	0.76	0.00	1.03
Age	0.04	0.00	0.20	0.96	–0.01	0.06	–0.05	0.99
Income	–0.00	0.82	0.00	1.00	–0.00	0.88	0.00	1.00
Trade union Membership	0.34	0.15	0.01	1.40	–0.23	0.37	0.00	0.79
Education	0.06	0.58	0.00	1.06	0.02	0.70	0.00	1.02
Subjective class identification	0.03	0.81	0.00	1.03	0.10	0.20	0.00	1.10
Constant	2.39	0.00			0.61	0.48		

Note: * In 1991 measured on a seven-point scale, according to settlement size, while in 1998 on a four-point scale, according to status of settlement.

Source: 1991 and 1998 ISSP data.

Table 10.11 Significant (P < 0.05) effects of socio-demographic variables on party preferences and their direction, 1991. (Logistic regression analyses)

Variable	*FIDESZ*	*MDF*	*FKGP*	*SZDSZ*	*KDNP*	*MSZP*	*Government/ opposition*
Age	–		+	–		+	+
Religiosity		+	+		+	–	+
Urbanisation			–	+			–
Net income	+	+					
Gender*			+				

Note: * + = Male.

Source: 1991 ISSP data.

religiosity would have proved to be marginal; but in the realm of socio-structural variables it clearly has a leading role.

The relative impact of the independent variables varies, of course, as one moves from one party to another. A set of regression equations (Table 10.11) show that in 1991 religiosity was a significant predictor of the vote for four parties (MDF, FKGP, KDNP, MSZP). Subjective class identification, trade union membership and education were not relevant for any of the parties, and only age reached a relevance comparable to religiosity. Urbanisation, net income and trade union membership played no role in 1998, while religiosity affected more parties (KDNP, MSZP, Fidesz-MPP) than age, class identification, education and gender (Table 10.12). Hence, it could rightly be regarded as the most important socio-cultural predictor of the vote. Moreover, the character of Fidesz voters, contrary to what was expected on the basis of the past of the party, reinforced that relationship. As was demonstrated earlier, the Fidesz's constituency does not exhibit the level of religiosity common on the traditional right (KDNP, MDF, FKGP), however, the present data also highlights that its voters are much more religious than could be expected just by considering their socio-demographic background. In other words, the party's changed appeal was best received in the religious portions of the predominantly non-religious social circles.

Conclusion

The data analysed in the last section confirms that the Hungarian parties, and especially the party blocs, have distinct electorates in terms of religiosity. As could be expected in the case of a religiously mixed, largely Catholic country, religion is a relatively important determinant of party choice. Although the relationship between party preference and religiosity declined somewhat since 1991, the relative weight of religiosity has in fact increased. While in 1991 religious voters recognised very well their favourite parties and voted accordingly, in 1998 disagreement over the role of religious elements in politics became the main source of party preferences. Party politics did not penetrate the realm of values closely linked to the social teaching of the Churches

Table 10.12 Significant ($P < 0.05$) effects of socio-demographic variables on party preferences and their direction, 1998. (Logistic regression analyses)

Variable	*FIDESZ*	*FKGP*	*SZDSZ*	*MIÉP*	*KDNP*	*MSZP*	*Government/ opposition*
Age	–	+					
Religiosity	+				+	–	+
Subjective class identification				+			
Education				+			
Gender*		+					

Note: * + = Male.

Source: 1998 ISSP data.

(family values, views on abortion) but clerical attitudes became thoroughly politicised.

While in the first years it seemed that the opposition between Christian parties, on the one hand, and the secular liberal and socialist parties, on the other, formed a natural pattern of religious politics, the developments of the second part of the 1990s have brought about a re-drawing of the map. The Fidesz leadership has opted for a 'Christian' strategy, and the result was, on the one hand, the acceptance of the party into the conservative camp and, on the other, the transformation of its electorate. On the other pole of the right-wing field, MIÉP appeared as a party which is strongly committed to radically clerical policies, in spite of its relatively secular electorate. These examples highlight the highly symbolic role churches and religion play in Hungarian politics and the complex relationship between religiosity and religious politics.

At a higher level of abstraction one may conclude that a crude dichotomy of secularisation versus Christianisation does not suffice. Different dimensions of the role of religiosity in society point in different directions. At some points the classical features of secularisation seem to surface: younger cohorts are much less integrated into the churches' institutional culture than the oldest ones. At other points, the stability of an already secularised situation prevails: religion is not used as a universal mechanism for explaining the world in everyday life, religious dogmas are doubted by the majority, social subsystems follow their own, autonomous logic. The withdrawal of the secularised forces can be witnessed at a third level, however. Religious concepts, metaphors and teachings became an integral part of the private and public discourse in Hungary during the last decade. More importantly for us, in the world of politics, religious symbols and attitudes towards Churches developed into major organising principles of alliances and conflicts. Clearly, the development of the institutional and personal dimensions of religiosity follow different paths.

The picture provided by the empirical data indicates that secularisation

should not be perceived as a social phenomenon constraining politicians in their behaviour, but more as a process that is, at least partly, endogenous to politics, thus party politics. The role of religion in social, private and political life had to be re-defined after the collapse of Communism and the main definers are party politicians.The rival projects of re-Christianising and re-secularising (in a Western way) the society are running parallel to each other, affecting both the relevance of religious values for party choice and the actual combination of religious beliefs, religiously motivated social attitudes and political affiliations.

Notes

1 In the early 1990s from half to three-quarters of the Hungarian population identified themselves as being religious, depending on the number of alternatives (two or five) offered to them (Tomka 1991a).
2 MIÉP has a half-governmental, half-opposition status, therefore it was omitted. But when included in the opposition camp, the results were the same.
3 This polarisation left the Christian Democrats' supporters unaffected, probably because of the ambiguous relationships between the party and the churches in this particular time period. Any conclusion on this party is tentative, since only twenty-two respondents preferred it in the 1998 data-set. The only reason for the party's inclusion in the analysis is that it played such a central role in religious politics for most of the decade.
4 In order to discover non-linear effects, I have also experimented with adding next to the original independent variables their distances from the sample means. None of these measures had a significant effect, except in 1991 the modified urbanisation variable (sig. 0 05), and in 1998 the modified age variable (sig. 0.00). That is, in 1991, the inhabitants of very small and very large settlements were more likely to vote for the Right, while in 1998 the middle-aged were more likely to vote for the Left, and the young and the old for the Right.
5 According to the data of Angelusz and Tardos (1995), between 1994 and 1998, previous membership in the Communist party had a more decisive impact on the vote.

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11 The religious base of politics in post-Communist Poland

A case of bounded secularisation

Kenneth Ka-Lok Chan

There are fewer true Catholics than the statistics show.
Cardinal Józef Glemp

A cross should be present in every place where the fate of the nation is decided.
Marian Krzaklewski, Leader of Solidarity Trade Union and Solidarity Electoral Action

Introduction

It is widely recognised that a strong bond exists between the Roman Catholic Church and the Polish nation. The country itself, its cultural identity, tradition, habits and customs are inextricably linked to Catholicism. Today, Poles manifest strong religious faith, and the level of religious activities remains very high. Poles now comprise about 97 per cent of the population and, according to the Vatican, about 91 per cent of the Polish population are Roman Catholics.[1] The country is one of the strongest Catholic communities in Europe. Religious symbols (in particular the crucifix and the picture of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa) can be found in many households. In 1998 there were 27,235 priests, each serving 1,279 faithful. In the same year, the total number of parishes amounted to 9,990 and the average size of a parish was 3,486. These figures speak volumes.[2]

This distinctive heritage of Polish Catholicism, interwoven over long periods, stems from the 1,034 years of the Church's presence in Poland. Latin Christianity was introduced to Poland as Prince Mieszko I was baptised in 966. The notion that Polishness is necessarily associated with Catholic faith has steadily taken root ever since (Davies 1984: 268–78, 336–41; Osa 1989; Szajkowski 1997). More importantly, over the past two centuries, the Church has upheld and defended Polish national identity and values in the face of the partitions, the two World Wars and Communism. Even in the face of formidable obstacles, Catholic values and practices have been successfully passed from generation to generation as part of the national heritage.

On the eve of the democratic breakthrough in 1989, the Church could claim to represent the entire nation; it was the oldest and the most trusted social institution

in the country.[3] In point of fact, it has become 'a Church of the people and for the people'. One could therefore have surmised that the Church would further enhance its authority in the new era, and religious appeals would serve as a principal vehicle for political articulation and mobilisation. On the other hand, Patrick Michel argued that 'Communism has rendered the Church the signal service of sparing it the necessity of undertaking the difficult task of coming to terms with the modern world that has been thrust upon the churches of the West'. He therefore warned that the Church might not be ready to encounter a 'competitive market of values' in the wake of political pluralism (Michel 1991: 196).

Recent discussions of religion in Western literature, however, have tended to focus on the question of its decline as a vehicle of political mobilisation. For some authors, the increasingly post-industrial, post-modern nature of the West has resulted in the weakening of the significance of religion in people's lives (Inglehart 1997), while others have pointed to evidence that despite alleged secularisation, religion has not ceased to be a source of political attitudes and behaviour (Van Kersbergen 1996).

In the following pages I shall consider the complex interplay between religiosity and politics with particular reference to post-Communist Poland. The focus here is on the role of the Roman Catholic Church and its teachings in society and politics in the post-Communist era. The analysis aims to address the following questions: Has the traditional religiosity of the Polish population changed in the last decade? If so, in what ways? Have democratisation and market-oriented economic reforms brought about secularisation? What are the indicators of secularisation, if any? What roles have religious issues played in the emergent post-Communist political landscape? How does religion affect party competition and ordinary voters? To what extent do religious voters support pro-Church parties and presidential candidates? What strategy has the Church undertaken to adapt?

