

# **New Wine in Old Bottles: Explaining Party Competition Along the Socio-Cultural Dimension in Europe**

**Jan Rovny**

jrovny@gmail.com

Sciences Po, Paris, CEE / LIEPP

University of Gothenburg, CERGU

**Jonathan Polk**

jonathan.polk@gu.se

Center for European Research

University of Gothenburg

## **Abstract**

In Europe, non-economic political issues are seen as secondary, but significant, sources of political competition. There is uncertainty, however, about the sources of its varying significance in politics. This paper addresses the extent to which this ‘other’ dimension frames political conflict across western Europe. Using expert surveys and country-level data, we first explore the contemporary content of the non-economic dimension. We find evidence of variance in the importance of this dimension in different party systems, which we explain through the role of historical religious conflict. Despite the rise of new cultural issues, historical religious divides provide strikingly powerful predictors of the significance of the socio-cultural dimension in contemporary political competition of western Europe.

November 25, 2014

# Introduction

Politics in advanced democracies extensively revolve around the management of the economy and redistribution of the wealth it generates. The stewardship of the economy is viewed as central to the evaluation of individual political leaders, as well as entire administrations. Simultaneously, many salient political issues – such as: the role of religion in public life; rights of ethnic or sexual minorities; the position of women in society and family; the acceptance of diversity; the type and level of supranational cooperation etc. – neither directly speak to, nor are clearly associated with the economy. Since the 1970s scholars thus refer to this ‘other’ dimension of politics as either green/alternative/libertarianism versus traditional/authoritarian/nationalism (Hooghe, Marks, and Wilson 2002, Hooghe and Marks 2009); liberal-authoritarian (Kitschelt 1994); new politics (Franklin et al. 1992); or post-materialism (Inglehart 1977, 1990). Whatever its name, multiple analysts and research teams highlight the important role of the cultural dimension<sup>1</sup> in political contestation throughout Europe (Marks et al. 2006; Kreisi et al. 2008; Kitschelt 1992; Evans and Whitefield 1993; Zielinski 2002). Although the political significance of the other dimension is of increasing interest, the profusion of competing names listed above is not accidental. The multiple and diverse political issues potentially connected with this dimension make it much more complicated than economic left-right politics. Thus the content of the non-economic dimension, as well as the sources of its varying significance in politics remain unclear.

This article consequently addresses the extent of political competition over the cultural dimension in western Europe. We argue that despite the primarily non-religious content of the dimension today, its varying role in western European competition is rooted in the religious cleavage of the late 19th and early 20th century. More specifically, we suggest that the historical political chasm caused by the deep secular-religious divide in predominantly Catholic societies opened competition in a non-economic direction, amalgamated economic conflicts, and increased the primacy of the other dimension with lasting effect.

This article contributes to the study of political competition in Europe by deepening our understanding of cleavage formation and longevity. While most contemporary studies of party competition in Europe focus on the economic left-right (for example, see Adams et al 2006, Adams, Ezrow and Somer-Topcu 2011, Budge et al 2012, Ezrow 2005, Somer-Topcu 2014), we demonstrate that economic conflicts did not always supersede religious divides. Rather, economic oppositions were brought into standing religious cleavages that continued

---

<sup>1</sup>To avoid repetition we refer to these issues as the other dimension, the non-economic dimension, the socio-cultural dimension, or simply the cultural dimension interchangeably throughout the text.

to dominate politics under certain circumstances. We thus build on the work of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) suggesting that the religious cleavage durably shaped political competition and policy outcomes in contemporary European states, even as explicitly religious competition has receded from party politics (see, e.g., Lijhpart 1979, van Kersbergen and Manow 2009, Ansell and Lindvall 2013, Tilley 2014).

After discussing the previous scholarship on the other dimension, we present its content across 16 west European countries included in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) on party positioning: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. We then use the axis of competition to conceptualize and measure party competition over the other dimension. Our examination into the role of the socio-cultural dimension reveals substantial variation in its importance across the party systems. To explain this variation we build an argument about how the historical legacies of religious conflict shape the structure of political competition in western Europe today. We test our hypotheses through quantitative analyses, and highlight the mechanisms by discussing two cases – France and Sweden – in greater depth. Ultimately, our work highlights the striking structural stability – despite the fluidity of content – of the main lines of conflict. We suggest that although the contested particulars change with the specific needs and interests of the day, the competitive frame in which they are placed is largely abiding.

## **The Contemporary Content of the Other Dimension**

The historical account of political competition in Europe suggests that modern party systems resulted from lasting historical divisions reaching back to the Reformation of the 16th century. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) explain how long-standing conflicts in European societies were translated into political competition represented in party systems. Early, pre-industrial European conflicts, centering on state-church relations and on center-periphery divides, informed the non-economic competition in Europe (Rokkan et al. 1999). The centre-periphery distinction was based on tensions between the dominant culture and ethnically, religiously, or linguistically distinct sub-groups within a country, while the religious cleavage grew out of the state's struggle for the control of social provisions and educational institutions (see Ansell and Lindvall 2013 for the latter). The dawn of industrialization saw the rise of economic contestation in the form of land-industry and worker-owner opposition. Lipset and Rokkan argue that the diversity of competition patterns in Europe stems from the pre-industrial

cleavages, while industrialization, and the rise of the worker-owner class cleavage, had a uniform impact across the continent. They then famously assert that by the 1920s, after the extension of suffrage, and the political mobilization of the class divide, the cleavages of Europe freeze in place (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 50). Works in the Lipset-Rokkan tradition then tend to focus on the class cleavage as the dominant conflict common to all European societies (cf. Bartolini and Mair 2007 [1990], see Bornschieer 2009 for an overview of cleavage-based research in the Lipset and Rokkan tradition), an approach further reinforced by spatial modeling and its emphasis on the economic left-right dimension (cf. Downs 1957).

The rise of competition over new values in the final quarter of the twentieth century called into question the frozen nature of the party systems of Western Europe, reorienting the relationship between parties and voters (see, e.g. Franklin et al. 1992; Oskarson 2005). The class structure, which no longer hinges on the divide between workers and owners, but rather on different skill endowments, is altered (Kitschelt 2003; Kitschelt and Rehm 2004), while religious attendance declines. At the individual level, citizens of countries that experienced rapid economic growth in the post-war era displayed increasing interest in personal expression and autonomy on matters of lifestyle and morality (Inglehart 1977, 1990). The overt politicization of European integration in the last decade of the 20th century fuels Euroscepticism, while decades of immigration led to increasing salience of cultural issues concerning immigration policy and assimilation (Betz 1994, Kitschelt and McGann 1995, Taggart 1995, Lubbers et. al. 2002, Ignazi 2003, van der Brug et. al. 2005, van der Brug and van Spanje 2009, Rovny 2013). The rising importance of political competition about abortion, gay rights, the environment, and immigration potentially weakens the historical connections between voters and parties, shifts the nature of cultural competition away from religion, and brings about a dealignment or realignment of the party system.

Kitschelt's studies of changes within European social democracy (1994) and the emergence of green parties (1988) and the radical right (1995) illustrate the importance of this non-economic dimension of competition, which he refers to as a libertarian-authoritarian continuum. For example, the increasing salience of quality of life issues, multiculturalism, and more participatory forms of politics proved to be a challenge for social democratic parties, as did a macro-economic environment that pushed towards moderation of economic policies. These factors combined to create space for competitor left-libertarian parties that were more economically left and socially liberal than social democrats. Kitschelt argues that the ability of these left-libertarian competitors to capture voters with more liberal preferences on social issues and the environment explains the rise of green parties throughout western Europe and

the struggle of social democratic parties after oil-shocks of the mid-1970s.

Ongoing processes of globalization or denationalization have created groups that benefit or suffer from these changes, which has in turn generated shifts in the structure of political spaces and party competition across Western Europe (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). Entrepreneurs and those employed in open, competitive sectors, as well as individuals with cosmopolitan attitudes, form the ‘winners’ from – and advocates of – denationalization. The management and labor of protected industries, workers with less competitive skill-sets, and individuals with strong, exclusive national identities make up the ‘losers’ from globalization and those that resist the forces of denationalization. Kriesi and colleagues still see politics in Europe as two-dimensional, but argue that the new critical juncture of globalization has shifted the nature of these dimensions. The cultural dimension is less defined by religion in the contemporary era and increasingly oriented around European integration (Kriesi 2007) and immigration, with the defense of tradition represented in more ethnic and nationalist terms. This resonates with our expectation that although the content of the other dimension may change across time and national contexts, the organizational structures and strategies of existing actors in a given party system have been shaped by formative conflicts over older facets of the cultural dimension, and this shapes the nature of contemporary cultural competition.

Kriesi, et al. emphasize the importance of parties that capitalize on the losers of globalization as the drivers of change in western European party systems (p.929). They share with Hooghe and Marks (see, e.g., 2009) a belief in the importance of appeals to identity, particularly exclusive conceptions of national identity, to activate the political force of this group, rather than arguments based exclusively in the defense of their economic interests. Returning to the language of ‘traditional, authoritarian, nationalist’ (TAN), parties with extreme TAN profiles are highly concerned with defending national sovereignty; these parties stridently oppose immigration as well as European integration because of the perceived threat that foreigners, international institutions, and cosmopolitanism pose to the national community (Hooghe, Marks, and Nelson 2002). The opposition to EU integration of parties near the TAN pole remains apparent in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) data up to the present day (Bakker, et al. 2012). Parties with green, alternative (an emphasis on participatory democracy), libertarian (GAL) profiles, however, are more supportive of integration, particularly in areas such as EU environmental policy, EU asylum policy, and strengthening the powers of the European Parliament (Marks, et al. 2006). In general, a party’s stance on the cultural divide is a more powerful predictor of the party’s stance on most aspects of

European integration than left-right (Hooghe, Marks, and Nelson 2002; Marks, et al. 2006).

In line with these recent works, the content of the other dimension underlines its contemporary character. The 2006 and 2010 waves of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey on party positioning in Europe include policy-specific questions related to three relatively independent dimensions: economic left-right, socio-cultural politics, and European integration. Using the battery of policy-specific questions related to the positioning of party leadership on cultural politics, we perform a varimax rotated principal factor analysis to examine the contemporary content of the other dimension. Its current structure is composed of two groups of issues (see table 1)<sup>2</sup>. The first and most significant group, relates to cosmopolitanism versus nationalism, as well as concerns over social lifestyles and civil liberties. Questions pertaining to religion, opposing secular modernism versus traditionalism, load most highly on a second factor. Comparing the eigenvalues shows that the questions associated with the first factor define the contemporary nature of the cultural dimension. This interpretation is further supported by the relatively low salience of the question concerning the role of religion in determining people’s lifestyles.<sup>3</sup> This provides empirical evidence that although the origins of socio-cultural competition may be rooted in religion, tensions between church and state are not the most distinctive features of socio-cultural politics today.

