

Weapons of the Meek: Political Parties and Religious Influence on Policy

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Abstract: How do churches influence public policy, and why does their influence vary across similarly religious societies? Prevalent accounts focus on the mobilization of voter demand and coalitions with political parties that exchange electoral support for policy concessions. In contrast, this article argues that such strategies are both risky and costly, and demonstrates instead the critical role of direct institutional access: writing legislation, vetting officials, and even running sectors of the state. Such institutional access is only available to churches with high *moral authority*: those perceived by the public as representing the common good and the national interest. Where churches in Christian Democracies have gained such moral authority by dint of defending the nation against a foreign regime, state, or colonial power, they are in a position to gain institutional access—without popular backlash against overt and partisan church politicking.

How do organized religions influence politics? Historically, for all their concern with the sacred and divine, religious groups have been adept players at secular and pragmatic politics: legitimating monarchs, shaping public morality, exerting control over education and the welfare state, or simply securing a favorable legal status. Yet in the modern era in predominantly Christian democracies, churches¹ are far more constrained, and cannot act alone. Legal firewalls stymie even powerful churches with pews filled with loyal adherents. Clerics do not stand for office, and church delegates do not sit in legislatures, governments, or administrative bodies.

Yet despite these constraints, religious influence on policy has been extensive. Religious groups, and specifically Christian churches, have successfully spearheaded efforts to ban abortion, to offer religious education in schools, limit access to contraceptives, obtain favorable financial exemptions, and constrain stem cell research, just to take a few recent European examples. Oddly, this influence varies across countries that are similar in their religious profiles of denominational affiliation, religious participation, and general belief. Even more surprisingly, this influence occurs despite extensive popular opposition to church involvement in secular policymaking. How, then, do these actors—Christian churches in modern democracies—obtain their preferred policy outcomes?

To answer this puzzle, I identify the key channels used by churches to wield influence over policy. This article emphasizes the critical role of *direct institutional access* to policymaking, and the conditions under which churches obtain it from an often reluctant secular state. Instead, I identify an alternative channel: direct institutional access to secular policymaking. Such access

¹ By “churches,” I mean Christian religious groups organized by denomination. Predominantly Christian democracies included here are: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (East and West), Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, and US, all included in the 2008 International Social Science Programme survey of religious and national identities.

comprises the ability to propose and vet policy directly through joint church-parliamentary commissions, informal legislative proposals, extensive parliamentary and ministerial consultation, vetting of state officials, and even church control of state sectors such as welfare, health, and education. Such institutional access is covert, frequently informal, and highly desirable to churches because it maintains influence over time at a relatively low cost. Yet only some churches can obtain this holy grail: those with high moral authority, who are identified in the public mind as protecting and representing national interest.

This explanation transforms and builds on a prominent literature that explains religious influence on policy as a function of popular mobilization or partisan coalitions. Churches can thus shape electoral demand for policy, and political parties may respond by channeling these demands into legislation. Churches can also form coalitions with sympathetic political parties that exchange policy concessions for electoral campaigning. Such electoral coalitions with powerful churches, especially, have emerged as a dominant explanation of policy influence (Donovan 2003, Gill 1998, Htun 2003, Meier 2001, Warner 2000). In such coalitions, churches mobilize the support of their faithful for political parties, and in exchange obtain policy concessions from the government parties they helped to bring into office. For example, the Italian Christian Democratic Party (*Democrazia Cristiana*, DC) relied on the public support of the Roman Catholic Church to keep the DC in power for nearly five decades after World War II (Hanley 1994, Kalyvas 1996, Warner 2000, Donovan 2003.)

I argue that among the “weapons of the meek” available to religious groups, such overt political coalitions are costly, risky, and relatively ineffective. They are often counterproductive, as churches grow accused of petty politicking by dint of their participation in partisan coalitions. Indeed, as we will see, explicit coalitions with political parties are often a sign of relative church *weakness*, not strength. Similarly, as an extensive literature has shown, voters are unreliable: they

tend to care more about pocketbook issues than morality, and their policy stances are often at odds with those espoused by churches (Hillygus and Shields 2005, Bartels 2008.)

Institutional access, in contrast is both more effective and less costly for churches than relying on either voters or coalitions. It is more effective because it is direct, and does not rely on mediation through political parties as much. It is less risky and costly, because it does not rely on the re-election of parties, nor does it publicize the policy influence of the church. The covert nature of institutional access is a boon to churches; unlike other interest groups, most church adherents *oppose* their leaders' efforts to influence policy on their behalf. By using institutional access, churches face less popular backlash and criticism. Churches thus effectively influence policy not simply through ballot boxes but in the back rooms of politics, through hidden deals and covert pressure (Berry 1977, Culpepper 2011, Hansen 1980, Hertzke 1988, Skocpol 1995, Wilson 1995, Wald, Silverman, and Fridy 2005).

Only a few churches, however, can achieve such access: those with high *moral authority*. Moral authority goes beyond the churches' broad spiritual guidance or familiar religious rituals, such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Instead, it is the popular identification of the church with national interest. It is thus a political resource that that allows churches to frame and to influence policy. Moral authority is high when backed and reinforced by the fusion of national and religious identities, a specific and historically-grounded religious nationalism that identifies the churches with the common good. Churches are then no longer limited to theology or to ritual. Moral authority is low when churches cannot make such claims of a historical defense of the nation, and national and religious identities are divorced (or even opposed to) each other.

Churches with such high moral authority are seen as impartial, trusted, and credible representatives of national interest. This trust placed in a church does not mean popular demand for church influence on politics, but it does indicate a widespread identification of the church

with the common good. When secular incumbents are threatened, and churches with high moral authority ensure regime survival by appealing to the nation and quelling societal unrest, churches can gain direct institutional access to policymaking. Just as importantly, given the popular disapproval of church influence on politics, such access is covert—and thus does not unleash a popular backlash. At lower levels of moral authority, churches can still form partisan coalitions that reward individual parties and represent narrower constituencies—but then lose moral authority by dint of overt politicking, and have to worry about their allies' re-election.

In advancing this argument, this article contributes to a vibrant literature on religious participation and mobilization (Gill 1998, Chesnut 2003, Trejo 2009), political parties and religion (Kalyvas 1996, Hanley 1994, Warner 2000, Kalyvas and van Kersbergen 2011), religious nationalism (Juergensmeyer 1993, Burleigh 2007), church-state relations (Fox 2008, Gorski 2003, Hagopian 2009, Philpott 2007) and policy influence (Htun 2003, Minkenberg 2002). It does so by identifying important, if overlooked, strategies of church influence within the secular state, and showing how moral authority, and the religious nationalism on which it builds, is a critical condition for such influence. Below, I examine the puzzle of church influence on policy in Section I: surprisingly, countries with similar religious profiles show very different levels of influence. Section II examines the competing explanations, and demonstrates that there is little public demand for church influence. Section III provides an alternative model of covert and effective church influence, and Section IV illustrates these mechanisms in two countries: Ireland and Italy. Section V tests these propositions on a broader sample of Christian democracies.