Church–state relations in post-Communist Poland

Poland's strong religious heritage notwithstanding, the end of Communist rule has brought about new developments in a largely unanticipated direction. The advent of democracy and the socio-economic transformation since 1989 have created a novel situation for the Church. Indeed, the role of the Church in society and politics has become one of the most ticklish political problems in post-Communist Poland. The changed situation has manifested itself in diverse ways. Firstly, secular tendencies have gathered strength in Polish society as a result of the practice of 'selective religiosity'. Secondly, the anti-Communist opposition that was held together under the aegis of the Church fell apart as soon as new channels for political participation were opened up. Thirdly, the Church is no longer an unquestionable moral and political authority. In all, the clergy has experienced an erosion of their influence in the past ten years.

The practice of 'selective religiosity'

On the face of it, there seems to be no evidence of a decline of religiosity in post-Communist Poland. According to the Polish General Social Survey (PGSS)

series, there has been neither a decrease of the share of Catholic respondents who attend mass at least once a week and pray at least once a day, nor a growth of non-practising Catholics (Table 11.1) (Cichomski and Sawinski 1999).

However, religion consists of *both* belief and practice. To understand 'religiosity' merely in terms of church attendance and membership statistics, although that certainly produces some useful indicators, is sometimes inadequate and misleading if the strength of religious belief is not also taken into account. While church attendance measures external behaviour, its relationship with religious beliefs and attitudes is essentially an empirical question. Habit, customs, or social norms, rather than genuine religious faith, might also account for regular church attendance. Thus, although Poland is predominantly Catholic, some crucial Catholic principles are being neglected, seriously contested or rejected outright by people in their everyday lives. In point of fact, the PGSS survey of 1997 revealed that 71 per cent of respondents approved of the death penalty, whereas only 17 per cent thought it was wrong; 49 per cent thought voluntary euthanasia should be allowed, whereas 34 per cent condemned it; 57 per cent believed that premarital sex was not wrong at all, and only 8 per cent supported a total ban on abortion. Recent opinion surveys have also found similar liberal attitudes toward religious practice and the ethics of family life.[4]

Table 11.2 shows that religious belief and practice are only moderately related at the individual level. In addition, devout lay members have complained about the excessive bureaucratic formalism of the Church and low standards of religious services (Holówska 1992; Szostkiewicz 1992).[5] Apparently, not all of the teachings of the Church are strictly observed by the faithful. Grzegorz Węcławowicz commented that 'the religiosity of Poles is very selective' (Węcławowicz 1996: 110; Borowik and Zdaniewicz 1996).

In the Church's view, however, selective religiosity is hardly a new phenomenon in Poland. It was indeed advocated by the Communist regime, which conspired to marginalise Catholicism. Since 1989, the clergy has assumed the onus of rectifying what they see as the notorious social legacy bequeathed by Communism, speaking out on major social and moral issues. The 'real' Polish way of life, some clergymen argued, must be built anew upon the fundamental values of the Catholic faith. What is striking, however, is that the efforts to 'restore individual and social morality' in post-Communist Poland have met with strong resistance. Consequently, a series of emotive debates has developed over controversial issues such as abortion, the ratification of the Concordat between Poland and the Vatican, and the new constitution.

The abortion debate (round one)

Abortion had become a legal and acceptable method of birth control in Poland since 1956, though it has been relentlessly opposed by the Church. Nonetheless, over the years, the number of registered abortions has dropped from 223,800 in 1960, to 132,600 in 1980, to 30,900 in 1991. The decline in abortions was mainly due to the availability and popular use of contraceptives. The influence of the

Table 11.1 Indicators of religiosity in Poland (%)

	1992	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1997*
Church attendance					
Never	2	1	2	1	1
At least once a year	2	1	1	1	2
Once a year	3	4	3	4	5
Several times a year	10	10	10	9	12
Once a month	10	10	10	9	9
Two to three times a month	13	11	11	11	10
Nearly every week	11	12	12	10	13
Every week	44	44	46	47	44
More than once a week	5	6	4	6	5
Pray					
Never	—	—	2	1	1
At least once a year	—	—	1	1	1
Once or twice a year	—	—	1	1	2
Several times a year	—	—	5	5	5
Once a month	—	—	4	3	3
Two to three times a month	—	—	4	4	4
Nearly every week	—	—	2	3	4
Every week	—	—	8	8	8
Several times a week	—	—	11	11	12
Once a day	—	—	41	40	36
Several times a day	—	—	17	20	19
Strength of belief					
Nonbeliever	1	1	1	1	1
Believer	80	80	83	78	79
Strong believer	19	19	16	21	20

Source: Polish General Social Surveys.

Table 11.2 Relationships between church attendance and various indicators of traditional religiosity (Spearman's r_s and Cramer's V)

	Attendance	*Pray*	*Subjective strength of belief*
Pray	0.50		
Subjective strength of belief	0.30	0.40	
Premarital sex	–0.29	–0.39	–0.24
Extramarital affairs	–0.18	–0.17	–0.14
Homosexuality	–0.17	–0.20	–0.10
Divorce*	–0.27	–0.31	–0.26
Euthanasia*	–0.32	–0.33	–0.22
No restriction on abortion*	–0.26	–0.25	–0.19

Notes: All correlations are significant at the 0.05 level.
* Cramer's V.

Source: Polish General Social Survey 1997.

Church-led anti-abortion campaign on the decrease was difficult to gauge but should not be neglected. After 1989, the Church made it clear that it wanted to see a total ban on abortion. It condemned the permissive law for encouraging 'the murder of the unborn child' but the appeal was not heeded until pro-Church parties and groupings increased their share of parliamentary seats in the 1991 election.

In point of fact, public attitudes on the issue were ambivalent. While most people would agree with the Church that abortion is against evangelical values, only a few were ready to endorse the Church's position to outlaw abortion entirely.[6] Tensions between pro-life and pro-choice opinions came to a head in late 1992 when a restrictive law to control the practice of abortion was passed by parliament. The new 'Family Planning' law allowed abortion only when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, or when it would endanger the mother's health, or when the baby was seriously handicapped. Doctors helping adult women seeking abortion in other circumstances could face up to two years imprisonment. Nonetheless, 69 per cent of the respondents in a CBOS poll vehemently opposed punishing women who broke the law and 74 per cent wanted a referendum on the issue.[7] Small wonder that the abortion issue remained on the political agenda. In fact, the public was in favour of liberalisation of the 1992 law. In particular, the pro-choice movement continued to urge that abortion should also be permitted if the mother was suffering from difficult social and economic circumstances.

The declining popularity of the Church and the rise of Catholic fundamentalism

In the past, there was little complaint about the Church's political role. Only the Communists challenged the clergy's involvement in the opposition movement. Since 1989, however, more and more people have become uncomfortable with a highly politicised Church. As early as mid-1990, the Institute of Psychology of the Polish Academy of Sciences reported that its respondents thought that the Church should not express its opinion on government policies (79 per cent), international affairs (64 per cent), the design of school curricula (63 per cent), the relationship between employees and employers (66 per cent), activities of social organizations (61 per cent), and the abortion issue (45 per cent). Small wonder, then, that the Church's new interests in parliamentary and electoral politics in the emergent democratic order has come under increasing criticism. One consequence was a marked decline in the Church's prestige in the early 1990s. In March 1991, the Church lost its place as the most popular institution in the country to the armed forces. In August 1992, it went down to third place after the armed forces and the police. Public approval of Church activities reached its lowest level of 46 per cent in November 1992, subsequently stabilising at 54 per cent.[8]

To make things worse, however, the aggressive language adopted by some leading clergymen and their high-handed political allies only showed that they

were unwilling, even unable, to engage in rational discourse in a democratic context with people holding different viewpoints. For example, Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, Head of Radio *Maryja*, repeated his accusation that Communism and liberalism were the culprits responsible for moral decay in Poland.[9] On other occasions he warned that the Church and Poland were besieged by 'non-Polish', sinister forces.[10] Another worrying development was the breeding of 'Catholic fundamentalism' in political discourse. Soon after the bishops had spoken out against *in vitro* fertilization (IVF), the Centre for Children's Health shut down its IVF department. In 1991, the deputy health minister, Kazimierz Kapera, was forced to resign after he condemned people with AIDS as 'typical deviants'. The minister had earlier called for a ban on all contraceptives, including condoms. When Ombudsman Tadeusz Zieliński, himself a practising Catholic and a social liberal, stood by the principle of separation of Church and state, he collided with the Church hierarchy and the pro-Church parties. Some went as far as to demand the abolition of the office altogether. 'My party considers the Ombudsman unnecessary', stated Henryk Goryszewski of the Christian National Union (ZChN), 'because it does not honour Papal social teachings'.[11]

This kind of clerical radicalism could only provoke an equally primitive anti-clericalism. The ex-Communists took the lead by alleging that the Church was trying not only to enhance its power and privileges but also to impose a 'theocracy'. A futile war of rhetoric thus ensued. In consequence, debate between religious and secular views over the relationship between Church and state took on an antagonistic character, rendering reconciliation impossible. Unfortunately for the Church and its supporters, the notion of removing the Church from public life was gradually gaining currency in society.[12] Polls began to show that a clear majority was dismayed at the clergy's meddling in politics. According to the PGSS, between 1992–97, more than half of Poles believed that the Church had too much power (Table 11.3). Given the aforementioned practice of selective religiosity, we may understand why Poles are wary of the emergence of 'Catholic fundamentalism'.