The other dimension predominantly consists of topical issues pertaining to the cultural character of society. Despite this content uniformity, the cultural dimension does not take on the same role in all party systems. Rather, there is significant variance in the amount that the economic left-right, socio-cultural, and European integration dimensions are interrelated across European countries, with economic left-right and socio-cultural dimensions relatively distinct from one another in some countries, but much more inter-related in others (Bakker, Jolly, Polk 2012). Diversity in the content and meaning of the socio-cultural dimension across countries should not surprise us because, as Marks et al. (2006: 157) report, in some countries this dimension: “is oriented around environmental protection and sustainable growth; in others, it captures conflict about traditional values rooted in a secular-religious divide; and in yet others, it is pitched around immigration and defense of the national community”. And while most economic left-wing parties are also ‘left’ on the social dimension in western Europe, the association and the extent of competition over the other dimension is varied.

---

<sup>2</sup>Please note that finding two factors with eigenvalues over 1 does not equate to having two dimensions within cultural issues. An unrotated factor analysis shows only one factor pertaining primarily to issues related to immigration and ethnic minorities.

<sup>3</sup>This analysis is consistent with most recent works on party competition in western Europe (cf. Kriesi et al. 2008; Bornschier 2010).

Table 1: The Structure of the Socio-Cultural Dimension

	<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>	<b>Saliency</b>
	(Cosmo.)	(Secular.)	0-10
Ethnic minority	0.92	0.24	5.76
Security	0.14	0.10	4.88
Regions	0.22	0.00	5.08
Urban-rural	0.38	0.53	4.11
Immigrant integration	0.92	0.28	6.19
Immigration policy	0.96	0.18	6.35
Religion	0.53	0.73	4.49
Social lifestyle	0.71	0.65	5.89
Civil liberties	0.89	0.34	6.31
Eigenvalue	4.38	1.52	
Proportion	0.69	0.24	

Principal factor analysis with varimax rotation. Saliency of each issue assessed by experts on a 0-10 scale. Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2006 and 2010.

The next section considers a way to measure this variance based on the work of Kitschelt (1994).

## Competition over the Socio-Cultural Dimension

This section assesses the extent to which political parties compete over the socio-cultural dimension by conceptualizing and measuring the *axis of party competition*. We show that there is significant variance in the role that the other dimension plays in structuring political competition across the party systems of western Europe. Crucially, we find that in some countries socio-cultural issues only loosely matter in political competition, while in others it is the predominant arena of political conflict. We now turn to a fuller discussion of our measure of party competition over the other dimension in Europe.

Scholars frequently simplify party competition to a two dimensional abstraction spanning economic and socio-cultural issues, and assume that the two dimensions are orthogonal to one another (Kitschelt 1992; Laver and Hunt 1992; Kitschelt 1994; Hooghe et al. 2002; Marks et al. 2006; Kriesi et al. 2008). In practice these dimensions are related, but the assumption of orthogonality is often useful for representational purposes.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Similarly, maps of localities assume that latitude and longitude are orthogonal, even though that is only true along one selected meridian (but not more). Orthogonality is a useful simplification even if it is

Parties take positions within this two dimensional space with respect to voters and each other, and formulate ideologies that connect their positions across theoretically separable dimensions. Consequently, parties do not fall randomly onto this two-dimensional space. The structure of party placement can be summarized into an ‘axis of competition’ (Kitschelt 1994). In a two-dimensional political space, the axis of party competition is the relationship between party positioning on dimension  $x$  and dimension  $y$ :

$$y_i = \alpha + \beta x_i \tag{1}$$

Here  $\alpha$  is the intercept, while  $\beta$  represents the slope of the competition axis in the two-dimensional political space. This slope is important for our purposes. It outlines the proportion between competition occurring along dimension  $x$  ( $\beta \rightarrow 0$ ) or dimension  $y$  ( $\beta \rightarrow \pm\infty$ ). It also expresses the extent to which the two dimensions are correlated (the greater the  $|\beta|$ , the stronger the correlation between  $x$  and  $y$ ).

It is possible to draw the axis line expressed in equation 1, that summarizes the positions of political parties within the two dimensional space. The parties’ preferences on the economic left-right dimension, e.g. stances on the redistribution of wealth and an active role for the state in managing the economy, determines the positions on the  $x$  axis. The parties’ preferences on the socio-cultural ‘other’ dimension determines the positions on the  $y$  axis. The steeper the slope  $\beta$ , the greater the variation in party positions on the  $y$  axis, and, simultaneously, the greater the association between placements on the dimensions  $x$  and  $y$ . In other words, the more polarized the parties’ positions are on a dimension, the more dominant that dimension is within the party system (see Kitschelt and Rehm 2014). A steep competition slope thus indicates greater polarization on the socio-cultural dimension, and greater correlation of the two dimensions, which suggests that the other dimension dominates party competition, and assimilates economic placements.

We produce two similar measures of the axis of competition. One is the coefficient  $\beta$  from a regression where each party is weighted by its vote share. This reflects the intuition that larger parties are more influential in framing party competition. The other measure takes the absolute value of this weighted  $\beta$  coefficient. The greater this value, the steeper the axis of competition, and consequently the greater the competition along the socio-cultural, rather than the economic dimension. Figure 1 summarizes the values of the absolute  $\beta$  coefficients, which were obtained from Chapel Hill Expert Survey data, while the details are in Table 5 in the appendix.

---

empirically incorrect.

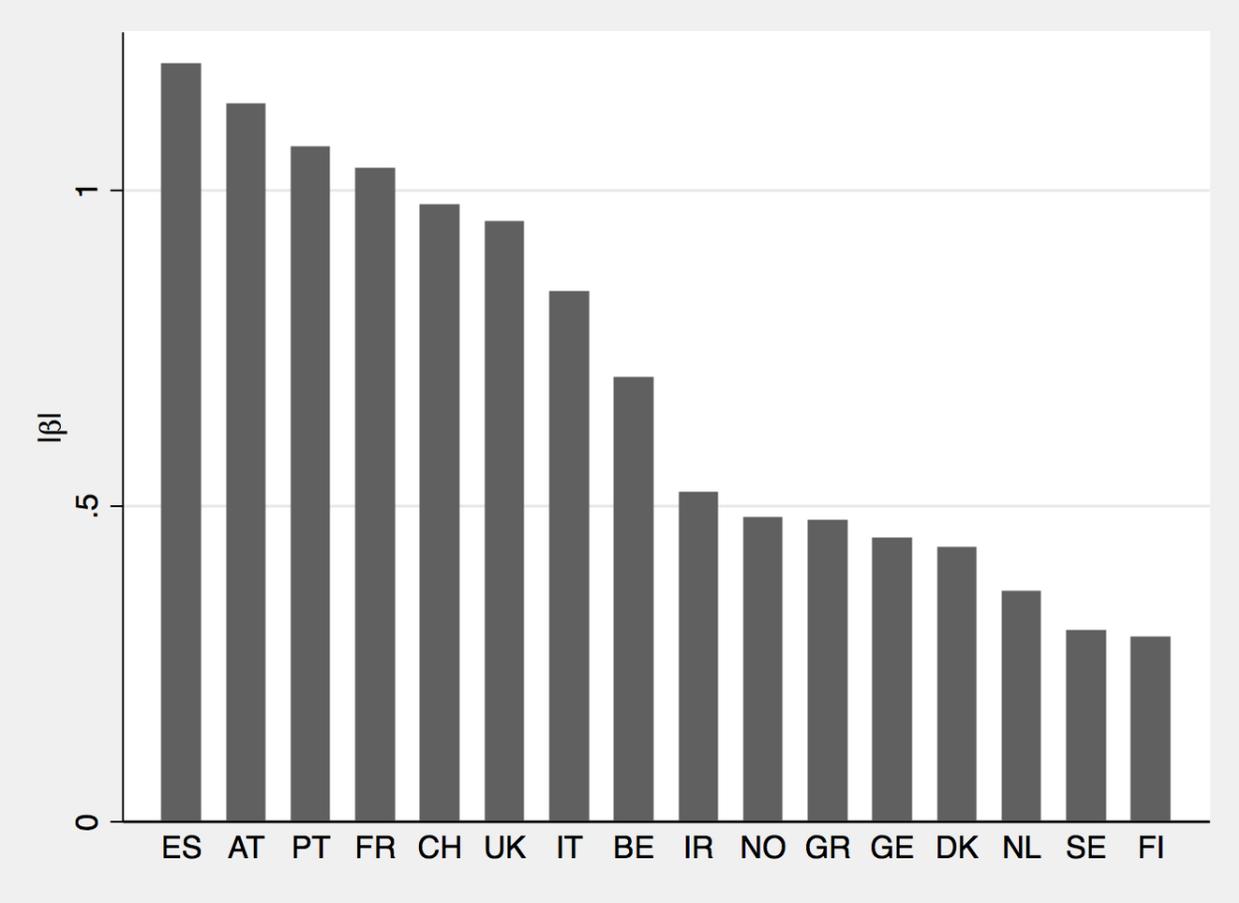


Figure 1: Absolute competition axis slopes

Absolute competition axis slopes obtained from a simple regression between non-economic (tangal) and economic left-right placement of parties weighted by party vote share, and averaged over observed years.

There is considerable variation in the amount of competition taking place on cultural politics when measured by the axis of competition. Note the rather flat axes (low absolute value of  $\beta$ ) in Finland, compared with the steep axes (high absolute value of  $\beta$ ) in Austria. This suggests that the other dimension is less relevant in countries like Finland or Sweden, while it is significantly more relevant in countries like Austria or Spain. The outstanding question then becomes: what lies behind the variance of the cultural dimension? We consider this in the next section.

## The Religious Basis of the Cultural Dimension

Why do some political systems compete along the cultural dimension significantly more than others? Our argument points to the central importance of religion which created deep religious-secular divides in some societies, but not in others. We argue that where it was reinforced, the religious cleavage proved to be a powerful frame of party competition throughout the 20th century, incorporating and sometimes even subsuming economic conflict, and coming to structure party competition along the other dimension. We make our argument in two steps concerning, first, the rise of the religious cleavage, and second, its amalgamating and framing power. We first summarize the argument before addressing its detailed points.

At the core of the religious cleavage was the nature of state-church relations which determined the rise and tenacity of religious divides across European societies. Where state-church relations were strained by conflict between a universalistic Catholic church and a modernizing liberal state, deep religious-secular divides persisted well into the 20th century and fundamentally defined the political oppositions of party systems. Where the dominant religious body was a Protestant state church, state-church relations were cooperative. The church generally accepted and even contributed to the modernization of the state, and religious-secular divides remained politically marginal.