I. Variation in Church Influence on Policy

Despite shared preferences, churches have varied widely in their ability to set the public debate and get their preferences enacted. Christian churches hold similar, theologically-grounded preferences across several policy domains. The five examined here are: education, divorce,

abortion, same sex marriage and stem cell technology (including assisted reproduction and embryonic stem cell research). The Roman Catholic Church has the same stance on these issues across countries. Conservative Protestant churches share many of these stances, though they have differed on divorce and stem cell research. Table 1 summarizes this variation.

TABLE 1 HERE

Yet very different patterns of religious influence on politics prevail, even among countries with similar levels of religiosity (as measured by levels of professed religious belief, patterns of attendance, and denominational loyalties.) For example, Ireland and Italy are both nominally Catholic countries, yet the impact of the Roman Catholic Church on policy outcomes varies enormously. The Irish church historically both set the terms of political debates and influenced their outcomes in ways the Italian church has struggled to. Similarly, the Roman Catholic Church in Poland has had a great influence on public policy, while in equally Catholic Croatia it has been unable to shape public debates or policy outcomes. Moreover, church-preferred policies are legislated in the face of enormous popular *opposition* to religious influence on politics. In all the countries examined, an overwhelming majority of respondents oppose the influence of churches on politics. Where churches have been especially influential, the opposition is even higher, as in Ireland, Poland, or the Philippines.² In short, religion influences politics whether or not the public wants it to.

Thus, piety is insufficient, and popular demand is minimal—yet religious influence on politics still occurs, in both new and developed democracies. We thus need an account of churches as political actors, and the channels of this influence. But if churches have no direct

² Moreover, these World Values Surveys data represent the low end of the estimates; surveys undertaken by the International Social Science Programme show even higher rates of rejection of religious influence on votes and governments.

role as legislators, and if popular demand is insufficient to explain policy outcomes, how do religious groups influence policy?

II. Existing Explanations: Mobilization and Coalitions

Churches can use several tactics to influence policy. First, churches can channel popular demand for policy, by organizing protests, collecting signatures, and mobilizing affiliated organizations (Castles 1994, Fink 2009). Second, churches can “contract” with political parties by mobilizing voters on behalf of parties in exchange for subsequent policy concessions (Warner 2000). Such exchanges can also invoke “debts of gratitude” from new democratic governments where the churches had earlier protected the opposition under an authoritarian regime (Htun 2003, Gill 1998). These tactics all rely on political parties as the key partners.

One prominent set of accounts for religious influence on policy focuses on the popular *demand* for religion and religious influence, and the conditions that foster such demand. Norris and Inglehart (2004), for example, argue that greater levels of social and economic deprivation increase religiosity, since they lead individuals to seek comfort and security in religion. In turn, religious voters behave differently: the more poor people attend church, for example, the more likely they are to vote *against* Left parties (de la O and Rodden 2008), and religious voters show less support for the welfare state (Scheve and Stasavage 2006.) Religious constituencies should be especially receptive to religious incursion into public policy issues framed as “moral” (Mooney 2001, 16.) Political parties here act as representatives of religious constituencies demanding church influence: the greater the share of religious voters, the more we should see their preferences reflected in policy.

Yet accounts that rely on public demand are belied by the large popular majorities that reject church influence in politics. As Figure 1 shows, the rejection of church influence on politics is always above 50%, as in very religious countries such as Malta, Poland, or the

Philippines. Moreover, as we will see, religiosity is a necessary but insufficient condition for policy influence. Churches in very religious societies can be highly influential—or they may repeatedly fail to obtain their policy preferences.

FIGURE 1 HERE

A second explanation emphasizes alliances formed with political parties, and the exchange of electoral mobilization for policy concessions (Warner 2000.) Churches pursue alliances with parties that have the highest expected probability of translating preferences into policy, at the lowest cost to the churches. Parties, in turn, will pursue these alliances depending on their need for electoral support, their ideological self-conceptions, and the structures of the churches they face (Warner 2000, 12.) Church influence on politics here is the result of contract-like exchanges of votes for policy concessions between churches and parties.

Such potential partners are not necessarily obvious. One set of candidates might be the Christian Democratic parties: but these parties have had a historically uneasy relationship with churches, and preferred to assert autonomy and pursue broad, cross-class coalitions whenever possible (Kalyvas 1996). Empirically, electoral support for Christian Democratic parties is not tied to either policy influence of the churches, or to popular religiosity: there is little correlation across countries or over time (Grzymala-Busse, 2010). Moreover, enforcement is a problem: once churches mobilize their support on behalf of parties, the party can renege on its promises, or it may create other means of mobilizing voters, as the Italian Christian Democrats did in the 1950s and 1960s. In short, coalitions are risky—in that the political partners may not be elected or uphold the deal, and they are costly—in that if majorities disapprove of church political activity, such voter mobilization on behalf of parties may result in backlash.

Another variant of such contracts takes place explicitly over time, and emphasizes “debts of gratitude” (Htun 2003.) Thus, governments acquiesce to church demands, especially in new

democracies, because they feel beholden to churches for the years of rhetorical and physical protection (Htun 2003, 102.) In new democracies, where churches have earlier protected democratic dissidents, such parties then reward the churches with policy concessions once they are elected into office. Where the churches were either neutral, or on the side of authoritarian governments, we would expect few little church influence on politics once democratic governments are in power (Juergensemeyer 1994, Gill 1998). Yet such political gratitude is notoriously short-lived and fragile, especially once church protection is no longer needed. We need an account of a sustaining mechanism that would continue to create incentives for political parties to translate church preferences into policy well into the democratic era.

For churches eager to influence policy, the fundamental problem with both relying on popular religions and on partisan coalitions is their public and contingent nature: where majorities disapprove of church involvement in politics, mobilizing voters is a risky strategy for churches. If they could, churches would rely on covert, far less costly and risky channels of policy influence. The next section examines why some churches can do so.

III. Institutional Access and Moral Authority

Paradoxically, to remain politically successful, churches have to appear to be above the political fray. Given the enormous opposition to church influence on votes, governments, or policy, churches that seek to influence policy and to retain adherents would do well to keep their efforts hidden. Such a direct but covert channel exists: *institutional access* includes the formulation of legislative bills, participation in government and parliamentary committees, vetting state officials, and in some contexts, actually administering state sectors such as education, the welfare system, and health care. The key advantage of institutional access is that it does not appear partisan—and that it remains largely covert. Specific policy pressure takes place behind the closed doors of ministries and high offices, with personal meetings substituting for public

demonstrations or exhortations. Other forms of institutional access, such as running hospitals and thus ministering to the sick, are hardly partisan. Such access can also be long-lasting, and persist even despite the transformation of a political regime from a communist autocracy to post-communist democracy: for example, in Poland, a joint commission established by the communist regime with the Church still meets regularly, nearly seventy years later. Above all, churches are relatively unsullied by politicking, and yet can directly shape policy.