Meanwhile, the Church and its parliamentary allies saw their political edge squandered. First, the pro-Church parties suffered a humiliating defeat in the 1993 election (Table 11.4). The ex-Communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) emerged in the poll as the largest parties in both houses of the parliament. The SLD and the PSL together enjoyed a comfortable majority of 303 seats in the 460-member *Sejm* (the lower house of Parliament), thus paving the way for the first left-wing government in

Table 11.3 Does the Church have too much power? 1992–7

	1992	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1997*
Too much	63	65	54	54	52
Just right	27	26	35	34	36
Too little	2	2	2	5	3

Source: PGSS.

Table 11.4 Parliamentary elections in Poland, 1991–7

Election year	*October 1991*		*Sept. 1993**		*Sept. 1997*	
	Votes (%)	*Seats*	*Votes (%)*	*Seats*	*Votes (%)*	*Seats*
Pro-Church lists:						
NSZZ Solidarity	5.05	27	4.90	0	—	—
Peasant Alliance (PL)	5.46	28	0.37	0	—	—
Catholic Electoral Action (WAK)	8.73	49	—	—	—	—
Central Democratic Alliance (POC)	8.71	44	—	—	—	—
Christian Democracy (ChD)	2.36	5	—	—	—	—
Party of Christian Democratic (PChD)	1.11	4	—	—	—	—
Catholic Electoral Committee: 'Fatherland' (KKW: 'Ojczyzna')	—	—	6.37	0	—	—
Union of Poland-Central Alliance (ZP-PC)	—	—	4.42	0	—	—
Coalition for the Republic (KdR)	—	—	2.70	0	—	—
Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS)	—	—	—	—	33.83	201
Movement for Reconstruction of Poland (ROP)	—	—	—	—	5.56	6
	31.42	157	20.76	0	39.39	207
Lists having both clerical and anti-clerical elements:						
Polish Peasant Party (PSL)	8.67	48	15.40	132	7.31	27
Democratic Union (UD)	12.31	62	10.59	74	—	—
Confederation for Independent Poland (KPN)	7.50	46	5.77	22	—	—
Nonpartisan Bloc for Reforms (BBWR)	—	—	5.41	16	—	—
Freedom Union (UW)	—	—	—	—	13.37	60
	28.48	156	37.17	244	20.68	87
Anti-clerical lists:						
Democratic Left Alliance (SLD)	11.98	60	20.41	171	27.13	164
Liberal Democratic Congress (KLD)	7.48	37	3.99	0	—	—
Party 'X'	0.47	3	2.74	0	—	—
Labour Solidarity (SP)	2.05	4	—	—	—	—
Democratic-Social Movement (RDS)	0.46	1	—	—	—	—
Labour Union (UP)	—	—	7.28	41	4.95	0
	21.97	105	34.42	212	32.08	164
Others:	18.13	42	7.65	4	6.28	2
Sejm (Lower House) size		460		460		460

Note: * A more restrictive electoral system has been in use since 1993. See note 13 for details.

post-Communist Poland. In addition, the two parties won an absolute majority of the seats in the less powerful Senate (seventy-three out of 100 seats). In contrast, the pro-Church right destroyed its chances by splintering into a plethora of groupings too small to win seats in the *Sejm*. The rightist camp, which pursued a Christian-nationalist platform in the first years of post-Communist politics, were torn apart by ideological differences and personal animosities (Chan 1995). Apart from the fragmentation of the pro-Church parties, the resurgence of the Communist successor parties in the 1993 election was also attributable to social hardships caused by the economic transition, growing anxiety with the right's clericalism and a set of electoral rules that favoured larger parties.[13]

Two years later, the Church was aggrieved at President Lech Wałęsa's defeat in his bid for a second term by the charismatic ex-Communist Aleksander Kwaśniewski in the 1995 presidential elections. The Polish Primate, Cardinal Józef Glemp, had publicly declared that the stark choice was one between Christian values and 'neo-paganism'. Special masses for President Wałęsa and the Fatherland were held to mobilise the Catholic vote. Despite this, Kwaśniewski received 52 per cent of the votes to Wałęsa's 48 per cent and won the presidency.

The abortion debate (round two)

After the 1993 election, the Church tried but failed to establish some sort of *modus vivendi* with the SLD-PSL coalition. The clergy continued to clash with the ruling parties on a wide range of policy issues. For example, the new parliament tried to liberalise the abortion law, but the bill was blocked by Wałęsa's presidential veto in June 1994. However, encouraged by Kwaśniewski's election to the presidency eighteen months later, a similar bill was passed again in October 1996. The new law allowed for abortion up to the twelfth week of pregnancy in cases where a woman found herself in 'hard living conditions or a difficult personal situation'. Women seeking abortion had to apply in writing and permission would only be given after consultation with a psychologist or a government health officer, or a physician who would not carry out the operation. Lastly, sex education would become a separate subject in schools, and some contraceptives would be partially subsidised by the state.[14] Amid sharp protests from the Church and all pro-life parties, President Kwaśniewski signed the bill into law in late November.

The Church moved swiftly to condemn the bill for allowing the termination of hundreds of thousands of innocent unborn lives. The bishops, the pro-life movement, and the Chamber of Physicians urged doctors not to carry out abortions. Public opinion remained divided: no less than 10,000 people from both pro-life and pro-choice lobbies demonstrated when the vote took place. A CBOS poll showed that the new law was supported by 58 per cent of the respondents. [15] For the Church, the pro-choice opinion was confusing freedom with immorality. After the passage of the bill, the clergy announced the creation of a new 'Fund for Preservation of Life' to support adoption centres, to provide housing for

single mothers and to help families living below the poverty line. In December 1996, a group of thirty-seven pro-life *Sejm* deputies referred the law to the Constitutional Tribunal. Subsequently, on 28 May 1997, the Tribunal ruled that abortion for social reasons contradicted what it saw as the principle of 'the democratic state ruled by law' which implied that life must be protected at all stages of development. After the ruling, SLD deputies proposed a referendum on the issue but it was rejected by 170 votes to 165, with twenty-six abstentions.

The concordat and the constitutional debate

The Concordat between Poland and the Holy See constituted another difficult aspect of the relationship between the Church and the state (Wislocki 1993; Krukowski 1999; Osiatynski 1996). The ill-fated treaty was signed by the Suchocka government in the summer of 1993 after parliament had been dissolved in May. No progress was made on the ratification of the treaty after the 1993 election. Initially, the new *Sejm* decided that the matter should be resolved by the end of 1995. Meanwhile, a special parliamentary commission concluded that the Concordat did not contradict existing constitutional law. Nonetheless, anti-clerical deputies, who dominated parliament at this time, argued that the treaty would grant the Church excessive influence and privileges; they insisted that the Polish government should renegotiate it with the Vatican. Moreover, some constitutional experts argued that it would be imprudent to endorse the Concordat when a decision on the constitutional nature of the Church–State relationship was still pending (Gebethner 1998; Staszewski 1991, 1993).

Owing to the complexity of the Concordat itself, the row over its ratification received less public attention than the abortion issue. According to one report, 20 per cent of respondents wanted the *Sejm* to ratify the Concordat, while 24 per cent were against it.[16] However, in the same survey, 23 per cent were indifferent to the problem, and 24 per cent had no opinion at all. In June 1996, a new survey showed that 57 per cent of the respondents were in favour of the Concordat, but only 17 per cent were against. Yet, 44 per cent thought that ratification should take place after the adoption of a new constitution, only 10 per cent thought it should take place beforehand, the rest showed little interest in the debate.[17]

In July 1996, the *Sejm* finally decided, with 199 in favour, 170 against and eleven abstentions, to postpone again the ratification of the Concordat after the adoption of the new constitution. Tadeusz Pieronek, Secretary-General of the Polish Episcopate, the council of bishops, commented that the Concordat was a victim of 'a perfidious political game'.[18]

The 1997 referendum on the Constitution further fostered the stand-off between the clerical and anti-clerical forces. The Church's frustration with the long delay had already found its way into the debate about the draft constitution. On the one hand, the pro-Church parties rejected the draft in total and turned the referendum into an electoral campaign, accusing the draft's supporters of, among other things, 'depriving Poland of its sovereignty and taking children from their parents'. Campaigners demanded constitutional

protection of national and Christian values and were keen to employ anti-Communist slogans for political mobilisation. 'New Poland', in their view, had to cleanse itself of the infamous past. On the other hand, the left focused on the merits of the draft and campaigned for its ratification. On 25 May, the Constitution was approved by 57 per cent to 46 per cent on a 43 per cent turnout. The distribution of votes was very similar to that of the 1995 presidential elections. Regions supporting Kwaśniewski in 1995 were in favour of the Constitution, while it was rejected in regions where Wałęsa had won.

The role of the church in democratic politics

In the first three years of the post-Communist period, the Church exerted a powerful influence on the policy-making process, and wasted no time in advancing its institutional interests. After the 1993 election, however, Church–state relations dramatically deteriorated as anti-clerical politicians controlled both houses of parliament, the government, and the presidency.[19] The Church suffered a series of setbacks with the liberalisation of the practice of abortion and the *Sejm's* decision to postpone ratification of the Concordat. The Church was also unhappy with the progress of the return of property confiscated by the Communist regime.[20] Both the Pope and Cardinal Glemp sharply condemned what they saw as new attempts to ridicule Christian values in Poland. To the clergy, the ex-Communists and their allies were not only promoting atheism but also intolerance and abuse of the Church.

As we have seen, the Church's concerns were above all social and moral. Many of the controversies remained unresolved, and there were no accepted ways of resolving the conflicts between clerical and anti-clerical views. On the one hand, the Church had long championed democracy and the rule of law. On the other hand, it unequivocally asserted that when moral principles and *vox populi* disagreed, the former should prevail. Not surprisingly, the Church dismissed the idea of a referendum on the abortion issue, although over a million people signed a petition in less than three weeks. The clergy held that such a fundamental issue should not be left to individual conscience. But for those who did not share this view, the Church's teachings were blatantly autocratic, outmoded and irrelevant in the new social and political era.