Where a deep religious cleavage develops, it proves to have a profound, and lasting impact on the structure of party competition. We agree with Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 46) that while the worker-owner divide exerted a homogenizing effect on European party systems, it is the previous cleavages that produced “much more marked, and apparently much more stubborn differences among the national party systems.” However, the Lipset-Rokkanian tradition, as well as the spatial modeling literature, tends to focus on the role of the worker-owner class cleavage in party systems, and its corollary economic left-right politics (see Bartolini and Mair 2007 [1990], Downs 1957, as well as Adams et al 2006,

Adams, Ezrow and Somer-Topcu 2011, Budge et al 2012, Ezrow 2005, Somer-Topcu 2014).<sup>5</sup> We, on the other hand, posit that the religious cleavage combined with, if not subsumed, the worker-owner cleavage in societies with deep religious rifts. Where a deep religious-secular cleavage developed, parties of the left adopted ardent secularism, while the right significantly catered to religious interests, thus leading to a significant association between economic and religious/cultural political preferences. Such an association creates a lasting imprint on party systems. While in the 21st century, religious political issues play a minor role in most western European party systems, political competition in party systems that experienced a deep religious-secular divide are marked by increased competition over non-economic cultural divides.

## Explaining the Religious Cleavage

Religion was not a major source of political conflict in early modern European politics. Liberals and the middle classes in general, were divided between those who were practicing and those who rejected the church, while churchgoers were split into a multiplicity of political camps (Conway 1997: 14; Kalyvas 1996: 21, 169). The church consequently pragmatically dealt with both liberal and conservative governments to obtain favorable legislation and secure its interests.

This situation changed across the continent in the second half of the 19th century. Starting in the 1860s, countries with significant Catholic populations<sup>6</sup> experienced what Kalyvas (1996: 26) termed a “liberal attack against the church.” The main goal of this attack was to wrest the control over education, social and family matters from the church, and move them into the secular domain of the state. What ensued in these Catholic or mixed Catholic and Protestant societies was a deep and protracted conflict between the Catholic church represented by the Vatican, as well as the national church hierarchy on the one hand, and the state on the other. The conflict had profound moral overtones, as it hinged around the question of who gets to educate, socialize and take care of the young and the needy – a secular national state seeking to produce citizens, or a universalistic church seeking to bear pious adherents. The liberals thus accuse the church of unpatriotism and treason (Kalyvas 1996: 33), while the church views the liberal side as an existential threat to its worldview (Martin 1978: 16-17).

The secular-religious engagement produces a vicious cycle which Martin (1978: 16-17)

---

<sup>5</sup>Although Lijphart 1979, Ansell and Lindvall 2013, and Tilley 2014 are prominent exceptions.

<sup>6</sup>That is countries which we generally refer to as Catholic or Mixed in this article.

describes as a “spiral of fear and mutual repulsion backed by violence until each side feels its very existence endangered by the other.” The liberal attack leads the church to first respond by strengthening the position of the papacy through various encyclicals, and finally, in 1870, through the declaration of papal infallibility (Conway 1997: 21). The growth of ultramontanism – the view of papal supremacy – however only incites further strengthening of secular liberal attacks on the church (Kalyvas 1996: 172, Martin 1978: 37, Ertman 2009: 45).

In a second step, the attacks on the church initiate general Catholic mobilization in its defense. In a number of Catholic and mixed countries, the liberal threat spawns the formation of confessional defense parties (Kalyvas 1996, van Kersbergen 1995), which is later further accelerated by the mobilization of the secular socialist camp (Ertman 2009: 46). This process of party formation brought religion into the political domain, and led to the “crystallization of the association between conservatism and religion on the partisan level and the monopolization of the Conservative political space by confessional parties” (Kalyvas 1996: 24), binding religion with the political right (Martin 1978: 37-8). The religious cleavage thus comes to stand “at the center of political life during the formative period of the Western European party landscape” (Ertman 2009: 53).

While the Catholic church and its opposition stand at the root of the religious cleavage, Catholicism does not uniformly lead to deep domestic divides over state-church relations. In cases where Catholicism unites a local population against foreign threat or domination, Catholicism is a unifying force and “internal conflict over religion is muted or obliterated by the paramount need for unity” (Martin 1978: 42; see also Conway 1997: 13). We follow Martin in treating Ireland and Belgium as cases where the Catholic church acted as such a uniting force, but also perform sensitivity checks for the Belgian case that will be described in more detail below. A similar argument applies to the Orthodox states, in our sample, Greece, that have been historically under Turkish domination (see Martin 1978: 22).

Protestant countries experience strikingly different state-church relations. Where Protestantism is the overwhelmingly dominant religion, no liberal attack against the church takes place. Manow and van Kersbergen (2009: 19) highlight how Lutheran state churches of northern Europe “did not feel fundamentally challenged when the new nation-state started to take over responsibilities that had previously fallen under the responsibility of the church. Anticlericalism never became a strong political current in the Scandinavian countries.” Furthermore, despite some internal dissent leading to the establishment of ‘free churches’, there is no significant religious confrontation in Protestant societies (see Anderson 2009: 217-218;

and Martin 1978: 33-34).

In fact, the church becomes an arm of the modern state apparatus. Morgan (2002) demonstrates how the Lutheran state church cooperatively implemented national education policy, while it was guaranteed a role in managing and overseeing it. Consequently, she concludes that “[i]n many Protestant countries, the national church became a partner of the state ..., rather than a competitor” (Morgan 2002: 124).

In mixed Catholic and Protestant societies, a liberal attack against religious dominance in education takes place akin to dominantly Catholic countries. However, the three-way competition between secular liberals, Catholics and Protestants weakens the tension between the churches and the state. The dominance of the religious cleavage thus comes to resemble that of Protestant societies in the long run. This is caused by the fact that in all mixed societies Catholicism is a minority denomination, and as such, it is associated with the political left. Martin (1978: 50-51) consequently suggests that “the Catholic Church assists in stabilizing the political sphere and in removing the issue of religion as such from the arena of confrontation, because it stands on the center-left, ... [splitting] up the image of unified politico-religious conservatism.” In addition, the pillarization of mixed societies – with Catholic, Protestant and secular social pillars – acts as a conduit for moderation. The different social segments cooperate in sets of changing political alliances where each camp may be needed and thus cannot be ostracized. Finally, the working class movement must limit its secularism in order to not alienate workers integrated in the Catholic or Protestant pillars. Consequently, “secularist propaganda is muted and by the same token religious hostility to the left is also muted” (Martin 1978: 52).

The religious cleavage is thus the strongest in dominantly Catholic countries. In countries with mixed Catholic and Protestant populations an initial liberal opposition to the churches opens a secular-religious divide, but this split is blunted by the three-sided nature of the conflict. Finally, in Protestant societies, where the church assists the state, no significant religious cleavage appears. The outstanding question is, how does the presence and depth of the religious cleavage affect the long standing structure of party competition? We turn to this in the following section.

## **The Effects of the Religious Cleavage**

Where it developed, the religious cleavage became a powerful frame of political competition for three key reasons. First, it integrated a number of other conflicts, becoming a super-divide. Second, religion was a political issue that united otherwise diverse political camps

and was consequently strategically useful. Finally, where present, the religious cleavage was deeply polarizing. Together, these three consequences of the religious cleavage make it a strong and long-lasting fracture in European societies, one that continues to determine contemporary political divides.

The first factor that establishes the religious cleavage at the forefront of European politics of the late 19th and 20th century is the fact that fighting the church is associated with a number of other political issues. In fact, “it became akin to fighting for progress against medieval obscurantism; for parliamentarism against absolutism; and for national independence against the supranational domination of the Vatican and its local representatives...” (Kalyvas 1996: 172). The religious issue amalgamates a number of historical, as well as contemporary conflicts. Martin (1978) highlights how both center-periphery and class conflicts are reinforced by and assimilated into the religious-secular divide where it appears. He suggests that the religious divide overlaps with distinctions between more secular, urban, industrial centers and more religious, rural and agricultural periphery (e.g. Martin 1978: 40). Where present, the religious cleavage becomes a central feature of politics.

Second, where the religious cleavage appears, religion becomes a useful political issue. It internally unifies diverse political camps by trumping other cross-cutting issues. Kalyvas (1996) reports how religion became a pivotal political issue mobilizing conservatives, liberals and Catholics alike. For conservatives, political mobilization and party organization proved difficult prior to the politicization of religion. However, the opening of the religious cleavage presented the conservatives with a deeply appealing issue, as well as with potential access to the organizational resources of the church (ibid: 55). For liberals, the religious issue presented an opportunity to quell internal dissent of various radicals by rallying all against the church. In addition, with the rise of socialism, anticlericalism was “the only issue that could make bourgeois liberalism attractive to the masses” (ibid.: 172-3). Religion was thus a unifying political topic for the key building blocks of European party politics.

Finally, where it appeared, the religious cleavage proved highly polarizing. It cemented political camps divided over secularism versus religion while amalgamating other divides around this cleavage. Manow (2013: 82) asserts that “[a]n important heritage of this conflict *à l’outrance* between a clerical Right and an anti-clerical Left is the radicalization of the Left due to the lack of plausible reformist option”. Simultaneously, “many Catholic clergy and faithful ... rally to the counter-revolutionary cause” (Conway 1997: 20), while “the official militancy [of Catholicism] ... [is] now transferred to the right and reactivated as a weapon against the seemingly indissoluble and ‘natural’ union of radicalism and atheism”

(Martin 1978: 38). Intellectuals split between militant faith and militant atheism leading to “rival societies within a single social whole” with an unparalleled “violence of expression and clarity of difference” (Martin 1978: 39). The polarizing religious conflict effectively assimilated politics into a dualism where left is synonymous with secularism and right with religion.

The force of the religious cleavage proved to be profoundly enduring. In a number of European societies with a history of state-church conflict the role of the church in education and social services, as well as the moderation of anti-religious stances on the political left is not resolved until well after World War II (Morgan 2002, Manow and van Kersbergen 2009). In the words of Manow, it is a consequence of the religious cleavage that in some countries “post-war politics retains a polarized character and it persists primarily due to “moral”, not economic, conflicts.” (Manow 2013: 82). The religious cleavage thus proves to be a fundamentally formative force in those European countries that experienced deep contestation between a modernizing state and a universalist, Catholic church.