Not surprisingly, churches would prefer to obtain institutional access.³ It is far more attractive than either partisan coalitions or mobilizing the electorate: churches in effect share sovereignty with secular politicians, rather than relying on fickle voters or less-than-reliable parties. Institutional access can also be durable and self-reproducing (controlling education, for example, allows the Church to inculcate generations of citizens with specific loyalties and identities). For secular incumbents, the preferences are symmetrical. Since institutional access means sharing sovereignty, secular governments are loath to grant it. Instead, incumbents would prefer a partisan coalition with a church, which makes policy concessions conditional on continual support. Institutional access is thus costly for the state, but highly desirable for the church. Coalitions are less costly for the state, but far less desirable for the church.

Under what conditions, then, would a state grant institutional access? To put it bluntly, when it needs church support to survive—and the church has the resources to ensure that survival. Institutional access is a price regimes are willing to pay if the benefits are high enough: for example, if politicians stand to lose office because the very regime or nation-state they have created will collapse, taking them along. Thus, secular actors will grant churches institutional

³ In more formal language, churches prefer to influence policy at minimum cost. Their ranked preferences are having their preferences legislated without participation in politics, followed by directly participating in policymaking, exchanging electoral support for policy concessions through partisan coalitions, and lastly, not influencing politics.

access when their hold on power is tenuous and their survival threatened. Such moments include a threatened regime collapse, gaining state independence, building a brand-new democracy, and critical elections (where the vote determines the future of the regime, not just who the incumbent will be)—in short, when a fragile secular state needs extensive support (and may not have the capacity itself to run some sectors, such as education). This is the story of the new Irish Free State handing over both education and welfare policy to the Church in the 1920s—and of the British Crown handing over the same sectors to the Church in Québec after 1840. As result, churches with high moral authority can gain enormous policy influence during times of upheaval and instability, such as regime transitions—precisely when institutional and policy frameworks are also transformed. Churches also obtain institutional access when they can prevent fratricidal conflict: this was the case in communist Poland, where both after the protests of 1956 and the enormous mobilization of 1980-1 the Church calmed down a furious populace and prevented violence and bloodshed in the name of national peace and survival. In exchange, it gained not only policy concessions, but greater authority over its assets, continued consultations with high-ranking communist officials, and policy input through joint committees. In short, if the secular actor cannot survive without church support, the price of institutional access is worth paying.

Yet not all churches can ensure regime survival, and thus gain institutional access. Only those with high *moral authority* can do so. Moral authority is the popular perception that churches are not only religious authorities, but representatives of national interest and the public good. It is conceptually distinct from religiosity: religious observance, affiliation, or belief. That said, religiosity is a precondition: without those full pews, churches have a hard time convincing politicians or society that they embody broad national interests. Moral authority relies on the perception that churches are faithful representatives and loyal defenders of society as a whole: the “nation,” rather than of narrower regional, partisan, or sectarian interests. It can originate in

contemporary efforts by the church to protect national interests, but it most frequently stems from the churches' historical defense of national identity and interests against a colonial power or an alien regime, and the subsequent fusion of national and religious identities (as in Poland, Lithuania, Croatia or Ireland.) Where the church shielded the nation, patriotism fused with religious loyalty, and the churches gained a powerful voice within society as trusted representatives of public national interest.⁴

Precisely because it relies on the perception that the churches are *national* representatives and defenders, moral authority is a powerful but brittle resource. If churches appear partisan, narrowly self-interested, or taking sides of regional or local constituencies rather than “representing the nation,” they risk dissipating this valuable resource. Once they establish moral authority, churches have to tend it carefully—and here, supporting a political party can backfire. If a church ties itself closely to a particular government or sub-national group, rather than the defense of the nation, its claims of universal morality and national protection are immediately suspect. Sponsorship or explicit mobilization on a behalf of individual parties can thus have a perverse effect. Churches can make public declarations and public announcements without losing moral authority, so long as their claims are credibly based on theology and on the national interest: but once churches dirty their hands with partisan, regional, or sectoral politics, they are far less credible in their claims of representing the interests of the nation.

We can see now why partisan coalitions may be a sign of party weakness—and why they are a costly tactic for churches. Churches are generally loath to be seen as partisan, and lose what moral authority they have. Churches with high moral authority can get around this obstacle by relying on covert institutional access, which does not damage their moral authority. Where they

⁴ Such moral authority is distinct from the demand on church influence on politics: it is not the support for church policy preferences, but a recognition of the church's role as a representative of national interest.

start off with lower moral authority by dint of a more compromised past, the churches' options are constrained. They are not trusted as broadly, and not as *national* representatives, even if specific constituencies might trust them. As a result, they cannot "speak to the nation" and significantly increase the incumbents' chance of survival. In turn, secular governments are unwilling to pay the price of institutional access. Churches can still expend moral authority to influence policy, but now rely on narrower coalitions with allied political parties, with all the entailed problems of credible commitment and backlash. Policy gains come at a steep price: what moral authority churches possess is eroded by partisan alliances and by overt politicking. Ironically, then, already weaker churches become more vulnerable still when they attempt to exert political influence. These churches are "tragically dependent" on political parties: they start off with less, and obtain their goals at much higher costs to their stock of moral authority.

Model of church-state interaction

A simple model elucidates the logic of the argument, and shows the conditions under coalitions or institutional access arise. To summarize the results, the critical combination for the state offering institutional access is both high church moral authority and a low probability of regime survival without church support.

In the model, governing incumbents (either democratic political parties or autocratic rulers) offer the churches a share of policymaking authority in exchange for the churches investing their moral authority on behalf of the state. This share can take the form of institutional access to the secular state, or partisan coalitions. Both sides have something the other wants: the church wants to change policies, the state needs church support. Institutional access is costly for the state (because it shares policymaking authority), but highly desirable for the church. Coalitions are less costly for the state, but far less desirable for the church.

A crisis occurs in the prehistory of the game, such as a regime collapse, the founding of a new-nation state, or an economic crisis. The church has M , moral authority, which we can think of as its ability to mobilize social support on behalf of its goals or other actors. Moral authority is a function of the church's non-political behavior, and its reputation for representing broad, non-partisan interests. Thus, overt partisanship will cost it moral authority. M is inherited from the past at some value $M_{t-1} \in [0,1)$.

The secular actor (which we can think of as an incumbent regime or an individual governing party) enjoys the benefits of office.⁵ Without church support, the secular actor remains in office with probability p . With church support, the secular actor remains in office with probability $p + (1-p) \delta_A M_{t-1}$ where δ_A is the rate at which the Church retains its moral authority M_{t-1} . (Subscript $_A$ refers to the retention rate when the Church has institutional access, and $_X$ refers to the retention rate in a coalition.) This formulation means that a) the probability of staying in office increases with the moral authority of the church; powerful churches contribute more to the secular actor's political survival, and b) church support does not guarantee the survival of the secular actor.