Can the politicisation of religious issues in Poland be averted? Critics have argued that the clergy should avoid intervening in public life altogether. Yet this is exactly the essence of the Church's apostolic mission. Most importantly, it must be noted here that for the Church, politics means 'concern for the common good'. In the Communist era, it means that the Church would not hesitate to intervene when government violated the 'dignity and rights of man'.[21] In the post-Communist context, it means that the clergy have the right, perhaps even the duty, to take part in political discussion. In particular, the Church will not refrain from proclaiming the moral principles that underpin Christianity, such as its call for a ban on the practice of abortion, so as to combat the secular, atheist values promoted by the former regime and the anti-clerical left. In any case, the Church

has been an active participant in political debates. Unsurprisingly, contentious issues that underscored the clerical–secular divide have increased in saliency since 1989. Apart from that, the Church's stance in party politics and elections deserves attention too.

Political parties and the church

As soon as political freedom was won in 1989, a whole range of political tendencies begun to emerge in Poland (Chan 1997). In this regard, Catholic doctrine and values have formed a crucial element of the programmes of various presidential candidates, parties and peasant movements. As expected, pro-Church leaders often stress the inextricable ties between Catholicism and 'true Polishness' in order to capitalise on the country's rich religious traditions (Hockenos 1993). Naturally, the Church's support has been of great importance to parties that assume a Christian national character. Some, notably the Christian National Union (ZChN), the Central Alliance (PC), the Peasant Alliance (PL), and the Solidarity Trade Union, have thereby become the Church's loyal allies in politics.

Mirosława Grabowska and Tadeusz Szawiel interviewed delegates of five major parliamentary parties at their party congresses in 1992 and 1993 (Grabowska and Szawiel 1993). Clearly, the parties disagreed over the extent to which Catholicism should be embodied in the state. On one hand, it should be no surprise that activists of the pro-Church ZChN and PC were devoted, practising Catholics who were also strongly in favour of a total ban on abortion. In December 1992, their leaders came up with an amendment to the Radio and Television bill that obliged the media to respect the 'Christian system of values'.[22] Generally speaking, these parties wished to strengthen the role of the Church as the moral authority in both society and politics.

On the other hand, the notion that policy-makers should follow the Church's teachings was strongly rejected by secular liberals from the Congress of Liberal Democrats (KLD) and the Democratic Union (UD) as well as by social democrats from the Labour Union (UP) and the ex-Communist Social Democracy of Poland (SdRP, a leading group in the SLD). SdRP and UP activists were largely nonbelievers, anti-clerical, and sceptical of the Church. Delegates of the UD and KLD were more or less religious, but their attitudes on religious issues appeared closer to their ex-Communist counterparts. It should be noted that the UD and the KLD merged in April 1994 to form a new party, Freedom Union (UW), which has mainly espoused a secular outlook as well.

As a result, a rift between traditional and anti-clerical views eventually opened up. The PSL, formerly a satellite party in the Communist period, has been on the horns of a dilemma since the 1993 election. On the one hand, with its leaders mindful of the traditional outlook of its rural constituents, they were keen to win the Church's backing in elections. Thus, it was necessary for the party to dissociate itself from the anti-clerical overtones of its ex-Communist coalition partner, the SLD. On the other hand, given the party composition of the

Sejm, there was no alternative way of realising its protectionist social and economic programmes but to join forces with the SLD. Strategically, the party therefore portrayed itself as a 'centrist, people's party, willing to work with both sides of the clerical–secular divide. The party's platform was therefore a tactful combination of a leftist socio-economic policy with a strong commitment to Christian moral principles. In practice, the PSL opposed the liberalisation of the 1992 abortion law and supported early ratification of the Concordat.

The Church has paid special attention to electoral contests. For the Church, 'it is a serious moral obligation to participate in elections' (Sabbat-Swidlicka 1993). But the role of the Church in elections did not stop at urging the nation to vote. In fact, it unconditionally supported the Solidarity movement during the partially free election of 1989. The most telling sign of this was that no less than half of Solidarity's Citizens' Committees had their campaign headquarters on parish premises (Kosela 1990). Since Solidarity's dissolution, the clergy has generously given their support to the emergent Christian and nationalist parties. Sometimes, senior clergymen acted as mediators between different post-Solidarity parties that appealed explicitly to Catholic social doctrine. For example, Father Bogusław Bijak was known to be a key figure behind the formation of the ZChN-led Catholic Election Action (WAK) before the 1991 election. In the 1993 election, the Archbishop of Gdańsk Tadeusz Gocłowski initiated and hosted a meeting with a number of pro-Church parties which later formed the electoral coalition 'Fatherland' (KKW-'Ojczyzna').[23] Father Józef Maj also played a similar but unsuccessful part in persuading Poland's fragmented right-wing parties to agree on a single candidate for the 1995 presidential elections.

Interestingly, in every election, the Episcopate announced that it would not back any particular parties or candidates. In the 1991 election, for instance, the Episcopate only asked the faithful to vote for candidates who were: wise and trustworthy, competent, in favour of Christian ethics and values and willing to promote them in Parliament, ready to serve the common good, as well as those who would safeguard and maintain Polish identity and its Christian values. Moreover, the bishops spoke out against egotists, careerists, power-seekers, corrupted and amoral politicians, and advocates of the separation of Church and state.[24]

That said, some leading clergymen openly identified themselves with a group of post-Solidarity Christian democratic parties. Furthermore, many pro-Church leaders were allowed to campaign in parishes and other Catholic lay organisations during elections (Auleytner 1993: 65). After all, as Bishop Pieronek always argues, 'priests are also citizens of Poland whose freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution'.

The 1997 general election and Church–state relations

On 21 September 1997 Poland went to the polls in the country's third fully competitive parliamentary election since the end of communist rule. With the emergence of Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS), an electoral coalition composed of 50 or so pro-Church parties and groupings, as the major rival to the

SLD, political neutrality on the part of the Church was out of the question. AWS's programme talked of 'Poland, Freedom, Family'. It stressed its mission as one of preserving fundamental values, of fighting moral decay in society. Clearly, the historical Solidarity versus Communism division had provided AWS leaders with a tremendously powerful set of symbols for mobilisation.

Such a strong religious commitment could have had the effect of scaring away the less religious vote, especially in the post-Communist period when the Church's authority was on the wane. However, the electoral defeats in 1993 and 1995 had forced the rightist milieu to undertake a far-reaching organisational adaptation and ideological repackaging. What is important is that the logic of electoral competition has not only helped to tame the authoritarian temper of many pro-Church parties, it has also encouraged a more pragmatic and accommodative strategy at both doctrinal and behavioural levels. For its part, the Church criticised the outgoing parliament for 'not meeting many social expectations'. Yet, Cardinal Glemp and most leading clergymen became reluctant to endorse a party or movement, lest their authority should be undermined as had happened in the 1995 presidential elections.

In the end, both the Church and the AWS adopted a flexible electioneering strategy during the 1997 election. As Aleks Szczerbiak observed, at the same time as AWS and the church's hierarchy's moderate stance prevented an anti-clerical backlash, the core 'religious right' electorate was mobilised by a combination of local parish priests and Radio *Maryja* (Szczerbiak 1998). As it turned out, the AWS won a greater proportion of votes than any other party and became the leading force in both houses of parliament. It relegated its arch-rival, the SLD, into second place, and went on to form a new government with the UW, a smaller centre party with a Solidarity background (see Table 11.4). This election represented not only an electoral breakthrough for the Polish right under the aegis of the Solidarity trade union, but it also confirmed the SLD's predominance on the left of the political spectrum. Most important of all, there were some signs of further stabilisation of the party system as a whole (Chan 1998).

After winning the election, the AWS had to transform itself from what was primarily an extra-parliamentary electoral alliance into a governing bloc. As a confederation of parties, it was internally divided into factions or wings. In fact, it took the AWS a month to find a Prime Minister and two more weeks of difficult negotiations to hammer out a coalition agreement with the UW. Significantly, the new parliament quickly ratified the Concordat and endorsed the Constitutional Tribunal's ruling on the abortion issue. But SLD deputies were outraged by the cross hung by AWS deputies in the *Sejm* chamber the night before the first session.[25]

Meanwhile, the preparation for the next presidential contest in 2000 had already begun. President Kwaśniewski, who has continued to enjoy the highest approval rating in recent polls, did not seem to be bothered by the prospect of 'cohabitation' with a hostile parliament. Making a virtue out of necessity, he unreservedly endorsed the AWS-UW government and advocated cooperation and consensus-building with parliament.

Nevertheless, Kwaśniewski expects a tough fight with the right. In October 1997, Wałęsa founded a new party, Christian Democracy of Poland, to relaunch his political career. The former President was confident that his party would appeal to the 'silent majority'. One month later, Solidarity leader Marian Krzaklewski created another party, Social Movement-AWS (RS-AWS), as his new political vehicle in addition to the Solidarity trade union. Krzaklewski's followers now dominate the AWS parliamentary caucus. But only time will tell if the two leaders will be able to work together to win back the presidency for the post-Solidarity camp.