The formative significance of the religious cleavage is further supported by extensive research concerning political behavior in western Europe. Taking stock of early cross-national research on the relative importance of class and religion for party choice, Lijphart (1979) saw the particular strength of religion in the continental European countries as the key difference between studies that found class voting to be stronger than religious voting (Alford 1963, Budge and Farlie 1976) and those concluding that religion was the dominant factor (de Jong 1956, Rose and Urwin 1969, Lijphart 1971). Studies that did not include continental European countries found class to be the stronger predictor of vote choice, but when these countries were included, religion trumped class. Lijphart went on to find religion to be more important than class in understanding party choice even when these two cleavages were further evaluated against the linguistic cleavage in Belgium and Switzerland. Following a Lipset and Rokkan logic, Lijphart (1979, 455) explains this outcome in language that remains useful for understanding modern party competition: “the conflicts of the past have structured the political parties and the differences between them, and are able to survive as entrenched atavisms in the party systems. The party systems in turn structure the electoral contests, even when other political dimensions have become more salient.”

Contemporary research provides evidence that Lijphart’s findings on the importance of the religious cleavage are not dependent on data drawn from the pre-thaw 1960s and 1970s that preceded recent trends in dealignment (Elff 2007, 2009). On the party level, a number of scholars highlight how the initially narrowly focused confessional parties matured to cross-

class parties (van Kersbergen 1995), serving an important role in maintaining the relevance of the religious cleavage in industrialized societies (Warner 2000, Inglehart and Norris 2004, 198). On the individual level, Knutsen (2004, 99) echoes this, arguing that “religious conflicts helped determine the structure of the modern party system and, therefore, still affect the electoral choices open to the voter”. The link between the church and parties of the right that represented conservative economic policies was based in mutual support for traditional moral values pertaining to marriage and the family, and later gender equality and gay rights (Inglehart and Norris 2004, 198). But even when there is a lack of explicitly religious themes or religious issues in a campaign, there is evidence that religious characteristics can still be a strong predictor of party choice (Dalton 1996, 185; Dalton 1990).

Knutsen (2004) disaggregates the religious cleavage into two components: religious denominations, i.e. the religious communities people are members of, and religiosity, or the strength of a person’s religious convictions. Examining the relationship between religion and party choice over time across eight European countries, he finds the connection to be strongest in the countries with large Catholic denominations, and substantially weaker in Protestant Britain and Denmark. Van der Brug et al. (2009, 1280) also presents evidence that Catholics vote for the centre-right more than secular citizens and highlight religion as a particularly strong determinant of voting for Christian Democratic parties. Conflict between the church and secular actors were strongest in the Catholic and mixed countries (Knutsen 2004, 100), and this tension appears to have seeped directly into political competition.

Religious conflict is thus a catalyst for the dominance of non-economic competition. Predominantly Catholic societies experienced deep moral divides between secular and religious positions, and non-economic religious contest assimilated and trumped other cleavages including economics, opening a non-economic dimension of competition. This manifests in a deep secular-religious divide between the left and the right, as well as in the steepness of the competition axis slope. This suggests the following hypotheses:

H1: The religious divide between left- and right-wing parties in Catholic countries tends to be significantly greater than in mixed or protestant societies.

H2: The axis of competition tends to be significantly steeper in Catholic societies than in protestant or mixed societies.

H3: The axis of competition tends to be significantly flatter in Catholic societies where the Catholic church united a local culture against foreign domination.

## Operationalization, Data and Methods

To assess our hypotheses we construct a dataset measuring party competition, party systems, and numerous social indicators. Our dependent variable, discussed above, is the weighted slope of the axis of competition. However, since we are only interested in the steepness of the slope, not its sign, we consider the slope's absolute value.

The theoretical discussion above underscores the importance of the predominant religious denomination of a society as a determinant of the nature of religious conflict and thus of the potential for non-economic party competition. We operationalize religious denomination in two ways. First, we use a nominal measure distinguishing between Protestant countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom), mixed countries (Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland), and Catholic countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain). We also include Greece in the Catholic category due to the monopolistic nature of the Orthodox church (see Martin 1978: 22). Second, we use a continuous measure of denominational difference that considers the percent of Protestants subtracted from the percent of Catholics (Orthodox in Greece) in a given country, based on latest observations (year 2000) from *The World Christian Encyclopedia* (Barrett 1982). Since the effect of denominational difference on the competition axis slope may not be linear, we also include its squared term. Finally, to operationalize the particular role of Catholicism in cases where it acted as a nationally unifying factor against external threat, we create a dummy variable coded one for countries that Martin (1978: 42) considers as 'Catholic exceptions' (Ireland, Belgium)<sup>7</sup>. We also add Greece into this exceptional category given the historical role its Orthodox religion played in the context of Turkish dominance (see Martin 1978: 22, 55).

Clearly, party competition over the other dimension should be influenced by a number of more recent socio-economic and political developments, as the literature review suggests.<sup>8</sup> First, we consider additional historical indicators, particularly the number of years of socialist and Christian democratic government since the second world war<sup>9</sup>, and the age of

---

<sup>7</sup>Belgium, despite the unifying role that Catholicism played in its independence, experienced a deep religious-secular conflict in the late 19th century (see Kalyvas 1998). To this end we reanalyze all our models with Belgium not included in the 'Catholic exception' category. This alternative coding has no substantive impact on the results. See the appendix for details.

<sup>8</sup>We follow Kitschelt and Rehm's (2014) extensive examination of the determinants of dimensional dominance in our choice of control variables.

<sup>9</sup>Collected from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow 2012), [parlgov.org](http://parlgov.org).

democracy<sup>10</sup>. Also, we control for income inequality, measured by the gini index, collected from Solt (2009)<sup>11</sup>. Second, as suggested by the literature, post-industrial societies are likely to develop particular non-economic conflicts. In line with Inglehart’s (1977, 1997, 2008) argumentation, greater economic development, measured by GDP per capita (World Bank), should lead to increased post-materialism, reducing conflict over economic redistributive issues, and opening competition over new socio-cultural concerns. Similarly, the tenacity of traditional religious beliefs, captured by the level of religious attendance, may drive competition on the socio-cultural dimension in the 21st century and we therefore include a measure of religious attendance from the European Social Survey data<sup>12</sup>. This variable is coded counterintuitively with lower values indicating more frequent religious attendance. Simultaneously, today’s socio-cultural competition is likely to center on ethnic, linguistic and cultural divides. Ethnic fragmentation, operationalized according to Alesina et al.’s ethnic measure (2003), together with net migration per capita<sup>13</sup> (World Bank), measure the ethno-linguistic and cultural diversity likely to drive competition over the ‘other’ dimension today. Finally, we control for the proportionality of the electoral system as measured by Gallagher’s Disproportionality Index (Gallagher 1991, Gallagher et al. 2011).

To assess the significance of the socio-cultural dimension, we estimate the steepness of the competition axis, measured as the absolute value of the  $\beta$  coefficient from a simple regression between the non-economic (called gal-tan in the CHES survey<sup>14</sup>) and economic placement of political parties. However, this dependent variable is an estimate, subject to sample variation that introduces uncertainty into the measure. To account for this uncertainty, we apply a two-step estimation method developed by Lewis and Linzer (2005). In the first step, we estimate the  $\beta$  coefficients across the countries and years we have information for using simple OLS regression where observations (parties) are weighted by their vote share. The

---

<sup>10</sup>The age of democracy variable subtracts the year a democratic constitution was formed from the election closest to 2006. Constitution information was collected from the CIA World Factbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>).

<sup>11</sup>This control is a proxy for welfare state generosity. We add this control to dispel concerns that competition along the other dimension is caused or facilitated by certain welfare state regimes. Simultaneously, in line with Manow (2013), we believe that the welfare state is to an important degree a product of historical conflicts often centering on religion. Religious competition, which we argue lies behind the opening of competition along the other dimension, is thus also an antecedent to welfare state formation.

<sup>12</sup>Observations for missing years have been linearly imputed.

<sup>13</sup>Observations for missing years have been linearly imputed.

<sup>14</sup>Please note that for reasons of convention we reverse the variable gal-tan to range from conservative to liberal placements, and thus refer to it as tan-gal.

first step model for each country  $k$ , year  $t$ , and party  $p$  is thus:

$$tanganal_p = \alpha_{k,t} + \beta_{k,t}economic_p + \epsilon_p \quad (2)$$

In the second step, we estimate our models of substantive interest, predicting the  $\beta$ s obtained in the first step with the above-mentioned predictors, using OLS regression, but weighting the coefficients from the first step regression by their standard errors. We use the weighting procedure proposed by Borjas and Sueyoshi (1994), and applied by Huber et al. (2005). The second level regression matrix is thus weighted by the matrix

$$\Omega = \mathbf{V}_{\beta_{k,t}} + \sigma_v^2 \mathbf{I}_{k,t} \quad (3)$$

where  $\mathbf{V}_{\beta_{k,t}}$  refers to errors connected with the estimate of  $\beta_{k,t}$  from the first step model, and  $\sigma_v^2$  is the residual variance from the second step model (Huber et al. 2005: 378).

In addition, to address the dependence caused by the fact that we include multiple observations from the same country over varying years, we report cluster-corrected standard errors (Primo et al, 2007). As a robustness check, the full models have been re-estimated using hierarchical linear models with random intercepts, so as to account for the country-specific nature of the data (Steenbergen and Jones, 2002: 234; Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal, 2008). The hierarchical linear models produce substantively identical results (see the appendix for details).

## Analyses and Results

To test hypothesis 1, table 2 presents means tests of the differences in placements on the role of religion in politics across the political left and right<sup>15</sup>, available from CHES data. The table demonstrates that the difference between the left and the right on religious views increases with the presence of Catholicism in a country. In Protestant societies, with little to no presence of Catholicism it is about 1.3 points (on a 0-10 scale); in mixed countries it is about 2.7; while in Catholic countries it is over 4. Furthermore, the lower part of the table shows that the differences between these groups are statistically significant. This finding lends support to our claims that Catholicism produces deeper moral divisions that are likely to last.

---

<sup>15</sup>Left parties are operationalized as those belonging to communist or socialist and social democratic party families, while the right is operationalized as parties belonging to liberal, conservative, Christian democratic and Protestant families. See CHES documentation for details.

Table 2: Assessing the difference in religious placement across political left and right

<b>Difference in religious placement across left and right</b>			
Country	Obs.	mean	s.e.
Protestant	9	1.316	0.347
Mixed	5	2.691	0.407
Catholic	16	4.099	0.327
<b>Means tests</b>			
Comparison	t	p	
Protestant v. Mixed	t = -2.469	p=0.029	
Protestant v. Catholic	t = -5.467	p=0.000	
Mixed v. Catholic	t = -2.225	p=0.038	

CHES data. Religious preferences scored on a 0-10 scale. Catholic countries include Greece.