In times of crisis, the secular actor, such as an autocratic regime or a governing democratically-elected political party, turns to the church for support to stay in office. It offers either institutional access A or an overt coalition X to the church.⁶ The church either accepts the offer or rejects it. The entire sequence is shown in Figure 1.

⁵ Typically, the secular actor prizes both policy and officeholding: rather than disaggregating these into two separate parameters, I collapse them here into one and normalize to 1. The central concern is with the authority over policymaking, and the willingness to make concessions to hold onto it.

⁶ Because the state moves first, and cannot offer voter support to the church, the church does not choose to rely on voter demand to produce its preferred outcome. If the church was the first mover, and if the goal was policy rather than sharing authority, the church could a) mobilize voters, b) initiate a partisan coalition, or c) demand institutional access.

FIGURE 1 HERE

If the church refuses to cooperate, it retains its level of moral authority, such that $M_t = M_{t-1}$. The state remains in power with probability p .

Accepting X , or a coalition with a secular actor, is costly for the church: both because it signals that the church is allied to a particular political option, and because it ties the church's future to a partisan actor who may or may not be around for much longer. Therefore, when the church accepts X , or a coalition, it loses moral authority, M_{t-1} , such that it obtains $X + \delta_X M_{t-1}$, where $\delta_X \in (0,1)$. δ_X measures how much moral authority the church retains after accepting X , and this formulation implies that a coalition with the state reduces a church's moral authority but churches with initially greater levels of moral authority retain more of it after a deal. The church will always reject an offer of $X = 0$, so that we can interpret that offer as the state not approaching the church (W). The state, in turn, gives up X , but it obtains the church's support, so that it gets a payoff of $p + (1-p) \delta_X M_t - X$, where $(1-p) \delta_X M_t$ reflects the church's contribution to the secular actor's survival.

If the church accepts A , or institutional access, it gains authority over policy without publicly becoming involved in politics. It obtains the payoff $\delta_A M_{t-1} + A$, where $\delta_A \in (0,1)$. Because it does not involve explicit politicking, the church retains its existing moral authority M_{t-1} at a higher rate than it would in a coalition: $\delta_A > \delta_X$. The state again obtains the church's support, which is now more valuable, because the church retains more of its moral authority, but it has to give up A , so that its payoff is $p + (1-p) \delta_A M_t - A$. In this model, A is an exogenously fixed amount, since the amount of institutional access tended to be similar across the empirical cases.

The subgame perfect Nash equilibria of the game are derived and specified in the Appendix. The game has three possible equilibrium outcomes: the church accepts an offer of institutional access; the church accepts a coalition; and the state does not seek the support of the church.

Institutional access is most likely to be offered to churches with high levels of moral authority or when the state is in a deep crisis. Figure 2 demonstrates the different equilibrium outcomes of the game for a combination of two key parameters: moral authority and the probability of state survival.⁷ The figure demonstrates three key points.

First, churches with higher levels of moral authority are more likely to be offered institutional access than a coalition. Second, as the state becomes more independent of the church in securing political survival, and/or as the moral authority of the church is less compromised by accepting a coalition, only churches with the highest levels of moral authority are approached with an offer of institutional access. Third, coalitions are most likely to be offered to churches with intermediate levels of moral authority when the probability of incumbent survival is low and/or when the moral authority of the church is not going to be compromised too much from accepting a coalition.

Two lines delineate the relevant conditions. The solid line shows where the state prefers offering institutional access; to the right, the state would be better off granting institutional access than offering a coalition or living without church support. The area below the dotted line shows where the state would prefer offering a coalition, such that the church accepts the offer, to offering nothing to the church and foregoing church support. Above the dotted line, by contrast, the state would be better off staying without church support than making a coalition offer that is sufficiently large for the church to accept. As the graph indicates, if the moral authority of the church were to be harmed severely by accepting an offered coalition, the state would be better off staying without church support – compensating the church for its lost moral authority would be too costly and a church with little remaining moral authority would be less useful in securing political survival.

⁷ The other parameters are set at .99 for delta A, .2 for p, and .3 for A.

Figure 2 HERE

Together, these two lines create four areas in the graph. As a result, in area 1, the state does not approach the church, since the church lacks sufficiently high moral authority and the state is sufficiently safe without the church's support. In area 2, the state would still prefer offering institutional access, but here a coalition is even worse than no support by the church. The area is relatively small, and does not exist once p reaches a value of about .7: at high levels of p , the state survives independently of church support and is loathe to give up its authority; only churches with very high levels of moral authority are approached by the state. In area 3 the state prefers offering institutional access to a coalition, which is better than no support by the church. Finally, in area 4, the church does not have sufficiently high levels of moral authority to make an offer of institutional access worthwhile to the state; however, the state is sufficiently insecure in its political survival to offer a coalition to the church.

IV. Coalitions and institutional access in practice

To illustrate how moral authority translates into policy influence in the domains of abortion, divorce, education, same sex marriage and stem cell research, I compare the Irish and Italian cases. These are examples of a broader universe of competitive and secular democracies—competitive in that religious groups are one of many striving for policy influence, and secular in that both law and society recognize the distinction between state and religion. In both Ireland and in Italy, over 90% of the population declares itself to be Catholic, and over half the population attends religious services more than once a month. In both, over 60% of the population oppose religious influence on politics, and over 75% oppose such influence on votes. Yet despite these similarities, the Roman Catholic Church has had very different levels of success in influencing policy, as summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 HERE

Ireland: High Moral Authority and Institutional Access

The central role of the Catholic Church in the emergence of an independent Ireland and in stabilizing the new republic gave it enormous moral authority in the 20th century. Independence in 1922 meant considerable cooperation between the church and state. After the 1937 Union with Britain, “close identification between Irish nationalism and the Catholic religion developed, and nationalists defended the prominent role accorded the church in areas of public policy” (Kissane 2003, 75.) Catholicism became the core pillar of an Irish, as opposed to an English, identity, and the Church actively promoted the intertwining of national and religious identities (Taylor 2007, 153). In the name of protecting the Irish nation, the Catholic Church was heavily involved in policing the moral and political spheres, and in fact argued successfully the two were the same (Keogh 1986, Smith 2004, Girvin 2002, Whyte 1971).

While the bishops were often ambivalent about Republican tactics, they supported the cause of Irish national aspirations (and their fusion with Catholicism), resulting in both moral leadership and institutional access after 1922. The need of the young independent Republic for church support was enormous, and so “nationalists defended the prominent role accorded the church in public policy” (Kissane 2003, 75, Andersen 2010, 17). Both main governing parties subsequently enacted the church’s preferences: Fianna Fáil, whose politicians demonstrated their religious credentials by reproducing Church rhetoric and sustaining its policy preferences, and the socially more moderate Fine Gael, which governed with the center-left Labour Party. This elite consensus “effectively drained Irish politics of a clerical–anticlerical dimension...disputes over the role of the Catholic Church largely disappeared from mainstream political debate” (Conway 2006, 171).