One of the most striking features of politics in post-Communist Poland has been the absence of a strong, moderate Christian democratic movement as an important component of the emerging electoral politics. The chances that the right will once again degenerate into a hazardous stalemate like the one in 1993 are by no means remote. Commenting on such a scenario, Bishop Pieronek was clearly in favour of the AWS:

> I don't believe Lech Wałęsa can create (a party of Catholics). If there is to be a new party it is going to be based on the AWS coalition put together by Marian Krzaklewski. Here I see a bigger chance for the Polish Christian democratic movement. On the other hand, if there are more parties inspired by Church teachings, it may be even better, because there will be more than one party able to explain the Church's teaching in practice. It is better to have different interpretations because then you can make the best choice.[26]

The underlying impact of religion on mass political attitudes and behaviour

It is also necessary to specify the impact of religion and the Church on political attitudes and electoral behaviour after 1989. First, over the past few years the Catholic faith has consistently promoted a rightist political outlook, as indicated by the respondents' self-placement on a ten-point left–right scale (Table 11. 5). A majority of the voters though, actually placed themselves in the centre along the scale. However, we should not overlook the differences in the mean left–right scores in relation to Church attendance and the strength of one's religious beliefs. Second, based on the respondents' opinions on religious education, abortion, and the ratification of the Concordat, CBOS discovered that Poland is indeed divided into two more or less equal clerical-traditional (42 per cent) and secular groups (46 per cent).[27] Notably, the former group is composed of devoted Catholics, regular Church-goers, and right-wingers who contend that the Church should play an active role in the social and political arenas, whereas the latter group is composed of sceptical Catholics, nonbelievers, and left-wingers who advocate the separation of the Church and religious values from the state. There is also a very small, moderate group (12 per cent) which expressed mixed feelings towards the Church and its teachings.

Table 11.5 Relationship between religiosity and left–right identification, 1997

	Mean left–right score	*Spearman's r_s*
Church attendance		
Never	4.4	
Every week	5.2	
More than once a week	7.7	0.23 (p=0.000)
Strength of belief		
Nonbeliever	5.3	
Believer	6.2	
Strong believer	7.1	0.15 (p=0.000)

Source: Polish General Social Survey 1997.

In terms of key social characteristics, the clerical-traditional group is dominated by elderly people (those aged fifty-five and over), the retired, women, individuals with a lower level of education and lower income, as well as those living in the countryside and small cities. On the other hand, the secular group is dominated by men, people aged thirty-five and under, individuals with a higher level of education and higher income, as well as those living in big cities of over 100,000 inhabitants (Szawiel 1995).

Third, religion has constituted a sustainable influence on party identification and voting preference, that is, religious individuals tend to vote for pro-Church parties and groupings (ZChN, PC, PL, the Solidarity trade union, and AWS), whereas members from the secular group are more likely to be found among supporters of liberal or secular left-wing parties (SLD, UP, KLD, UD, and UW).[28] Moreover, higher religiosity, among other factors, also encourages voting in elections and a higher interest in politics in general (Table 11.6). Finally, religiosity was 'the best of predictor of voting preferences' for the two major contenders in the 1995 presidential elections (Jasiewicz 1996), as devoted Catholics were more likely to vote for Wałęsa than for Kwaśniewski.

With the exception of religiosity, the social bases of voting remains indistinct. In socio-demographic terms, only the PSL resembles a typical class-based agrarian party. However, most parties appear to be either unwilling or unable to narrow their appeals to the voters, preferring instead to rely on an expansive electoral strategy. The pervasiveness of catch-all strategies in turn contributed, to a significant degree, to the social heterogeneity that characterised all parties. Not surprisingly, self-professed religiosity has been a better predictor of party preferences than the range of voters' socio-demographic characteristics in Poland.

Conclusion

The past decade has witnessed a gradual decline of religiosity, widespread disapproval of the Church's interference in politics and the triumph of anti-clerical

Table 11.6 Religiosity and mass electoral behaviour

Church attendance and turnout (Cramer's V)	
1990 Presidential Elections (first round)	0.15 (p=0.000)
1990 Presidential Elections (second round)	0.14 (p=0.001)
1991 Parliamentary Election	0.13 (p=0.000)
1993 Parliamentary Election	0.13 (p=0.000)
1995 Presidential Elections (first round)	0.16 (p=0.000)
1995 Presidential Elections (second round)	0.06 (p=0.662)
1997 Constitutional Referendum	0.19 (p=0.000)
1997 Parliamentary Election	0.21 (p=0.000)

Church attendance and party preference (%)

	1993 election			*1997 election*		
	Pro-Church	*Mixed*	*Anti-clerical*	*Pro-Church*	*Mixed*	*Anti-clerical*
Church attendance						
Never	14	14	71	0	14	71
At least once a year	9	9	82	0	26	75
Once a year	25	10	61	18	17	60
Several times a year	24	25	48	25	20	50
Once a month	34	24	38	33	31	28
Two to three times a month	38	24	34	32	31	32
Nearly every week	41	27	35	42	28	26
Every week	49	23	22	54	23	17
More than once a week	73	12	7	79	7	5
Strength of belief						
Nonbeliever	34	0	33	50	0	50
Believer	35	14	36	41	26	29
Strong believer	67	19	14	68	15	10

Source: Polish General Social Surveys.

parties and candidates in elections in Poland. These events have challenged the Church as an institution, its teachings, and its authority over social and moral issues. The prestige of the Church has clearly declined. All these developments have far-reaching political implications.

First of all, the clerical-traditional constituency has been weakened by the rise of public disillusionment with the Church and its political allies. The results of the 1993 and 1995 elections clearly indicate the Church's limitation in electoral politics. As a consequence, the pro-Church parties can no longer afford to neglect the views of the less religious, socially liberal voters. Second, with the advent of democracy and pluralism, the Church is now only one of many voices competing for popular influence. As the spokesman for the Polish Episcopate, Father Adam Schulz concluded, 'the times when priests told their faithful how to vote are over'.[29]

That said, the damage that has been done to the Church's authority should not be exaggerated. It would be mistaken to suggest that since 1989 there has been an

Table 11.7 Party preference by selected demographic categories in the 1997 election (%)

	Pro-Church	*Mixed*	*Anti-clerical**
Age			
18–29	37	28	22
30–39	40	27	21
40–49	36	23	29
50–59	38	17	32
60+	43	16	30
Residence			
Rural	40	25	22
Small town<100,000	36	21	30
Large town>100,000	38	22	28
Education			
Primary	41	20	22
Vocational	45	20	24
Secondary	38	22	29
University	31	32	26
Occupation			
Worker	45	16	27
Farmer	35	39	15
Pensioner	39	14	32
Unemployed	43	17	24
Entrepreneur	39	27	22

Note:
* The figures for the anti-clerical UP, which gained 4.95% of the vote, were not recorded in the exit poll.

Source: OBOP exit poll as reported in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 23 September 1997.

irreversible trend towards secularisation in Polish society. Catholicism remains a fundamental element of Polish culture, and Poles still remember that the Church stood up for national interests in the face of external aggression and internal oppression. Also, despite some clear signs of setbacks, the Church has not experienced massive desertions.

On the contrary, according to the PGSS of 1997, 57 per cent of respondents claimed that 'the Church was very important', and another 49 per cent put 'a great deal of trust' in the Church. Cardinal Glemp is respected and popular. Pope John Paul II is by far the most influential public figure in Poland, with 82 per cent of respondents in a CBOS poll regarding the papal visit of June 1999 to be a significant event for themselves.[30] With the exception of Jerzy Urban's satirical weekly tabloid *NIE*, the press and the media have shown restraint in their reporting of the clergy's opinions on social and political affairs. Last but not least, the Church has continued to exert considerable influence on the faithful's political outlook and their party preference. The data that are currently available also suggest that religiosity has a persistent impact on the propensity to vote in elections. As AWS's electoral victory in 1997 showed,

although Christian-nationalist ideology has not been uniformly successful in elections, it continues to shape Poland's emergent democratic politics.

For the clergy, however, the anti-Church backlash amounts to a serious crisis that threatens the very foundation of Polish Catholicism. As the oldest social institution of the country, the Church now stands at a crossroads. It is learning from past mistakes and looking for different ways of continuing its mission. It has been a tortuous adaptation process, full of twists and turns. Some clergy are fully aware of sailing uncharted waters. For examples, in November 1995 the Cardinal himself admitted that there were 'fewer true Catholics than the statistics showed' (Luxmoore 1996). Accordingly, a Special Commission, chaired by Bishop Bronislaw Dembowski, was set up under the Episcopate to encourage dialogue with non-believers and sceptics of the Church.[31]

Meanwhile, Christian-nationalists and radical clergymen have intensified their fundamentalist, sometimes anti-Semitic campaign, to stem what they call creeping secularisation and Europeanisation of Polish culture. Some of them, such as those associated with the 'Polish Family' group and Radio *Maryja*, aim at a far-reaching confessionalisation of the state (Michnik 1998). By and large the Episcopate's attempt to sanction the extremists has not been successful. After the 1997 election, the radicals in parliament tried without success to abolish sex education in schools, and to impose a total ban on abortion and pornography.[32] Paradoxically, these radical groupings have done the Church a disservice by provoking further conflict in society that has left the various pro-Church milieux seriously divided.

Church–State relations in post-Communist Poland have been determined by the interplay of the attitudes of the faithful, the Church's own institutional strength, and its relations with the ruling elite. The post-Communist era has provided a much less favourable environment for the Church than anticipated. Instead, the Church has yet to find its place in the new democratic context. It has had both constraints to overcome and opportunities to seize. The clergy's response to secularisation and anti-clericalism has been erratic. This complex situation is further compounded by the emergence of fundamentalist groupings. Conflicts over religion will almost certainly polarise the forthcoming presidential campaign in the autumn of 2000, but they will also exert a strong impact on the electoral choices of Polish voters in the future as they have done in the past.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the Institute of Social Studies, University of Warsaw for granting me access to The Polish General Social Survey 1992-97 Data File. I am also grateful to Nuffield College for financially supporting my participation in the ECPR Joint Sessions in 1997 where this research was first presented.

Notes

1 Poland was created by forced border changes after the Second World War. Other denominations of significance include the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church

(555,000 followers), the Greek Catholics (110,000 members), the Lutheran Church (87,000 members), and Jehovah's Witnesses (123,000 members). It is difficult to estimate the size of the Jewish population (anything from 3,000 to 30,000), but in 1998 five Jewish religious organisations together claimed to represent 4,252 members. In 1995, about 140 religious associations and churches were registered under the 1989 religious organisations law.