This leads us to now assess the determinants behind the competition axis slope. Turning to hypotheses 2 and 3, table 3 presents the results of OLS regression models assessing the absolute slope of the competition axis with a categorical measure of predominant religious denomination, with protestantism as the baseline. The full model shows that while there is no significant difference between mixed and Protestant countries, the absolute slope in Catholic countries is over 0.5 points steeper than in Protestant countries, which translates to a rotation of the axis by  $22.5^\circ$ . This suggests that Catholic societies include significantly greater amount of conflict over the other dimension than Protestant or Mixed countries.

Table 4 further emphasizes these results. It predicts the absolute competition axis slope with a continuous measure of denominational difference (measured as % Catholic - % Protestant) and its square. The results show that the greater the proportion of Catholics in a society, the increasingly steeper the competition axis is. With full model  $R^2$ s of 0.825 and 0.821, the models have a good level of fit, though that is also a function of sample size. Note also that in the analyses presented in both tables, the significance and substantive direction of our primary findings hold across model specifications, both with and without a variety of control variables.

In addition to our hypothesized effects, we find evidence that net migration influences the structure of party competition. The greater the inflow of migrants, the steeper the axis slope, and hence the greater the dominance of competition over the ‘other’ dimension. This suggests that, besides the historical role of religious conflict, more recent political issues – immigration – come to bear on the structure of party competition in western Europe.

Table 3: Predicting absolute competition axis slope with denomination

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Mixed countries	-0.0940 (0.248)	-0.0940 (0.250)	-0.0206 (0.186)	-0.138 (0.244)	-0.0626 (0.206)	0.00527 (0.137)
Catholic countries	0.465** (0.200)	0.515** (0.193)	0.380** (0.168)	0.335 (0.230)	0.741*** (0.135)	0.547*** (0.144)
Catholicism w/ external threat		-0.477*** (0.0598)	-0.334* (0.160)	-0.396*** (0.0754)	-0.622*** (0.0951)	-0.488*** (0.156)
Socialist govt years			-0.00104 (0.00894)			0.00410 (0.00522)
Christ Dem govt years			-0.00168 (0.00313)			0.000277 (0.00233)
Income inequality (gini)			0.0321* (0.0167)			-0.000918 (0.0242)
Ethnic fragmentation				0.357 (0.318)		0.336 (0.385)
Religious attendance				0.0279 (0.0962)		-0.0825 (0.201)
Net migration / capita				5.176* (2.439)		7.742*** (1.319)
Age of Democracy					0.00198** (0.000700)	0.00180** (0.000765)
GDP per capita					-1.98e-06 (9.35e-06)	-2.54e-06 (8.38e-06)
Disproportionality Index					0.00192 (0.0152)	0.0179 (0.0177)
Constant	0.636*** (0.187)	0.636*** (0.189)	-0.255 (0.687)	0.372 (0.632)	0.362 (0.287)	0.526 (1.698)
Observations	58	58	58	58	58	58
Countries	16	16	16	16	16	16
$R^2$	0.397	0.523	0.621	0.631	0.675	0.825

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 4: Predicting absolute competition axis slope with denominational difference

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Denominational Difference	0.00339*** (0.00109)	0.00370*** (0.00102)	0.00257** (0.00104)	0.00313** (0.00111)	0.00453*** (0.000773)	0.00337*** (0.000919)
Denominational Difference <sup>2</sup>						4.12e-05** (1.90e-05)
Catholicism w/ external threat		-0.468*** (0.0640)	-0.345* (0.163)	-0.355*** (0.0546)	-0.523*** (0.0959)	-0.513*** (0.153)
Socialist govt years			-0.00294 (0.00765)			0.00591 (0.00509)
Christ Dem govt years			-0.00263 (0.00278)			0.00483 (0.00283)
Income inequality (gini)			0.0260 (0.0160)			0.000867 (0.0227)
Ethnic fragmentation				0.0580 (0.286)		0.207 (0.431)
irlgatnd				0.109 (0.0986)		-0.0447 (0.200)
Net migration / capita				5.753** (2.007)		7.241*** (1.329)
Age of Democracy					0.000937 (0.00101)	0.00121 (0.000710)
GDP per capita					-1.97e-06 (7.18e-06)	2.42e-06 (9.25e-06)
Disproportionality Index					0.0169 (0.0188)	0.0357* (0.0188)
Constant	0.795*** (0.0954)	0.814*** (0.0941)	0.120 (0.576)	0.0664 (0.497)	0.651*** (0.194)	0.0431 (1.623)
Observations	58	58	58	58	58	58
Countries	16	16	16	16	16	16
$R^2$	0.407	0.528	0.615	0.620	0.655	0.821

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

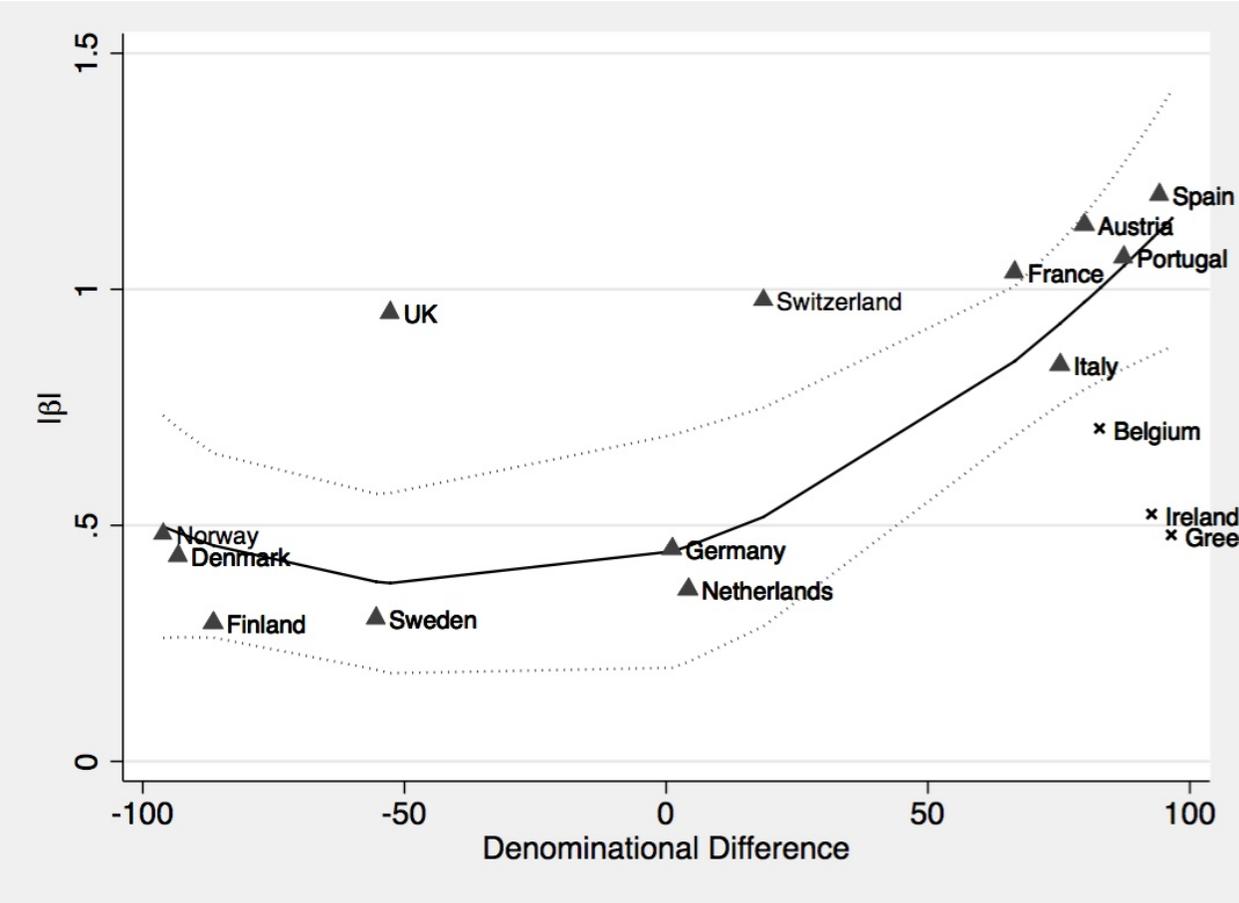


Figure 2: Predicting absolute competition axis slope

Predicted values with 95% confidence interval. Denominational difference measured as % Catholic - % Protestant. Countries marked with 'x' are considered as Catholic/Orthodox countries with religion as a unifying factor against an external threat. Based on model 6 from table 4.

To better represent the key relationships postulated in H2 and H3, figure 2 depicts the predicted values of the curvilinear effect of denominational difference while plotting the observed values for individual countries (averaged over the observed years). Figure 2 supports both H2 and H3, demonstrating that denominational difference has a strong, significant and curvilinear effect. The greater the proportion of Catholic population, the increasingly steeper the axis of competition. However, countries where Catholicism (or in the case of Greece, Orthodoxy) joined the local population against an external threat tend to have significantly flatter competition axes. In these cases religious conflict was moderated by the need for unity.

Figure 2 further highlights the outlying character of the United Kingdom. Despite being a predominantly Protestant country, it has a relatively steep axis of competition. Recent research by Ziblatt (\*\*book in progress\*\*) provides a potential explanation of the British anomaly. Ziblatt demonstrates how the British conservative party utilized religious networks to build up its political platform in the latter part of the 19th century. He thus suggests that “the ‘most important political organization’ in British politics in the nineteenth century was built in large part on the shoulders not of class actors but of religious institutions and networks that cut across class” (Ziblatt CH3: 127). Evidence from the CHES data supports these historical findings. The British conservatives are significantly more religious than conservatives in other Protestant countries<sup>16</sup>. Similarly, Tilley (2014) uses two sets of British survey data to show that religion is not only of historical significance, but also currently shapes people’s party choice in Britain, suggesting a certain exceptionalism of the UK: “if religious cleavages are alive and well in Britain, then this suggests that the religious cleavage can survive in even the most unpromising of circumstances” (Tilley 2014: 3). We may thus speculate that, for idiosyncratic reasons, the British political system involved greater religious competition than those of other Protestant countries, opening the ‘other’ dimension, and leading to steeper competition axis.

Overall, the quantitative results support the argument that a dominant presence of Catholicism creates a deep religious rift between key political actors, opening competition along a non-economic dimension into which other conflicts are subsumed. This mechanism makes a lasting impression on party systems, one that seems to be largely impervious to significant historical developments of the post-war era. The structure of party competition framed by religious rifts of the late 19th and early 20th century, continue to last until now.