The Church repeatedly framed abortion, divorce, and education as its purview, and the restrictions on these domains as a matter of the moral health of the nation. The Church publicly

(and convincingly) argued that its mission was to protect the Irish nation, but its *direct* influence relied on institutional access. Church opinions were regularly sought both officially, and in informal consultations between politicians and clerical officials. Beginning with the writing of the Constitution, Church officials and interests were explicitly represented, with the future Archbishop of Dublin John Charles McQuaid helping to write the first draft of the article on religion, church, and state, as well as provide advice on the drafting of other articles of the constitution (Keogh 2007, 101-2.) The 1937 Constitution identified the common good with religious criteria, and accorded the Church a special position that did not end until 1972. Furthermore, the Church assumed nearly full control over education, hospitals, welfare, and juvenile justice institutions, making it an effective partner in governance—and constraint—on whatever government was in office (Inglis 1998, chapter 3 and 122ff, see also Larkin 1984, 121).

Education illustrates both Church authority, and the mechanisms of its replication over time. Attempts by the British government to introduce a non-denominational educational system in 1900s were already frustrated by “an alliance between the new Sinn Fein party and the Catholic hierarchy” (Kissane 2003, 75) in the name of Irish national identity and values. The Catholic Church was subsequently able to insist on its primacy, both through loyal cabinet ministers, and through informal pressure. Ministers of Education were inevitably observant Catholics, and the pervasive argument of both secular and religious authorities was that neutrality would translate into bias against belief. The result was that from the 1930s onwards, the Church controlled primary schooling and the administration of juvenile justice. The Council of Education, established in 1950, had as quarter of its members Catholic religious figures, as was its chair (Coolahan 2003, 139.) The Council confirmed the primacy of the Catholic Church in education, with the 96% of primary schools run by the Church. Among the “Rules for National Schools,” published in 1965, Rule 68 stated that “of all parts of a school curriculum

Religious Instruction is by far the most important” and that “a religious spirit should inform and vivify the whole work of the school.” The Church’s role was not openly questioned until the 2010s, when demographic changes and immigration prompted a new Programme on Patronage and Pluralism to review the Church’s role in education. The committee included explicitly secular advocates, and eventually called for divesting the Church of patronage and the removal of Rule 68 (Coolahan 2003, Hussey et al 2012.) By this point, however, the Church itself did not object to the divestment: with fewer monks and nuns, the Church had difficulty staffing the schools, and had long turned to secular teachers. Given burdens of administering the educational system, the review did not overturn church preferences.

Throughout the 20th century, the Church successfully framed several issues as matters of fundamental morality, with politicians of all stripes picking up and amplifying the religious language in public debates and policy justifications. The Church’s fundamental role in creating the initial legal framework meant that abortion and divorce policies also accorded with Church preferences. Divorce was prohibited by the 1937 constitution, and illegal until 1995. To further entrench its preferences in the constitution, Church influenced mass referenda. One such referendum in 1983 made abortion, which was illegal, unconstitutional as well: “the result was clearly a vindication of the Catholic Church’s authority and demonstrated the vulnerability of the political process to a campaign orchestrated by well-organized interest groups” (Kissane 2003, 81.) A 1992 referendum, on the heels of the notorious “X case” (where a raped girl was not allowed to travel to England for an abortion) resulted in the freedom to travel—but with no further provisions for legalizing access to abortion. The reluctance of both politicians and medical authorities to run afoul of the Church was so great that the parliament refused to clarify what would constitute the one ground for abortion--“threat to a mother’s life”--until 2013 and the death from sepsis of a woman whose 19-week miscarriage was not treated by doctors.

Where the Church's policy access was not institutionalized, and once the Church lost moral authority policies could depart from Church preferences. When courts rather than politicians or voters decided policy outcomes, for example, the Church was less successful: in 2002, High Court decisions ended the ban on contraception, the proscriptions on homosexuality were reduced, and no-fault divorce became a possibility (a 1986 referendum supported the ban on divorce). In the 1990s, the Church had lost a great deal of its moral authority with the pedophilia and child abuse scandals that had emerged: the Church had betrayed the public trust it had insisted was its monopoly. Accordingly, a 1995 referendum repealed the ban on divorce, against Church opposition. Homosexuality itself was illegal until 1993 (and delegalized against Church opposition)—but by 2011, two thirds of the population was in favor of same sex marriage. If no politician wanted to introduce abortion to Ireland, by 2012 the challenge was “to find a prominent politician prepared to oppose gay marriage out loud” (*The Irish Times*, 14 July 2012.) Yet politicians and professional associations remained as reticent on assisted reproduction and stem cell technology as on abortion (McDonnell and Allison 2006, 825.) The Church had already framed the issue as akin to abortion, since embryos were involved—and as a result, it was too risky for governments to take up. As a result, the government never legislated directly on stem cell research (despite a 2009 High Court plea to do so), or on the legal status of embryos, without which such technology was left in a legal limbo. The legacy of institutional access continued to endure, even as moral authority of the Irish Church decreased.

Italy: Lower Moral Authority and Coalition

Italy appears to be the stereotypical Catholic country, with churches at every corner and strong traditional religiosity. Yet beneath the façade of a Catholic state, the relationship between the church and state has been a complicated one. The Roman Catholic Church (and specifically, the Vatican) was opposed to the reunification of Italy in the 19th century, forbade Catholics from

participating in the new democracy on the pain of excommunication, and vehemently fought any attempts to constrain the power of the Vatican. It could thus never claim to speak for the “Italian nation” or to be above local or partisan interests, and never gained the moral authority of the church in Ireland. The result was that on the one hand, a strong popular religiosity could survive—but the Church never gained the institutional access of its Irish counterpart.

In the postwar Italian democracy, the Italian Church allied itself with the Christian Democratic (DC) party: the Church mobilized its flock to stem communist popularity, its main perceived threat. As one analyst put it, “the Church wanted guarantees of influence and of anti-Communism, and it was beginning to appear that the DC would be able to offer both” (Warner 2000, 108.) In turn, the DC sought Church support to win elections and to support the new democracy—but the Church did not have the moral authority to guarantee its success, or the regime’s survival. Instead, the DC relied on the Church’s mobilizational capacities in the elections to compensate for the party’s meager organizational resources after the war (Pollard 2008, 123). Beginning with the 1948 elections, and until the DC’s collapse in 1993-4, the Church supported the DC throughout its rule, largely because no other party was both conservative and credible. In exchange, the DC financed Catholic hospitals, seminaries, schools, and Catholic cultural, educational, and social activities (Ignazi and Welhofer 2013, 38.)