2 However, it should be noted that more than half of the parishes were located in villages and towns with less than 10,000 inhabitants. Indeed, regional differences were substantial in terms of the average size of a parish, ranging from 2,136 in Przemyśl to 7,269 in Warsaw. See *Rocznik Statystyczny 1999*: 116–18.

3 Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej (CBOS), *Opinie o Miejscu i Roli Kościoła w* PRL, July 1988. See also Chrypinski (1990); Monticone (1986); Szajkowski (1983); Anusz and Anusz (1994): ch. 2–9; Raina (1985).

4 CBOS, *Stosunek do Kary Śmierci*, January 1999; *Warsaw Voice*, 5 September 1999; CBOS, *Stosunek do Aborcji po Zaostrzeniu Przepisów Antyaborcyjnych*, February 1998.

5 'Soul and papers', as one Polish priest half-jokingly told me, are both needed to become a good Catholic.

6 CBOS, *Opinia Publiczna o Prawie do Przerywania Ciąży*, April 1992.

7 CBOS, *Serwis Informacyjny*, nos. 11–12, November 1992. The Church's proposal to penalise women did not materialise in the final version of the law.

8 CBOS, *Instytucje Społeczne i Polityczne*, June 1992. See also Grabowska (1993; 1994a; 1994b).

9 In fact, the Pope himself has repeatedly criticised what he sees as 'the Western culture of materialist consumption and moral relativism'. While denouncing Communism and 'radical capitalist ideology', the Pope envisages a 'Christian Europe' united by transcendental, moral values. On John Paul II's vision of Europe, see Cava (1992, 1993); Byrnes (1997); Kovel (1987).

10 *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 9 December 1996.

11 *Wprost*, 14 February 1992.

12 CBOS, *Obecność i Instytucjonalizacja Wartości Religijnych w Życiu Społecznym*, October 1994.

13 Three electoral thresholds were introduced to exclude parties that did not manage to muster widespread support. Only lists that collected at least 5 per cent of the total vote were entitled to gain seats at the district level. Parties were allowed to form electoral coalitions, but then they had to face a higher threshold of 8 per cent. Two coalitions were registered: Catholic Electoral Committee-'Fatherland' (KKW 'Ojczyzna') and Democratic Left Alliance (SLD). Lastly, parties or coalitions had to overcome a 7 per cent threshold in order to claim a share of the sixty-nine national seats.

14 *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 25 October 1996.

15 *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 27 November 1996.

16 CBOS, *Stosunek Społeczeństwa Polskiego do Konkordatu*, February 1994.

17 *Rzeczpospolita*, 4 July 1996.

18 *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 4 July 1996.

19 Czaczkowska, E. K. (1996) 'Lewica-Kościół. Dobrze, źle, coraz gorzej', *Rzeczpospolita*, 31 October-1 November 1996, p.5.

20 By the end of 1992, the Church had filed over 3,000 applications for the return of property. A special Government-Church commission was therefore set up to investigate these cases. By May 1996, only 684 applications had been considered, 573 of which were ruled in favour of the Church.

21 John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 1981.

22 In February 1997, 27 deputies, mainly from the SLD, tabled a bill in order to replace 'Christian value system' with 'humanistic system of values'. Parliament rejected the proposal.

23 *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 15 July 1993.
24 Rydlewski, *op. cit.*: 206–7.
25 Notably, Krzaklewski's claim won general public approval, with 52 per cent in favour and 29 per cent against. See CBOS, *Sprawa Obecności Krzyża w Sejmie*, November 1997.
26 *Warsaw Voice*, 2 November 1997.
27 CBOS, *Obecność i Instytucjonalizacja Wartości Religijnych w Życiu Społecznym*, October 1994. The two groups can further be broken down into 'radical' (17 per cent) and 'moderate' (25 per cent) traditionalism, as well as 'radical' (17 per cent) and 'moderate' secularism (29 per cent).
28 See also CBOS, Protrety Wyborców, August 1996.
29 *Warsaw Voice*, 18 October 1998.
30 CBOS, *W Oczekiwaniu na Przyjazd Papieża do Ojczyzny*, May 1999.
31 Adam Szostkiewicz, "Kościół wobec niewierzących. Nie nawaracajmy, porozmawiajmy", *Wprost*, 31 July 1999: 20–1.
32 "Pornografia zakazana", *Rzeczpospolita*, 4 March 2000; "Prezydent przeciwny zakazowi pornografii", *Rzeczpospolita*, 28 March 2000.

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12 Conclusion

European exceptionalism?

David Broughton and Hans-Martien ten Napel

The central thesis of José Casanova in his book *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994) is that what we are witnessing is a global 'deprivatization' of religion. Casanova uses this term to explain that 'religious traditions throughout the world are refusing to accept the marginal and privatized role which theories of modernity as well as theories of secularization had reserved for them' (Casanova 1994: 5). An even more recent study by Jeff Haynes, *Religion in Global Politics*, published in 1998, concluded that 'a body of literature written by historians and social scientists, labelled "secularization theory", was, by and large, mistaken' and that 'those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary and comparative politics do so at their peril' (Haynes 1998: 215, 220).

At the same time, as we noted in our introduction, analyses of the relationship between religion and voting in Europe have dramatically fallen out of academic favour in the last twenty years on the apparent assumption that, as far as secularisation is concerned, Europe constitutes the exception in comparison with the rest of the world. In this volume, Brian Girvin clearly takes this view when he ends his overview of the roots of and recent ideas regarding the process of secularisation by concluding 'that European politics have become secularised over the past fifty years. The religious dimension in politics has largely disappeared. . . . It seems likely that in the new century religion will be less salient in the political realm, that political mobilisation will concentrate on issues other than religion but that some issues with a moral content will continue to draw on religion and have a political impact, if a diminishing one.'

Our starting point, however, as the editors of this book, was precisely that we believe that the decline – let alone the irrelevance – of religion in the context of voting behaviour has not yet been empirically demonstrated. This volume has therefore focused on the question if and how religion continues to influence and shape mass electoral behaviour in a number of different European countries. More specifically, in the introduction, two questions were asked: firstly, how can we most effectively test the impact of 'secularisation' on voting patterns in different European countries and secondly, to what extent has there been a 'decline' in the impact of the religious cleavage?

Methodological questions and issues

As far as the first question is concerned, the main result of the analyses presented here is without doubt that the approach to studying religion focusing upon using quantitative data at its core has not yet been able to overcome all the well-known problems and difficulties in employing such an analytical approach. In a sense, therefore, the first part of the title of John Madeley's contribution on the Scandinavian countries to this volume could also have been used as the title for the book as a whole: whether we like to admit it or not, assessing the religious factor in European electoral politics is still very much a matter of 'reading the runes'.

The overall issues and difficulties involved in clearly establishing the links between different social background variables and voting behaviour were usefully set out in a journal article published in 1990 by Patrick Dunleavy. Although he was essentially examining the state of research in terms of mass political behaviour in the specific context of voting research in Britain and the British Election Studies series (Dunleavy 1990), we nevertheless believe that the article also represents a good approach to both looking back to the various country case studies of this volume and forward to the problems and possibilities of future research in the field of religion and mass electoral behaviour.

Dunleavy highlighted a number of questions and issues that have direct relevance to this volume. Specifically, he focused upon the problems of analysing two-way causation flows between voting and a wide range of correlated variables, the discrepancies between different levels of analysis (specifically individual data and aggregate data providing measures of contextual influences) and problems of changes in question wording over time producing what he believed to be 'indeterminate' responses. The idea that single survey items can measure attitudes of any sort was criticised, as was the strong continuing emphasis on socialisation theory as a driving force in the design of and assumptions underpinning voting surveys. The lack of theoretical content in such surveys was also seen as a major weakness.

Dunleavy's solutions to the problems he identified involved the development of a 'multi-testing' approach to political science, via the 'pluralization' of types of data and the use of a variety of analytic methods. He acknowledged that such an approach would only work if sub-disciplinary boundaries were eroded. The prize for implementing such changes in survey design would be the production of fewer static, survey-based, decontextualised studies where social meaning had essentially been stripped out. The bewildering variety of human meanings and motivations could only be captured and analysed by sensitive and sophisticated multiple indicators.

Fiona Devine (1995) took up some of these specific points, arguing the case for a greater use of qualitative interviews in voting research as a means of 'unpacking' the linkages between the different variables in a more subtle and detailed manner. She argued in particular that more sophisticated methods would not necessarily lead to better explanations unless the data were collected using a

different approach, an approach which recognised the need to address key questions of process, context and meaning. The strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to the study of voting behaviour should be acknowledged and the potential use of qualitative approaches involving group discussions, life histories, oral history and in-depth interviews should be recognised. Enhancing our understanding of mass political behaviour required the combination of a variety of both quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques. The use of more qualitative approaches was limited though by problems of reliability and interpretation and the problems involved in generalising to the population as a whole from the small numbers of respondents normally involved in qualitative studies.

The literature derived from the study of religion and voting behaviour in the past has equally had to grapple with many of the problems that Dunleavy identified in his article. For example, in terms of religious beliefs, do people join a particular church because of their beliefs or do those beliefs stem from being a member of a particular church? Surely the context of religious interaction within an often well-established social network must play a vital part in understanding why some people are religious and others are not? To what extent does the 'social dimension' of religion bind people together, sustaining communities and groups in the process, providing individuals with a 'marker of identity' which may or may not overlap with other social group memberships? Asking a particular individual some specific questions about their religious affiliation, religiosity and beliefs is unlikely to provide a fully-rounded picture of the extent to which religious dimensions and aspects are significant in their lives.