---

<sup>16</sup>The UK conservatives score 5.9 on the (0-10) religious scale on average, while other Protestant conservatives score 3.6 on average. This difference is highly statistically significant ( $t=11.687$ ;  $p=0.000$ ).

Indeed, countries with historical monopolistic Catholicism exhibit competition over non-economic issues that assimilate economic competition today. The following section considers two illustrative cases – France and Sweden – in greater detail.

## Case Studies

### France: The Secular Republic Built on the Religious Cleavage

France, and its three republican regimes in place since 1870, is the archetype of the modern secular state. However, the French state is fundamentally rooted in state-church conflict and French political competition remains framed by the religious cleavage which was a dominant divide at the birth of modern French democracy. Having amalgamated other political conflicts, the secular-religious divide has persisted into the current Fifth Republic.

The Third French Republic was born from the Prussian defeat of France in 1870-1871, and during its initial years seemed to be a weak and temporary regime, likely to see the fate of the previous two short-lived republics. The main aim of the conservative right was the restoration of the monarchy, while the republican liberals were divided between various political strands. What these groups shared, however, was a unifying view on the role of religion in society. While the conservatives hoped to use the state-church conflict as mobilizing means for returning the monarchy, “anti-clericalism provided the ‘true cement’ of the otherwise divided Republicans” (Kalyvas 1996 p.122).

Consequently, the republican regime made anti-clericalism its central concern, and the creation of secular education was synonymous with building the modern republic. By the late 1870s, the liberals started introducing legislation that would break the traditionally strong role of the Catholic church in education and social support provisions. This included obligatory school attendance, eliminating tuition, and recruiting only devoted republicans to run public assistance administration, replacing all clerics in central advisory bodies by 1880 (Morgan 2002: 129, Manow and Palier 2009: 152). This liberal attack on the church unleashed what Manow and Palier (2009: 153) termed “a veritable *guérilla scolaire*,” where the church and its supporters fought for state subsidies to private, Catholic schools, and generally against the involvement of the state in education and social policy. Although the French Catholics failed to build a confessional defense party<sup>17</sup>, Kalyvas (1996: 115)

---

<sup>17</sup>Gould (1999) and Kalyvas (1996) attribute this failure to the fact that the Catholic church considered the Third Republic too weak to last, rather calculating with the collapse of the regime and the return of a religiously inclined monarchy.

contends that “the state-church conflict developed into the most salient cleavage and the key ideological issue of the Third Republic. It dominated politics at all levels, from parliament to the last village, and overshadowed every other political and social question.”

The potent religious cleavage in France absorbed economic interests. Anti-clericalism was a powerful political tool of the liberals. It brought together a broad coalition of middle-classes, as well as anti-clerical peasants, opposed to the church due to its historical role in land tenure and the rural economy (Gould 1999: 57, 59). The opposition to the Catholic church generally rallies the political left, as expressed in the words of a radical republican leader, Léon Gambetta: “Le cléricalisme, voilà l’ennemi” (cited in Gould 1999: 62). Similarly, Manow discusses the presence of not only industrial communism in France (and in Catholic southern Europe), but also of ‘backwoods communism’ based on “radicalized, rural population . . . deeply rooted in anti-clericalism” (Manow 2013: 92). The political poles were thus decisively defined by the secular-religious cleavage which dominated the class cleavage in late industrializing France (Manow and Palier 2009: 148).

The deep religious divide continues into the post-war era. The Fourth Republic sees the rise of the christian democratic Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP) (van Kersbergen 1995). However, it is Charles De Gaulle – the founder of the current Fifth Republic and its political right-wing – who presents himself as the main defender of Catholic interests in post-war France. By initiating the Barange Law, which grants public payments to students attending Catholic schools, Gaullists “had cleverly presented themselves as the better defenders of the Catholic cause,” (Manow and Palier 2009: 164) than the MRP. De Gaulle’s founding political project is deeply rooted in the religious cleavage. In his own words, a key to Gaullist success is the ability “to consolidate and regroup all the forces of Catholic origin” (De Gaulle, cited in Manow and Palier 2009: 164).

The religious cleavage in France is thus a source of deep and lasting conflict, which has associated the political left with intense opposition to the church, while the right remains at least a tacit defender of religious interests and values. Recent and ongoing political debates on non-economic issues, such as gay marriage, prove highly polarizing and mobilizing, uniting the left behind secular liberal positions, while the right defends socially conservative, religiously-inspired views.

## **Sweden: The Church-State**

Sweden offers an example of a long-standing collaborative relationship between the church and the state. This relative symbiosis dates back to the Reformation, during which the

monarch associated the church apparatus to the state (Anderson 2009: 211). In the context of early state-building, the church is fused with the state. Higher education is placed into state hands with the aims of producing educated elites that can serve in the state administration, while the clergy remains deeply involved in lower education and its management (Morgan 2002: 132). Thanks to this secular-religious collaboration in education and social provision, the late 19th century does not see any significant liberal attack on the church which would set off a spiral of conflict, producing a politicized religious cleavage.

The Lutheran church did not oppose state involvement in education and social welfare, it rather viewed the state as a partner (Anderson 2009: 212). Inversely, the state used the church as an apparatus for executing its policies. The church dominated local governing councils, so that the “local church was, in a sense, the local government” (Morgan 2002: 133). Similarly, although poor relief was taken up by the state in the 19th century, the pastor remained a member of the relief board (Anderson 2009: 221). Anderson (2009) on the one hand highlights the conservative nature of the Swedish church which was challenged in the late 19th century by opposition to its state-granted privileges, leading to the foundation of various ‘free churches’. On the other hand, she underscores that the Swedish church was essentially reactive, and by the end of the 19th century did not have significant political influence (Anderson 2009: 219).

In the absence of a state-church conflict over modernization and secularization, the main political impetus of the turn of the 20th century centered around the issue of democratization. The liberals – supported by a collection of urban middle classes and small farmers – ally with the social democrats in a push for universal suffrage and parliamentary government (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992). The social democrats initially intensely oppose the fusion of the church and the state, however, in order not to offend religious workers, they begin to moderate their positions in the first years of the 20th century (Anderson 2009: 130). By the end of the 1920s the social democratic party accepts religion by establishing a party organization “open to SAP members of all ecumenical faiths and [having] the effect of depoliticizing religion within the party” (Anderson 2009: 132). The church similarly moderated its conservatism and accepted social reform (Anderson 2009: 130).

The acceptance of religion on the part of the Swedish social democrats and the social moderation on the part of the church ensured that religion did not reinforce the class cleavage which eventually emerged as central to Swedish politics. The absence of religious conflict in Sweden finally facilitated the formation of the center left, red-green coalition between the social democrats and agrarians in the 1930s which framed Swedish politics as primarily an

economic contest between the left and the bourgeois blocks (see Manow 2013).

## Conclusion

We departed from the observation that extensive scholarship views non-economic political issues as secondary, but significant, sources of political competition in contemporary Europe. In line with the scholarship following the post-material argumentation, the paper analyzed the content of the other dimension, finding it to be dominated by cultural questions pertaining to immigration, ethnic diversity and individual life-styles. In a second step, applying the concept of the axis of competition, the paper demonstrated significant variance in the extent to which party systems align along the socio-cultural dimension as opposed to the economic dimension. The ensuing parts of the paper then focused on explaining this variance.

The primary finding of this analysis is the durable power of historical cleavages in explaining competition over the other dimension in contemporary Europe. Our analyses suggest that the best explanation of current competition over non-economic issues lies in the religious conflicts in the formative years of the late 19th and early 20th century Europe. By creating deep, morally framed divides between the key political forces of the day, these religious conflicts created a structure of political competition which was erased by neither the coming, nor passing of various political regimes; by neither the cataclysmic armed conflicts of the 20th century, nor the subsequent reconstructions; by neither the post-war stability and affluence, nor the rise of ‘new politics’ after the 1960s. The framework of political competition in western Europe has remained remarkably stable.

Recently, Franklin and Mackie (2009: 2) have asserted that “[i]n the world of today social cleavages of the type defined by Lipset and Rokkan no longer condition the nature of political life.” Our analysis, however, suggests that the basic structure of European party systems remains diversified from the rather distant past. Our findings concur with Lipset and Rokkan’s (1967: 35) argument that “[t]he crucial differences among the party systems emerged in the early phases of competitive politics, before the final phase of mass mobilization” based mostly on non-economic divides, before the rise of the worker-owner cleavage, which “tended to bring the party systems closer to each other in their basic structure.” In addition to Lipset and Rokkan, we assert that where religious conflict was significant, the religious cleavage fused with the class divide. Political competition in countries that experienced a deep historical religious-secular divide revolves significantly around non-economic contests. Research on party competition should thus take into account that in some countries

economic politics may capture meaningful political oppositions only partially.

Simultaneously, our analysis underlines that the content of cultural politics has been altered. Competition over this dimension has little to do with the religious divides pitting Europeans against each other in centuries past. Migration and ethnic diversity, changing the ethno-cultural fabric of European societies, is at the core of the meaning of the other dimension today. Our finding of structural longevity coupled with issue innovation suggests that European politics may not follow biblical wisdom. The new wine of contemporary non-economic issues seems to fit rather well into old bottles shaped by 19th century glass makers.

## References

- Adams, James, Lawrence Ezrow, & Zeynep Somer-Topcu. 2011. "Is anybody listening? Evidence that voters do not respond to European parties' policy statements during elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (2): 370–382.
- Adams, James, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow, & Garrett Glasgow. 2006. "Are niche parties fundamentally different from mainstream parties? The causes and the electoral consequences of Western European parties' policy shifts, 1976–1998." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (3): 513–529.
- Alesina, Alberto, Arnaud Devleeschauwer, William Easterly, Sergio Kurlat, & Romain Wacziarg. 2003. "Fractionalization." *Journal of Economic growth* 8 (2): 155–194.
- Alford, Robert R. 1963. *Party and society: the Anglo-American democracies*. Rand McNally.
- Anderson, Karen M. 2009. *Religion, Class Coalitions, and Welfare States*. Cambridge University Press chapter The Church as Nation? The Role of Religion in the Development of the Swedish Welfare State.
- Ansell, Ben, & Johannes Lindvall. 2013. "The political origins of primary education systems: ideology, institutions, and interdenominational conflict in an era of nation-building." *American Political Science Review* 107 (03): 505–522.
- Bakker, R., S. Jolly, & J. Polk. 2012. "Complexity in the European party space: Exploring dimensionality with experts." *European Union Politics* 13 (2): 219–245.
- Barrett, David B. 1982. *World Christian encyclopedia: a comparative study of churches and religions in the modern world, AD 1900-2000*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Bartolini, S., & P. Mair. 2007. *Identity, competition and electoral availability: the stabilisation of European electorates, 1885-1985*. ECPR Press.
- Betz, Hans-Georg. 1994. *Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Borjas, George J., & Glenn T Sueyoshi. 1994. "A two-stage estimator for probit models with structural group effects." *Journal of Econometrics* 64 (1): 165–182.
- Bornschieer, Simon. 2009. "Cleavage politics in old and new democracies." *Living Reviews in Democracy* 1.