Despite this marriage of convenience, the Italian Church achieved far less than it had sought. The Christian Democrats first sought coalitions with the “unacceptable” Socialists (PSDI), Liberals (PLI) and Republicans (PRI) after 1948 even after achieving absolute majority, to “reduce the effects of ecclesiastical pressure [on the] government” (Pollard 2008, 119.) They then also began to seek greater autonomy from the Church. Specifically, the DC emphasized patronage, which obviated the need for the Church’s organizational mobilization of the voters and thus “severed its direct link to the Catholic hierarchy” (Gundle 1996, 60, see also Furlong

1996, 60, Donovan 2003, 101, and Pollard 2008.) The inclusion of Mussolini-era Lateran Pacts⁸ in the Constitution favored the Church, but the 1984 revision of the Concordat ended much of this privilege.

The DC not only sought greater autonomy, but it often failed to deliver on the Church's stated goals. In four out of the five policy areas examined, the Church obtained far less than it sought. As early as 1946, the Church was angered by the Christian Democratic government's laxity in including the sanctity of marriage in the constitution, and allowing labor the right to strike (Clark, Hine, and Irving 1974, 336, Warner 2000, 119.) Subsequently, a 1974 divorce referendum produced a majority in favor of new and permissive legislation, as did an abortion referendum in 1981 (which only reaffirmed the liberal law on abortion passed in parliament in 1978, much to the Church's consternation and vituperation). The Church continued to run most preschools, but much of the Church's influence over education, such as it was, predated the coalition. The 1984 Concordat revision ended compulsory religious teaching in schools (although most parents chose optional religious education for their children, Donovan 2003.) In many ways, the harder the Church tried, the less it achieved through its coalition—yet it had nowhere else to turn. After 1994, and the sobering experience of the DC's fall from power, the Church did not form an electoral coalition with one of the parties in the newly bipolar Italian party system. Instead, the Church turned to appealing to individual MPs, irrespective of their party affiliation, as a way of influencing policy. It was unable to change much in abortion, divorce, or education, issues that by that point had been decided as far as the electorate and the parliament were concerned. Similarly, while the Church has opposed same-sex marriage, legal

⁸ The 1929 Lateran Pacts between the Vatican and Italy ensured Vatican's independence, its financial standing, and a series of political concessions, including some control over education.

measures to ban it have failed, and instead the Court of Cassation found in 2012 that same sex couples share equal rights with heterosexual ones.

In one area, however, the church was able to influence policy: stem cell research and other bio-ethical policies. It was able to do so *after* its coalition collapsed with the implosion of the DC in 1993-4, when the Church ironically became the one *de facto* national institution. In the late 1990s, a veto by Catholic MPs over bio-ethics legislation “resulted in a legislative vacuum, since regulation itself was seen as state recognition of, and participation in, immoral practice” (Donovan 2003, 112.) The Church preferred this outcome to lenient legislation. However, the veto backfired: scientists were now free to experiment, with controversial results such as the implantation of embryos in postmenopausal women. It was not until 2004 and the return of a center-right government that a more restrictive bill was passed. A 2005 referendum would have liberalized the legislation, but the Church persuaded enough voters to stay home to invalidate it: even though the repeal of the strictures was approved by 90% of those who voted, turnout was only 26%. The complexity of the laws and voter apathy helped to defeat the referendum (DiMarco 2009, 21.) Ironically, then, the Church’s one major modern policy success came *after* the collapse of its partisan coalition—and as a result of voter passivity, rather than moral authority.

V. A further empirical test

To test the broader correlations, I rely on the Church Influence in Democracies (CID) data set, which I constructed. It comprises 29 countries for which survey data on moral authority was available, and includes data on religiosity, economic development, policy influence, and public opinion regarding church activity and authority. While cross-sectional, the data set allows a snapshot of the accumulated impact of moral authority and institutional access on religious

policy influence. I specify several different OLS⁹ models that test both the independent and conditional impact of moral authority, popular demand for church influence, explicit coalitions between political parties and churches, and institutional access controlling for economic development (log GDP) and prevalence of Catholicism.

The outcome of interest, *policy influence*, is measured with the index of church ability to set the terms of political debates and policy outcomes across five domains (education, divorce, abortion, stem cell research, and same sex marriage). In each of the five policy domains, organized religions can obtain 1 point for influencing rhetoric, and 1 for influencing policy, for a possible total of 10. If secular politicians accept and use language first formulated by identifiable churches (“sanctity of life,” “natural law demands” etc), political rhetoric is coded as 1. If secular politicians have adopted church policy recommendations in response to church demands, policy influence is coded as 1. Here, churches frequently used non-governmental organizations to make their case. If these NGOs are proxies: sponsored and vetted by the churches, policy influence is coded as 1. If they are allies, sharing members and goals with churches but not necessarily strategies, policy influence is coded as 0.

The proxy for *moral authority* is religious nationalism, or the “fusion” of religious and national identities. It is measured by the percentage respondents who consider the dominant religion in their country to be important or very important to national identity (ISSSP 2008.) While an imperfect proxy, it taps into the historical relationship between churches and their representation of national interests, and the favorable reputation that specific religions gain as a

⁹The dependent variable is an additive index that is bounded (values span from 0 to 10), which usually calls for using ordered probit that allows us to model the latent continuous metric underlying the ordinal responses and to model how the independent variables affect the probability of moving from one ordinal category to the next. However, probit uses up additional parameters and the coefficients are more difficult to interpret, requiring the comparison of probabilities or odds ratios. Since both OLS and ordered probit regressions generated nearly identical results (the predicted values correlate at .99 (@.000 *p* value), I report OLS results.

result. Such fusion is distinct from religiosity, or religious observance. I measure religious observance by using self-reported church attendance data (a more demanding measure than either belief in God or denominational affiliation, though still subject to positive reporting bias), policy influence with an index of church ability to set the terms of political debates and policy outcomes across five domains, economic development with a log of GDP, and Catholicism by the percentage of population estimated to be Catholic. I include these models with binary measures of explicit political party-church coalitions and institutional access.¹⁰ To measure demand for church influence on politics, I rely on an item from the 1998-2004 World Values Survey: agreement with the statement “religious leaders should influence government.” Other data comes from the 2003 International Social Science Programme (religious nationalism and demand for religious influence), 2000 Penn World Tables (GDP), and the 2006 CIA Factbook (prevalence of Catholicism).

To summarize the results, moral authority and the institutional access it produces are consistently associated with policy influence, even taking into account economic development, prevalence of Catholicism, church-party coalitions, and popular demand for church influence. Further, it is unlikely that we have the causation reversed, and that influence on politics promotes moral authority or the fusion of national and religious identities: both because moral authority precedes influence on politics, by decades and sometimes by centuries, and because if

¹⁰ “Institutional access” is also a binary variable, coded 1 if an organized religion gained formal representation in national legislative bodies, joint episcopal-parliamentary commissions, ran a ministry or a ministerial sector funded from the state budget, was consulted formally during policymaking, or exercised vetting powers over national appointments, and 0 otherwise. Both “coalitions” and “institutional access” were coded using contemporary press and scholarly historical accounts. Neither fusion nor institutional access correlate particularly strongly with coalitions: at $-.07$ and $-.039$, and with very high p values ($.72$ and $.84$, respectively) that suggest we cannot reject the null hypothesis that fusion, institutional access, and coalitions are simply related by chance. Fusion and institutional access correlate strongly at $.54$ ($.003$ p value), a substantively and statistically much stronger relationship.

vast popular majorities object to church influence on politics, it is unlikely that such influence strengthens the church's standing in society, or increases its popular moral authority.