Changes in question wording are the bane of all survey research but the retention of outdated and misleading questions simply to provide a time series of directly comparable survey responses seems at least an equal risk which increases with time. Testing the impact of religion has at least got beyond the use of single items to measure 'religion' with the development of whole batteries of questions on such topics as church authority, doctrinal beliefs, and traditional morality along with more 'political' issues such as disarmament, racial discrimination and the problems of the Third World. Socialisation theory has traditionally played a central role in understanding the impact of religion on mass politics but there has been a perceptible recognition among researchers in recent years that the reality of religious pluralism and the availability of 'many voices' pose major threats to the uncritical acceptance of church authority in both religious and secular matters.

The question as to whether there has been enough theoretical content driving the design of questions and indicators trying to tap the impact of religion on voting behaviour remains an open one. The broad field of religious sociology, particularly in the United States, appears to have suffered no diminution in its research output in recent years, deftly switching its focus from crude classifications of Protestant, Catholic and Jew to a recognition that there are more than 100 possible religious denominations in the USA. In one very important sense, however, the much subtler analytical distinctions between denominations that

this should permit is undermined empirically by the inevitability that there will not be enough respondents in the numerically smaller categories to permit any detailed examination of their religious behaviour or attitudes. As a result, the three category denominational division mentioned above has still only been extended to five or six, although the rationale for drawing distinctions between different types of Protestants has produced some interesting and thoughtful work (Smith 1990; Jelen 1998).

A number of frameworks for analysing religion and voting behaviour have been used in the past. Ken Wald's framework (1983) consists of four aspects of religion, which have been operationalised empirically by others in different countries. The first dimension treats religious denominations as interest groups that enter politics in order to either further or oppose policies that might affect their interests. The second dimension treats religion as a distinct sub-culture. This poses the idea that the link from a religious affiliation to a particular political party is mainly an outgrowth of a person's identification derived from the values of their socially defined environment. In terms of this dimension, religious involvement will be a major aspect, making use of measures of church attendance, church school attendance and membership in various religious groups. The third dimension sees religion acting as a surrogate or proxy for other social conflicts and characteristics. This involves testing other salient face-sheet variables to see whether, if statistical controls for variables such as class, region, gender and age are employed, the religious 'effect' disappears, suggesting that the religious 'effect' was essentially spurious.

The fourth dimension draws on the work of Weber in regarding religion as a belief system. This is because denominations usually have values and views relevant to the secular world based on varying ideas relating to questions of individual responsibility, the degree of submission to the authority of the state, hierarchy, the overall organisation of society and the 'reach' of the temporal sphere and the relationship of religious beliefs and the church to it.

Given the diversity in the countries included in this volume, it would have been too rigid and restrictive to simply operationalise Wald's framework in each chapter. Nevertheless, Wald's framework does provide ideas which the various contributors were able to adapt and test in their analyses, particularly the need to consider other social variables when examining any putative 'religious effect' on voting behaviour and the various ideas derived from the status of religious denominations as interest groups existing within a defined and powerfully influential sub-culture or ethos. The wider belief system might well be deceptively similar between countries on the surface, but operationalising concepts such as hierarchy, authority and culture is notoriously prone to being undermined by national peculiarities in understanding and frequent examples of subtle but significant 'exceptionalism'.

We can however make progress in developing our understanding of how religion continues to influence voting patterns by considering various aspects of three of Wald's dimensions. In particular, firstly, we want to consider whether religious denominations can be regarded essentially as interest groups

protecting and even attempting to advance their own interests; secondly, whether a 'religious ethos' can provide the impetus and direction for 'religious voting' in face of competing claims for loyalty from a shifting array of social forces and finally, whether the mostly clearly identifiable 'religious effect' on voting choice is direct or indirect, and whether it is in fact a proxy for other social influences and/or attitudes.

Religious denominations as interest groups

Churches have long been regarded as important societal institutions that enter the political arena in order to either defend their interests as corporate bodies or as masses of like-minded individuals. The precise nature and articulation of these interests will inevitably differ by country, in particular depending on whether the church is established and its consequent relationship with the state and/or whether the church has specific privileges within a broader 'para-public' institutional context. It is not difficult to see why churches would have identifiable interests to defend from various 'outside forces' and that they would perceive threats to their influence among their adherents from the spread of 'outside values'.

Today, it is much less easy to see churches lining up predictably and consistently behind particular stands on specific religious issues on the political agenda. In many countries, issues rooted in religion are almost entirely absent from the political agenda and this is certainly one source of the 'mystery' as to why religion appears to be influential still in the structuring of voting choice. The key contemporary religious issue in many European countries is that of abortion, but even on this issue, instinctive church condemnation on straightforward 'right to life' grounds has often been reluctantly modified to fit specific circumstances relating to uneasy concerns as to whether the followers are actually following. Two good examples of this would be Poland and Germany.

In the future, questions relating to state support for non-Christian schools seem potentially likely to become an issue of greater importance. At present, this issue has only been half-heartedly perceived as being significant but any changes to the relationship between the state and the formal religious institutional structures of any country is certain to be both sensitive and difficult to resolve amicably. Any serious attempt at explicitly acknowledging the social and legal consequences of 'multi-culturalism' is bound to lead in this direction.

For now, the measurement of this particular dimension of Wald's framework has tended to use questions designed to assess the potential existence of denominational divides on issues such as abortion as well as the legitimacy of the church being involved in and speaking out on a variety of social issues. Questions on overall trust in the church as an institution are also sometimes used as in Poland.

However, the precise place of the churches within the institutional structure of a particular country might not matter decisively for their role, if they can retain the overall support of their adherents and successfully meet the challenges

involved in passing their core values derived from the teachings of the church down the generations. The institutional framework might well change over a long period (although most likely this will be slow), while the key religious values and perceptions remain largely unaltered because of the retention and protection of the means of inculcating those values.

'Religious ethos' and 'religious voting'

The second aspect of Wald's framework considers religion as a distinct subculture, whereby the attachment of a particular individual to a particular political party is simply a reflection of identification with the habits and values of the socially defined environment within which the particular individual is immersed from childhood. Operationalising this aspect of the framework is normally carried out through indicators such as church attendance, sectarian school attendance and membership in religious groups.

The assumption is that those who are most integrated into their particular sub-community are the ones most likely to demonstrate a tendency to cast their votes along identifiable lines. In Germany, for example, the main religious divide appears to be between those who are better integrated into their church and those who are not, rather than on the basis of a purely denominational division between Protestants and Catholics. The CDU-CSU always appears to be the strongest party among those most integrated into their particular church. In France, integration into the Catholic milieu remains an important factor in the analysis of French voting behaviour and it is also something that has changed little in recent years. In Spain, however, in the wake of religious polarisation in the 1930s, the political elites of the post-Franco era explicitly decided to keep religious issues off the political agenda with the result that the religious profiles of the two main parties (the PSOE and PP) have become increasingly blurred.

The main difficulty for the churches today is one of 'holding the line' in terms of preserving their influence on their adherents and their families. A particular religious ethos does not exist in a social vacuum; instead, religious beliefs have to react and adapt to a variety of competing social forces.

One influence of increasing importance is often seen to be the mass media and the way in which religious groups might hold distinct views on particular policy issues on the basis of exposure to particular sources of information. In addition, it is important to remember that the media are not simply a neutral source of information. In European countries in particular, the media are vital 'carriers' of often progressive beliefs and values, vital contributors to 'official' definitions of reality, along with other well-educated elites in the fields of education and the law. Many members of these elites are highly secularised in their personal lifestyles and consequently in their views of 'reality'.

A second focus of change are the increasing tensions arising *within* the different denominations from a growth in fundamentalism (so-called *culture wars*), various 'new age' cults and the increasing visibility of non-Christian organisations with specific and uncompromising demands. For now, these groups

might be regarded as fringe elements on the religious scene but their apparent influence among the educated young and the disaffected suggests strongly that established churches must not be complacent in their attitude to such competition in the 'religious marketplace'. The 'economic model of religion' suggests that religious competition is good for churches and that their relevance and vitality will be best secured by their reacting energetically to such challenges to their social position and authority.

It is particularly when dealing with this aspect of Wald's framework that the greater use of qualitative techniques seems to be the most appropriate. The sense of community and ethos emanating from a particular religious community at the level of a specific congregation or a particular local church is unlikely to be fully revealed by two or three cursory questions on the topic of religion, particularly when such questions are squeezed into a much longer omnibus survey covering a range of varied topics. The extent of social networks and the degree of homogeneous beliefs can best be unravelled by in-depth interviews and the use of semi-structured techniques rather than a reliance on closed response categories allowing for little subtlety of response and even less detailed shading of opinion.

Religious effects on voting patterns: direct or indirect?

The third aspect of the Wald framework concerns the questions as to whether religion is a direct influence on voting or whether it is indirect, and whether it is essentially a spurious statistical effect which will 'wash out' of the analysis once other relevant socio-economic variables such as social class, gender, region, union membership, language and ethnicity are statistically controlled. These last two influences are often the variables used in the analyses of religion and voting in countries such as Canada but even there, the religious effect does not disappear entirely when such analyses are conducted.

In the European context, a direct link between religion and voting is derived from the establishment of parties that are based upon particular religious principles such as Christian Democratic parties. The indirect link is based on issue positions rather than the party, although in many cases such as in the Netherlands, there are simultaneously both direct and indirect religious links in existence. The recent electoral decline of many Christian Democratic parties in Europe and the consequent loss of a previously dominant position in many countries suggest that the direct link may no longer be of as much significance as in the past. The indirect link via issue positions is unlikely to be very strong either since the political space in European politics is not often defined today in religious-secular terms. Even where is it so defined, as in the Netherlands, there is a lack of widespread social cohesion behind particular issue positions that makes it risky for parties to pitch their appeals on what may turn out to be dangerously shifting electoral sands in the 'privatised' world of religious belief.