- Bornschieer, Simon. 2010. "The New Cultural Divide and the Two-Dimensional Political Space in Western Europe." *West European Politics* 33 (3): 419-444.
- Budge, Ian, & Dennis Farlie. 1976. "A comparative analysis of factors correlated with turnout and voting choice." *Party Identification and Beyond. Representations of Voting and Party Competition. London/New York/Sydney/Toronto: J. Wiley* pp. 103–126.
- Budge, Ian, Michael McDonald, Paul Pennings, & Hans Keman. 2012. *Organizing Democratic Choice: Party Representation Over Time*. Oxford University Press.
- Conway, Martin. 1997. *Catholic politics in Europe, 1918-1945*. Routledge.
- Dalton, Russel J. 1990. *Religion and Party Alignment*. Finnish Political Science Association pp. 66–88.
- Dalton, Russell J. 1996. "Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced Western democracies." *Chatham, NJ: Chatham House*.
- Döring, Holger, & Philip Manow. N.d. "Parliament and government composition database (ParlGov)." . Forthcoming.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Harper and Row.
- Elff, Martin. 2007. "Social structure and electoral behavior in comparative perspective: The decline of social cleavages in Western Europe revisited." *Perspectives on Politics* 5 (02): 277–294.
- Elff, Martin. 2009. "Social divisions, party positions, and electoral behaviour." *Electoral Studies* 28 (2): 297–308.
- Ertman, Thomas. 2009. *Religion, Class Coalitions, and Welfare States*. Cambridge University Press chapter Western European Party Systems and the Religious Cleavage.
- Evans, G., & S. Whitefield. 1993. "Identifying the bases of party competition in Eastern Europe." *British Journal of Political Science* 23 (04): 521–548.
- Ezrow, Lawrence. 2005. "Are moderate parties rewarded in multiparty systems? A pooled analysis of Western European elections, 1984–1998." *European Journal of Political Research* 44 (6): 881–898.
- Franklin, Mark N, Thomas T Mackie, & Henry Valen. 1992. *Electoral change*. ECPR Press.
- Franklin, Mark N, Thomas T Mackie, & Henry Valen. 2009. *Electoral change: Responses to evolving social and attitudinal structures in Western countries*. ECPR Press.
- Gallagher, Michael. 1991. "Proportionality, disproportionality and electoral systems." *Electoral studies* 10 (1): 33–51.
- Gallagher, Michael, Michael Laver, & Peter Mair. 2011. "Representative government in modern Europe." .
- Gould, Andrew. 1999. *Origins of liberal dominance: State, church, and party in nineteenth-century Europe*. University of Michigan Press.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, & Gary Marks. 2009. "A postfunctionalist theory of European integration: from permissive consensus to constraining dissensus." *British Journal of Political Science*.

- Hooghe, Liesbet., Gary Marks, & Carole J. Wilson. 2002. "Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?" *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (8): 965.
- Huber, John D, Georgia Kernell, & Eduardo L Leoni. 2005. "Institutional context, cognitive resources and party attachments across democracies." *Political Analysis* 13 (4): 365–386.
- Ignazi, Piero. 2003. *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe*. Oxford University Press.
- Inglehart, Ronald. 1977. *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*. Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, Ronald. 1990. *Culture shift in advanced industrial society*. Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, Ronald. 1997. *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, Ronald. 2008. "Changing Values among Western Publics from 1970 to 2006." *West European Politics* 31 (1-2): 130-146.
- Inglehart, Ronald, & Pippa Norris. 2004. "Sacred and secular: Religion and politics worldwide." *Cambridge/Mass*.
- Jong, JJ de. 1956. "Overheid en onderdaan." *Wageningen: Zomer en Keunings*.
- Kalyvas, Stathis N. 1996. *The rise of Christian democracy in Europe*. Cornell University Press.
- Kalyvas, Stathis N. 1998. "Democracy and Religious Politics Evidence from Belgium." *Comparative Political Studies* 31 (3): 292–320.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 1992. "Formation of Party Systems in East Central Europe." *Politics and Society* (20).
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 1994. *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kitschelt, Herbert, & Anthony J. McGann. 1995. *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. University of Michigan Press.
- Kitschelt, Herbert P. 1988. "Left-libertarian parties: Explaining innovation in competitive party systems." *World Politics* 40 (02): 194–234.
- Kitschelt, Herbert, & Philipp Rehm. N.d. "Determinants of Dimensional Dominance." paper presented at the workshop "Party competition and voter alignments in times of welfare state transformations", Sciences Po Paris, 25-26 September 2014.
- Knutsen, Oddbjørn. 2004. "Religious denomination and party choice in Western Europe: A comparative longitudinal study from eight countries, 1970–97." *International Political Science Review* 25 (1): 97–128.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter. 2007. "The role of European integration in national election campaigns." *European Union Politics* 8 (1): 83–108.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschie, & Timotheos Frey. 2006. "Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: Six European countries compared." *European Journal of Political Research* 45 (6): 921–956.

- Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschieer, & Timotheos Frey. 2008. *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge Univ Pr.
- Laver, Michael, & Ben W. Hunt. 1992. *Party and Policy Competition*. London: Routledge.
- Lewis, Jeffrey B, & Drew A Linzer. 2005. "Estimating regression models in which the dependent variable is based on estimates." *Political Analysis* 13 (4): 345–364.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1979. "Religious vs. linguistic vs. class voting: The" crucial experiment" of comparing Belgium, Canada, South Africa, and Switzerland." *The American Political Science Review* pp. 442–458.
- Lijphart, Arend, International Political Science Association et al. 1971. *Class voting and religious voting in the European democracies: A preliminary report*. Number 8 University of Strathclyde.
- Lipset, Seymour M., & Stein Rokkan. 1967. *Cleavage structures, party systems, and voter alignments: an introduction*. New York: The Free Press.
- Lubbers, Marcel, Mérove Gijsberts, & Peer Scheepers. 2002. "Extreme right-wing voting in Western Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 41 (3): 345–378.
- Manow, Philip. 2013. "Religious Cleavages, Divisions on the Left and the Political Economy of Southern Europe." *International Journal of Social Quality* 3 (2): 78–105.
- Manow, Philip, & K. Van Kersbergen. 2009. *Religion, Class Coalitions, and Welfare States*. Cambridge University Press chapter Religion and the Western Welfare State – The Theoretical Context.
- Marks, Gary, Liesbet Hooghe, Moira Nelson, & Erica E. Edwards. 2006. "Party Competition and European Integration in the East and West: Different Structure, Same Causality." *Comparative Political Studies* 39 (2): 155.
- Martin, David. 1978. *A general theory of secularization*. Blackwell Oxford.
- Morgan, Kimberly J. 2002. "Forging the frontiers between state, church, and family: Religious cleavages and the origins of early childhood education and care policies in France, Sweden, and Germany." *Politics & Society* 30 (1): 113–148.
- Oskarson, Maria. 2005. *The European voter. A comparative study of modern democracies*. Oxford University Press chapter Social Structure and Party Choice.
- Rokkan, Stein, Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle, & Derek W Urwin. 1999. *State formation, nation-building, and mass politics in Europe: the theory of Stein Rokkan: based on his collected works*. Clarendon Press.
- Rose, Richard, & Derek Urwin. 1969. "Social cohesion, political parties and strains in regimes." *Comparative Political Studies* 2 (1): 7–67.
- Rovny, Jan. 2013. "Where do radical right parties stand? Position blurring in multidimensional competition." *European Political Science Review* 5 (1): 1 –26.
- Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, Evelyne H. Stephens, & John D. Stephens. 1992. *Capitalist Development and Democracy*. Cambridge Polity Press.

- Solt, Frederick. 2009. "Standardizing the world income inequality database\*." *Social Science Quarterly* 90 (2): 231–242.
- Somer-Topcu, Zeynep. 2014. "Everything to Everyone: The Electoral Consequences of the Broad-Appeal Strategy in Europe." *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Taggart, Paul. 1995. "New populist parties in Western Europe." *West European Politics* 18 (1): 34–51.
- Tilley, James. 2014. "“We Don’t Do God’? Religion and Party Choice in Britain.” *British Journal of Political Science* FirstView.
- Van der Brug, Wouter, & Joost Van Spanje. 2009. "Immigration, Europe and the ‘new’ cultural dimension." *European Journal of Political Research* 48 (3): 309–334.
- Van der Brug, Wouter, Meindert Fennema, & Jean Tillie. 2005. "Why some anti-immigrant parties fail and others succeed: A two-step model of aggregate electoral support." *Comparative Political Studies* 38 (5): 537.
- Van der Brug, Wouter, Sara B. Hobolt, & Claes H De Vreese. 2009. "Religion and party choice in Europe." *West European Politics* 32 (6): 1266–1283.
- Van Kersbergen, K. 1995. *Social capitalism: A study of Christian democracy and the welfare state*. Routledge.
- Warner, Carolyn M. 2000. *Confessions of an interest group: the Catholic Church and political parties in Europe*. Princeton University Press.
- World Bank World Development Indicators*. 2010.  
**URL:** <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator>
- Ziblatt, Daniel. N.d. *Conservative Political Parties and the Birth of Modern Democracy in Europe*. unpublished manuscript.
- Zielinski, J. 2002. "Translating social cleavages into party systems: The significance of new democracies." *World Politics* 54 (2): 184–211.