How do the competing explanations fare against each other? The regression results are consistent with the proposition that *institutional access* is a powerful form of policy influence. Institutional access is both substantively and statistically significant across the different specifications, as the regression results in Table 2 show. In Model 1, Fusion, Attendance, and Institutional Access are all strong correlates to policy influence. Strikingly, once we include all independent variables in Model 3, Institutional Access emerges as the critical correlate of policy influence.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

The impact of Institutional Access remains even after controlling for numerous likely confounders, such as religiosity, economic development, popular demand for policies, and denominational profiles. The conditional impact of Institutional Access is estimated in Model 2. Since interaction coefficients are difficult to interpret, I graph the marginal impact in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

Institutional Access has a positive marginal impact on policy influence across all levels of Fusion. This conditional impact of Institutional Access, becomes statistically significant at a point when roughly 30% of poll respondents state that the dominant religious tradition is an important part of national identity. In short, for a range of values, the institutional access obtained by churches, such as legislative consultations, membership in joint parliamentary commissions, vetting of public officials, lobbying channels, and so on, has a positive marginal impact on the churches' ability to obtain their policy preferences—and increasingly so. That said, an important caveat here is that since there are relatively few observations at the very lowest and

very highest levels of national-religious fusion, the larger confidence interval in those areas may reflect lack of observations rather than a substantively weaker relationship.

Coalitions between churches and political parties do not appear to correlate to church policy influence, either in a simple additive model or when interacted with fusion. The additive Model 5 shows that Coalitions do not correlate to Policy Influence. Even a stripped-down model that only includes Coalitions and the controls (not shown) similarly fails to show either substantive or statistical significance. Further, the impact of Coalitions does not appear to be conditional on fusion, as Model 6 suggests (the same results hold if Coalitions are interacted with Religiosity). Once again, for greater ease of interpretation, I graph the results in Figure 5. There is no discernible impact of coalitions at any level of religiosity: the confidence interval always includes 0.

FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

The *demand for religious influence on government* does not appear to be a determinant of church influence, as in Models 3 and 4. These results are robust to using both WVS survey questions, and ISSP survey questions that explicitly ask respondents to agree that organized religions should influence votes and incumbents. Even in bare-bones models (not presented here) that included Popular Demand for influence and the controls (but excluded Fusion), demand is neither substantively nor statistically significant: even when given the most latitude to do so, Demand has no bearing on church influence on politics. If the other independent variables are included, as in Model 3, Demand continues to be very poorly correlated to church influence.

TABLE 4 HERE

Finally, *religiosity*, as measured by attendance at religious services, is a significant predictor of policy influence. In nearly every specification, Attendance is correlated to religious influence on politics. This makes sense in light of the idea that moral authority is predicated on religiosity:

a church cannot claim to represent the nation if few people are its members or faithful. It loses both substantive and statistical significance once we include institutional access in the models, and even more so once other independent variables are included. Tables 4 and 5 the models where the impact of religious attendance is statistically and substantively significant.

TABLE 5 HERE

Yet even once we take Attendance into account, the proxy for Moral Authority has an independent impact on policy outcomes. Even more importantly, once we include measures of institutional access, both Attendance and Fusion lose some of the substantive and statistical strength of their association to policy influence. This suggests that some of the impact of fusion and religiosity is *mediated* through institutional access as the critical channel of influence. However, the strong conditional relationships discussed earlier suggests that institutional access *moderates* the relationship between fusion and policy influence: the greater the religious nationalism and the higher the moral authority of churches, the greater the impact of institutional access. Such direct policy influence is thus the weapon of choice for powerful churches with societal clout—while their weaker brethren rely on the more ineffective partisan coalitions.

VI. Conclusion

The main theoretical goal of this article has been to demonstrate how churches effectively influence politics—and the conditions under which they can do so. The simple formal model, case studies, and quantitative evidence all suggest that the key to success is institutional access, rather than popular demand, mobilization on behalf of a political party, or a grateful former protégé.

As the case studies and the broader sample both show, the churches' moral authority makes institutional access possible—and at lower levels, it facilitates explicit coalitions with

political parties. Secular actors, whether political parties or governments, concede some of their policymaking authority in exchange for the support of churches that allows these secular actors to survive politically. Partisan coalitions explicitly rely on competitive political parties: institutional access does not, because it is possible in the absence of party competition, as in the case of the Polish communist regime. From this perspective, coalitions with political parties are neither the predominant nor the most effective way for churches to obtain policy influence.

Yet moral authority itself is brittle. It is undermined by overt and narrow politicking—but can also crumble when churches do not live up to representing the nation in other ways (for example, when the definition of the nation itself changes, as it did in Quebec in the 1960s). That said, since religiosity is distinct from moral authority, even open politicking by the church need not affect popular piety, church attendance, or individual behavior (Zubrzycki 2006, 222.) Such loss of moral authority, however, does greatly limit future policy gains. Institutional access continues, but the influence it channels decreases. Moral authority thus both establishes institutional access—and then sustains policy influence.

Two other implications follow. First, scholars of nationalism have tended to overlook how religion and national identity can symbiotically draw on each other and reinforce each other. By the same token, the “nation-state” comprises two distinct identities and loyalties, which may very well stand in opposition—and the churches that choose the side of the nation, as in Poland, Lithuania, Croatia, the Philippines, or in Ireland, gain far greater secular influence than those that opposed it, as in Italy, France, or the Czech Lands. The churches’ earlier actions (and the careful interpretation and inculcation of these histories), often in face of repression and persecution, legitimated their self-representations as the agents of national interests and thus a powerful influence on both new states and their policies.

Second, if we take churches seriously as interest groups (Warner 2000), then one implication is that political boiler rooms—informal consultations, covert legislative proposals, and hidden vetting of officials—offer a far more powerful influence on democratic policymaking than ballot boxes—electoral mobilization and support of political parties. Here, the argument presented here fills two gaps: on the one hand, while the existing scholarship has explained how coalitions arise, it has not examined the alternatives to public and partisan coalitions. We see that institutional access is one such alternative. Second, in contrast to other interest groups, churches may be especially interested in the “quiet politics” of institutional access, since their official efforts to influence policy often go against the wishes of their adherents. And here, institutional access allows a covert influence that is far less costly to the image of the churches as disinterested, nonpartisan, and divinely inspired advocates of national interest.

Table 1. Variation in Church Influence in Predominantly Christian Democracies on Policy Across Five Policy Domains since 1900: Education, Divorce, Abortion, Same-Sex Marriage and Stem Cell Technology.