Additionally, the idea that religious conflict might simply be a proxy for other social characteristics and conflicts is not borne out by the empirical analyses. The

idea behind this aspect of the Wald framework is that the religious effect on voting is essentially spurious; that religion will not have any impact on voting patterns once the 'true' relationships between the key variables are uncovered. This might be related most commonly to various measures of social class, gender, age or region for example. Nevertheless it appears that religious effects on voting, even if weakening over time and affecting fewer people than in the past, remain apparent after various statistical controls for the other variables have been carried out. Given the usual absence of religious issues on the mainstream political agenda and the electoral decline of explicitly religious parties in European politics, these 'religious effects' remain a mystery. As Madeley notes in his chapter on the Scandinavian countries in this volume, 'why did the religious parties emerge so strongly when the actual business of politics in terms of what the politicians argued about and conducted campaigns around seemed to be focused on quite other secular issues?'

This linkage may well be engendered either by the churches or the political parties in the form of electoral mobilisation but not in a form or way that survey questions normally adequately capture. The operationalisation of this dimension of religious activity appears to be inadequate as a means of demonstrating the 'religious effect' at the level of the individual respondent. It may be the case that, once more, the idea of an ethos or social network which does not come through via the analysis of a brief set of questions on religion needs to be seen as the primary focus of future research if the roots and dimensions of this particular linkage are to be uncovered.

In terms of the first major question of this volume therefore (how can we most effectively test the impact of 'secularisation' on voting patterns in different European countries), we can see that the well-known limitations of the mass survey approach to testing the various dimensions of religion remain both apparent and potent. Despite the development of whole batteries of survey questions on diverse topics such as religious beliefs, church activities and authority, along with a burgeoning issue agenda on topics such as abortion, pornography, sex education, gay rights, euthanasia and bio-ethical concerns, there remain wholly legitimate concerns about the way in which the impact of these issues can be justifiably measured at the level of mass politics and in terms of the structuring of voting patterns in Europe.

For many, this will come as no surprise since, for them, the essence of religion is its non-empirical nature and its roots in a 'plausibility structure' which can only find acceptance through social confirmation. However, the problems involved in developing measures of religion which are immediately operationalisable and empirically testable do not mean that such a task is impossible.

On this basis, however, assumptions of secularisation as an inevitable and unstoppable trend must be brought into considerable doubt. The undoubted processes of religious change, adaptation and the development of 'selective religiosity' should not be crudely equated with a one-way ticket to secular oblivion. This leads us to discuss the degree to which European politics at the mass level can sensibly be regarded as being irredeemably secular.

How 'definitive' is secularisation in Europe?

Our second main question in this volume concerns the extent to which there has been a 'decline' in the impact of the religious cleavage. Most of the chapters in this book, in so far as it has proved possible to effectively test the impact of secularisation on voting patterns in Europe as noted in the last section, conclude that there has been a 'decline' of religion. On the other hand, in most countries, secularisation appears to be far from definitive. If we follow the running order in which the chapters have appeared in this volume, it has to be noted, on the one hand, that John Madeley in his contribution on Europe's sole mono-confessional Protestant region argues that Scandinavia 'is particularly noteworthy for its advanced secularisation'. On the other hand, it must be noted that: firstly, his chapter (because it focuses on the various Christian parties) does little to empirically demonstrate this thesis as such; and secondly, as Madeley himself argues, when the great majority of nominally Lutheran Scandinavians vote according to their views on secular matters, they are in fact, because of the Lutheran rule against 'mixing' religious with political concerns, paradoxically remaining faithful to a long-standing Lutheran tradition. Thirdly, in so far as the revivalist Christians dissent from this Lutheran mainstream by claiming that a separation of religion and politics cannot be properly upheld, 'the new politics of values provides a surprisingly favourable setting for the survival of Scandinavian Christian Democracy'.

With respect to the 'mixed' countries, David Seawright concludes in his chapter on Britain, that although '[t]here may thus be quite a distinctive post-war secular trend in the numbers regularly attending orthodox Churches', '[t]he above evidence highlights the erroneous assumption that religion no longer matters as a social cleavage in voting behaviour in mainland Britain. . . . [T]he social cleavage of religion will have to be given greater consideration in future studies of electoral behaviour.'

Similarly, on Germany, Geoffrey Roberts writes, that '[f]rom the evidence, it would appear that the religious cleavage is diminishing in terms of its relevance for electoral politics in Germany, but that it is still a potent factor, and one which, on certain issues and for certain groups, can be of decisive importance. – [E]lectoral behaviour, as the statistics demonstrate, still seems to be affected quite substantially by denomination and religiosity.'

In the case of the Netherlands, the evidence for secularisation seems much less ambivalent. Joop van Holsteyn and Galen Irwin conclude that '[d]uring the second half of the twentieth century dramatic changes took place in the Netherlands in the relationship between religion and politics. . . . Voting by means of a direct link between religion and politics has reached close to its minimum level. Attracting voters by means of an indirect link, that is, issue positions, does not provide much hope for the CDA either.' Yet, even in this country, forty per cent of the population still feels that religion is a good guide in politics.

With respect to the Catholic countries, Pierre Bréchon argues that '[n]owadays, France is one of the most secularised countries in Western Europe'. Yet, 'integration into Catholicism is still a very important factor in French electoral behaviour. Practising Catholics exhibit electoral behaviour scarcely different from that of thirty years ago. . . . [T]he religious or non-religious dimension remains very important.'

In sharp contrast, according to José Ramon Montero and Kerman Calvo, '[o]ur journey across the relationship between religiosity and electoral behaviour tells us a story of decline in Spain. . . . The saliency of the religious factor as an identity maker is increasingly vanishing, and hence the power of this variable to explain how Spaniards vote is becoming almost irrelevant.' As they themselves argue, however, with their emphasis on the importance of political agency, this is in part the result of the strategic commitment of both party and Church elites not to mobilise religion versus secular identities. Also, they significantly add that '[f]urther research should clarify the extent to which the seemingly paradoxical assertion which points at the similarities of conservative and Socialist voters in terms of religiosity might be explained because of their distinct personal constructions of religion; in other words, by the co-existence of two types of religious voters. . . . If this is indeed the case, it is obvious that existing indicators may have lost a good deal of their validity, since they would appear to bring together under a common heading markedly distinct opposing constructions of what religiosity means.'

Mark Donovan ends his contribution to this volume on Italy by concluding that 'there is much to suggest that Italy's "secularisation" is not yet definitive'. The question in the title of the chapter, 'Italy: A Dramatic Case of Secularisation?', can therefore not be answered fully in the affirmative, at least not yet.

In terms of our two case studies from Eastern Europe, the complexity of the questions as to the nature and degree of secularisation are as apparent there as in the states of Western Europe. Zsolt Enyedi, on the one hand, talks about 'the relatively high level of secularisation in present-day Hungary' but this does not prevent him from arguing, on the other hand, however, that 'religion is a relatively important determinant of party choice. Although the relationship between party preference and religiosity has declined somewhat since 1991, the relative weight of religiosity has in fact increased.' He concludes 'that a crude dichotomy of secularisation versus Christianisation does not suffice. Different dimensions of the role of religiosity in society point in different directions'.

Kenneth Ka-Lok Chan argues on the one hand that '[t]he past decade has witnessed a gradual decline of religiosity, widespread disapproval of the Church's interference in politics and the triumph of anti-clerical parties and candidates in elections in Poland'. On the other hand '[i]t would be mistaken to suggest that since 1989 there has been an irreversible trend towards secularisation in Polish society. . . . Conflicts over religion . . . will . . . exert a strong impact on the electoral choices of Polish voters in the future as they have done in the past.'

Thus, however deep the fall of European Christian Democracy may have been since David Hanley published his edited volume on Christian Democratic parties in Europe in 1994, religion certainly continues to influence and shape mass electoral behaviour in Europe in ways which are difficult to measure reliably and immediately but which nevertheless retain significance for both individuals and groups.

As the prominent sociologist of religion Peter L. Berger recently wrote,

> [t]he religious impulse, the quest for meaning that transcends the restricted space of empirical existence in this world, has been a perennial feature of humanity. (This is not a theological statement but an anthropological one – an agnostic or even an atheist philosopher may well agree with it.) It would require something close to a mutation of the species to extinguish this impulse for good. The more radical thinkers of the Enlightenment and their more recent intellectual descendants hoped for something like this, of course. So far it has not happened, and . . . it is unlikely to happen in the foreseeable future. The critique of secularity common to all the resurgent movements is that human existence bereft of transcendence is an impoverished and finally untenable condition.
>
> (Berger 1999: 13)

As Mary Kenny has expressed it:

> It IS natural to be religious. It goes against human experience to struggle through life without any spiritual support. . . . There have been ages of skepticism – the 18th century – and ages of faith – the 19th century. There have always been times when the young are more rejecting of religion as irrelevant to their lives, but the wheel turns and faith surges back again. The millennium wheel does not signify that the Christian tradition is falling, merely turning, and as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Credo.
>
> (*Express*, 29 December 1999)

One challenge for future empirical research on religion and mass politics would be to adopt this idea of human beings as unalterably religious as the starting-point for that research rather than slavishly adhering to the still predominant paradigm of 'modernisation theory', which includes various hypotheses regarding secularisation. It is simply not the case on the basis of the detailed, cross-national evidence that we have assembled in this volume that 'history' and 'society' necessarily and inevitably gravitate in the broad direction of secularisation. As Casanova, Haynes, Berger and others have demonstrated, it is more appropriate to speak of a 'de-secularisation of the world', and as this volume has shown, assuming Europe as a whole is the exception to this particular 'rule' may prove to be both erroneous and empirically unjustifiable.

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