# Appendix

Table 5: Competition axis slopes

Year	Country	$\beta_{weighted}$	$ \beta_{weighted} $
1999	Austria	-1.024	1.024
2002	Austria	-1.283	1.283
2006	Austria	-1.261	1.261
2010	Austria	-0.977	0.977
1999	Belgium	-0.821	0.821
2002	Belgium	-0.677	0.677
2006	Belgium	-0.580	0.580
2010	Belgium	-0.734	0.734
1999	Denmark	-0.429	0.429
2002	Denmark	-0.386	0.386
2006	Denmark	-0.468	0.468
2010	Denmark	-0.455	0.455
1999	Finland	-0.284	0.284
2002	Finland	-0.523	0.523
2006	Finland	-0.279	0.279
2010	Finland	-0.083	0.083
1999	France	-0.633	0.633
2002	France	-1.414	1.414
2006	France	-0.928	0.928
2010	France	-1.164	1.164
1999	Germany	-0.860	0.860
2002	Germany	-0.425	0.425
2006	Germany	-0.414	0.414
2010	Germany	-0.096	0.096
1999	Greece	-0.771	0.771
2002	Greece	-0.464	0.464
2006	Greece	-0.403	0.403
2010	Greece	-0.272	0.272
1999	Ireland	-0.215	0.215
2002	Ireland	-0.445	0.445
2006	Ireland	-0.720	0.720
2010	Ireland	-0.703	0.703
1999	Italy	-0.487	0.487
2002	Italy	-0.634	0.634
2006	Italy	-0.929	0.929
2010	Italy	-1.307	1.307
1999	Netherlands	-0.453	0.453
2002	Netherlands	-0.555	0.555
2006	Netherlands	-0.229	0.229
2010	Netherlands	-0.221	0.221
2010	Norway	-0.481	0.481
1999	Portugal	-1.237	1.237
2002	Portugal	-0.977	0.977
2006	Portugal	-0.967	0.967
2010	Portugal	-1.090	1.090
1999	Spain	-1.040	1.040
2002	Spain	-1.041	1.041
2006	Spain	-1.398	1.398
2010	Spain	-1.323	1.323
1999	Sweden	-0.433	0.433
2002	Sweden	-0.073	0.073
2006	Sweden	-0.403	0.403
2010	Sweden	-0.299	0.299
2010	Switzerland	-0.977	0.977
1999	United Kingdom	-0.973	0.973
2002	United Kingdom	-1.264	1.264
2006	United Kingdom	-0.867	0.867
2010	United Kingdom	-0.694	0.694

Table 6: HLM replication of full models in tables 3 and 4

	(1)	(2)
Mixed countries	0.0498 (0.106)	
Catholic countries	0.528*** (0.127)	
Denominational difference		0.00345*** (0.000834)
Denominational difference2		3.77e-05*** (1.29e-05)
Catholicism w/ external threat	-0.679*** (0.119)	-0.726*** (0.117)
Socialist gov't years	0.00305 (0.00414)	0.00369 (0.00402)
Christ Dem gov't years	-0.00109 (0.00262)	0.00218 (0.00283)
Age of democracy	0.00154*** (0.000571)	0.00115** (0.000551)
GDP/capita	-9.45e-06 (7.27e-06)	-4.59e-06 (7.71e-06)
Income inequality (gini)	-0.0254 (0.0184)	-0.0250 (0.0184)
Ethnic fragmentation	0.721** (0.307)	0.595* (0.321)
Religious attendance	-0.162 (0.133)	-0.113 (0.140)
Net migration/capita	7.858*** (2.620)	6.935** (2.700)
Disproportionality index	0.0295** (0.0138)	0.0423*** (0.0130)
Constant	1.792 (1.234)	1.356 (1.265)
Observations	58	58
Countries	16	16

\*\*\* p&lt;0.01, \*\* p&lt;0.05, \* p&lt;0.1

Assumes that dependent variables do not include stochastic error.

Table 7: Replication of results from table 3 with Belgium not coded as ‘Catholic exception’

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Mixed countries	-0.0940 (0.248)	-0.0940 (0.250)	0.0405 (0.143)	-0.130 (0.251)	0.0646 (0.252)	0.140 (0.112)
Catholic countries	0.465** (0.200)	0.493** (0.197)	0.363** (0.167)	0.260 (0.254)	0.552** (0.194)	0.459** (0.157)
Catholicism w/ external threat		-0.520*** (0.0612)	-0.541*** (0.110)	-0.504*** (0.130)	-0.510*** (0.138)	-0.680*** (0.258)
Socialist govt years			-0.00240 (0.00921)			0.00372 (0.00675)
Christ Dem govt years			-0.00450 (0.00283)			-0.00292 (0.00271)
Income inequality (gini)			0.0339** (0.0136)			0.00238 (0.0273)
Ethnic fragmentation				0.152 (0.281)		0.0599 (0.308)
Religious attendance				-0.0671 (0.151)		-0.208 (0.279)
Net migration / capita				7.308*** (2.121)		9.462*** (1.819)
Age of Democracy					0.000580 (0.00131)	0.00128* (0.000663)
GDP per capita					-7.76e-06 (1.23e-05)	-1.58e-06 (7.68e-06)
Disproportionality Index					0.0209 (0.0244)	0.0251 (0.0213)
Constant	0.636*** (0.187)	0.636*** (0.189)	-0.262 (0.626)	0.930 (0.928)	0.578 (0.395)	1.187 (2.219)
Observations	58	58	58	58	58	58
Countries	16	16	16	16	16	16
$R^2$	0.397	0.477	0.650	0.605	0.595	0.817

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 8: Replication of results from table 4 with Belgium not coded as ‘Catholic exception’

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Denominational Difference	0.00339*** (0.00109)	0.00360*** (0.00105)	0.00238** (0.00102)	0.00274** (0.00118)	0.00388*** (0.00103)	0.00285** (0.000998)	0.00240** (0.000997)
Denominational Difference <sup>2</sup>						2.06e-05 (1.95e-05)	
Catholicism w/ external threat		-0.535*** (0.0541)	-0.577*** (0.0860)	-0.482*** (0.108)	-0.556*** (0.127)	-0.744*** (0.246)	-0.792*** (0.250)
Socialist govt years			-0.00445 (0.00811)			0.00275 (0.00662)	0.000382 (0.00708)
Christ Dem govt years			-0.00525* (0.00269)			-0.00105 (0.00302)	-0.00288 (0.00266)
Income inequality (gini)			0.0275** (0.0119)			0.00121 (0.0267)	-0.0104 (0.0276)
Ethnic fragmentation				-0.125 (0.259)		-0.0578 (0.337)	0.0702 (0.312)
Religious attendance				0.0226 (0.141)		-0.189 (0.274)	-0.277 (0.280)
Net migration / capita				7.544*** (1.861)		9.010*** (1.764)	9.720*** (1.933)
Age of Democracy					6.68e-05 (0.00108)	0.000975 (0.000587)	0.000935 (0.000682)
GDP per capita					-3.49e-06 (1.11e-05)	2.46e-06 (8.93e-06)	-2.28e-06 (6.98e-06)
Disproportionality Index					0.0285 (0.0206)	0.0315* (0.0162)	0.0327 (0.0199)
Constant	0.795*** (0.0954)	0.804*** (0.0952)	0.123 (0.477)	0.551 (0.740)	0.697** (0.279)	1.133 (2.263)	2.229 (2.191)
Observations	58	58	58	58	58	58	58
Countries	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
R <sup>2</sup>	0.407	0.491	0.649	0.605	0.617	0.815	0.809

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

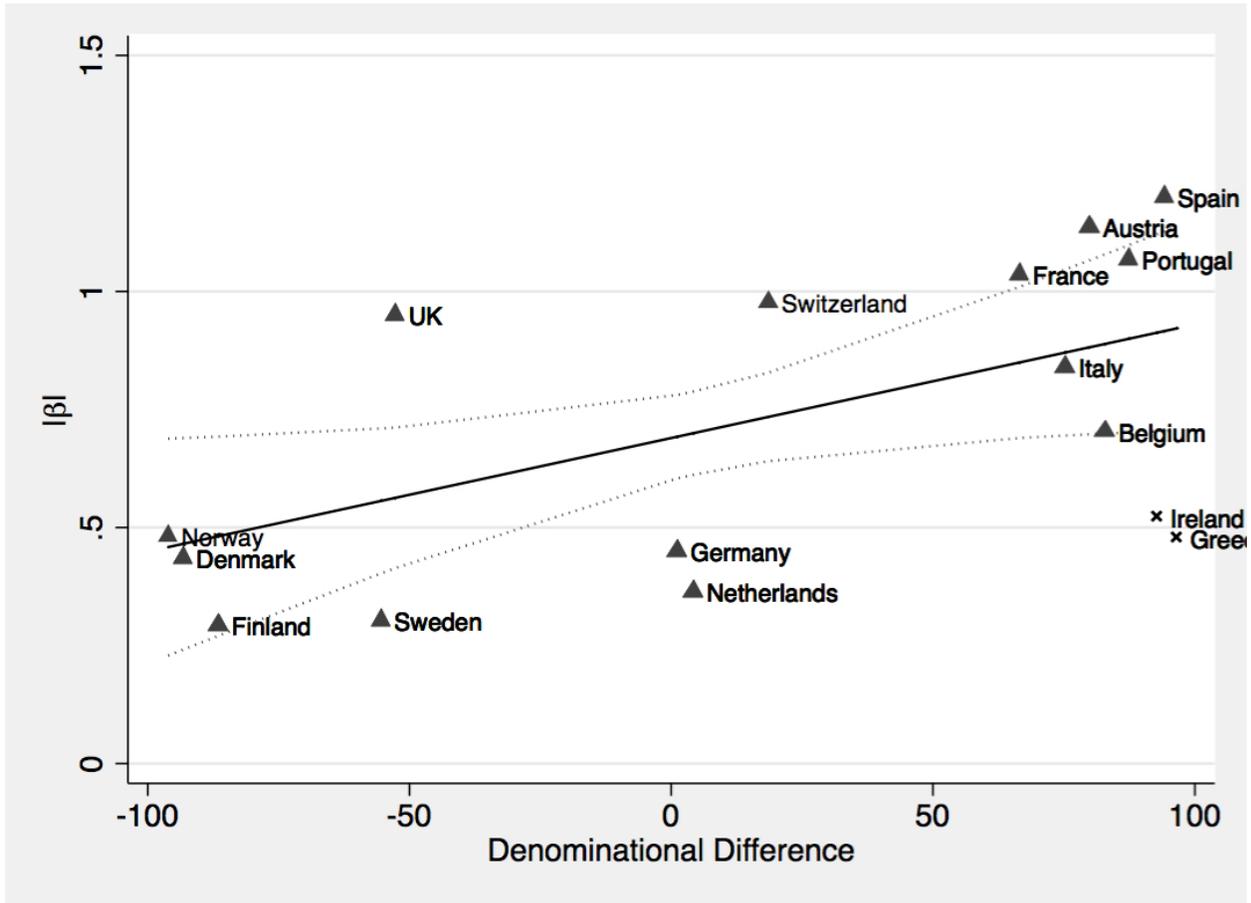


Figure 3: Predicting absolute competition axis slope (Belgium not considered as ‘Catholic exception’)

Predicted values with 95% confidence interval. Denominational difference measured as % Catholic - % Protestant. Countries marked with ‘x’ are considered as Catholic/Orthodox countries with religion as a unifying factor against an external threat. Based on model 7 from table 8.