Country	Influence	% rejecting religious influence on policy	Level of religious nationalism/ fusion
Ireland	9	72	58
Philippines	9	76	84
Chile	8	68	54
Austria	7	80	53
Poland	7	81	75
United States	7	51	66
Italy	4	68	52
Slovakia	4	71	50
Croatia	4	79	.
Spain	4	73	44
W. Germany	4	71	37
Australia	3	74	37
Bulgaria	3	79	76
Hungary	3	70	43
Portugal	3	89	66
Switzerland	3	69	39
Latvia	2	72	23
Canada	1	67	54
Denmark	1	84	33
Finland	1	58	23
New Zealand	1	73	38
Slovenia	1	73	32
UK	1	65	35
Czech Rep.	0	74	29
E. Germany	0	73	13
France	0	82	17
Netherlands	0	60	13
Norway	0	64	20
Sweden	0	52	17

Influence on policy: measured by whether policy changes were a) compatible with church teachings, and b) justified by the politicians passing them as having a Christian character, to avoid coding an accidental coincidence as influence. Influence in framing requires that a) religious officials first frame the issue as religious, and b) politicians then adopt that language in justifying their stances. Each country case could then obtain 1 point in each policy domain (5 domains: abortion, divorce, education, stem cell research and same sex marriage) for policy influence or policy framing since 1945. Range: 0 to 10 (5 domains x 2 possible points in each). Mean: 3.40. Standard deviation: 2.97. Full data set and code available from the author upon publication.

% Rejecting Influence: World Values Survey, 1995-2008, % responding that religious organizations should NOT influence politics. 2003 ISSP data for Australia, New Zealand, and Switzerland: % responding “religious organizations should NOT influence government.” Range: 51 to 89, Mean: 71.3, Standard deviation: 8.78.

Level of religious nationalism/ fusion of religious and national identities: % responding that it is “Important to be [Dominant Religion] to be [National Identity].” 2003 ISSP data. Range 13 to 84, Mean: 42.2, Standard deviation: 19.8

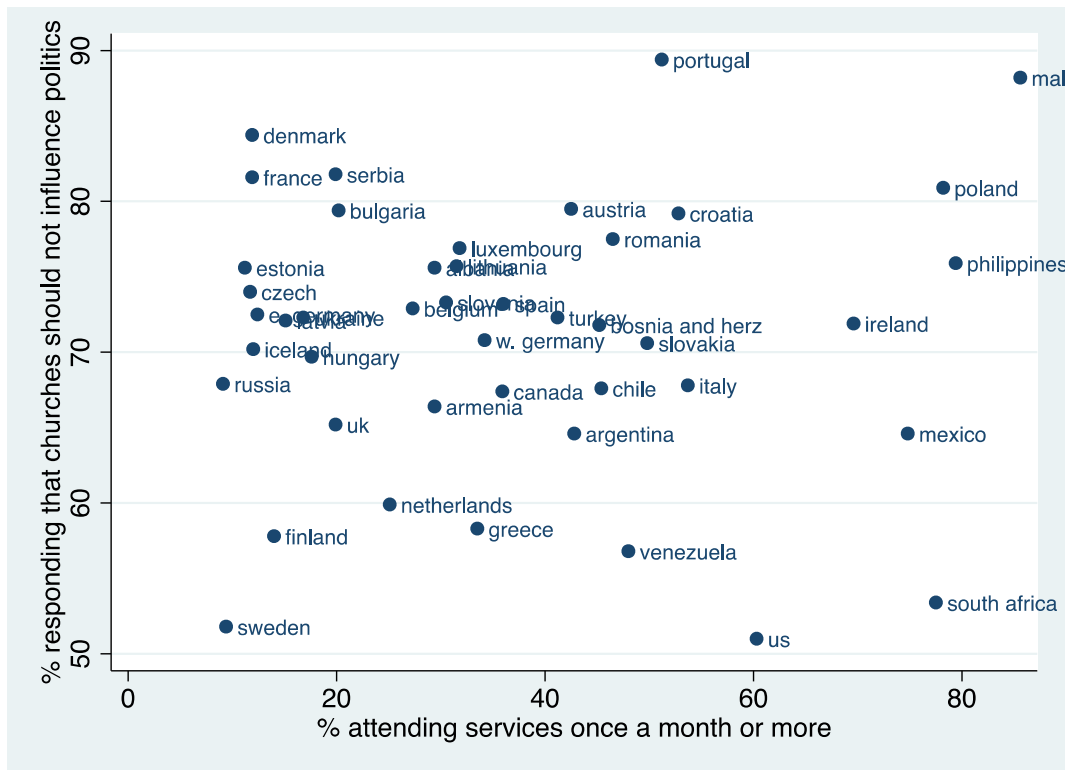
Table 2. Postwar church Influence on Policy Debates and Outcomes:

	Ireland	Italy
Abortion restricted? ¹¹	2	0
Divorce restricted?	2	0
Religion in schools? ¹²	2	1
Stem cell research restricted?	2	2
Same sex marriage prevented?	1	1
Summary score:	9	4

Figure 1: Demand for Church influence on politics

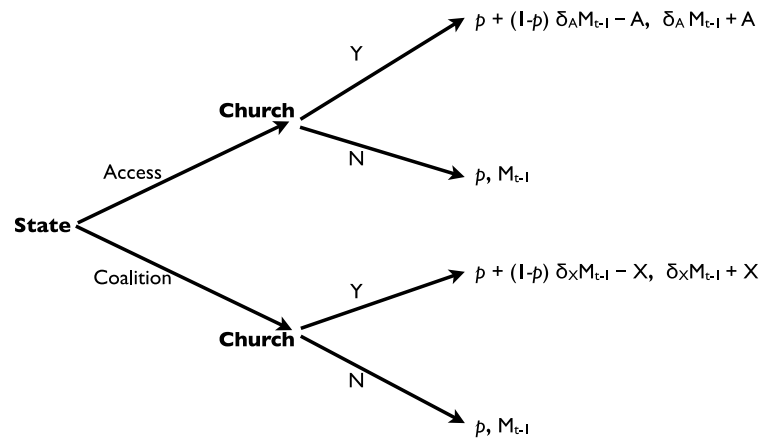
¹¹ Abortion is defined as “unrestricted” if abortion is available freely up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. It is “restricted” if access is more constrained, either at the national level or across sub-national units.

¹² Either the state funds religious schools, or mandatory religion/ ethics classes are taught in public schools.



Source: World Values Survey, 5th Wave. Results robust to using ISSP.

Figure 2. Model of Church-State Interactions



X: coalition offer made by secular state to church, concession made by state

A: institutional access given by a secular state to church, concession made by state

p : probability of secular actor remaining in office *without* church support

M: moral authority of Church

δ_X and δ_A : retention rate of M for Church if it enters into coalition or obtains institutional access, respectively.

Figure 3: Equilibrium outcomes as function of moral authority and state survival

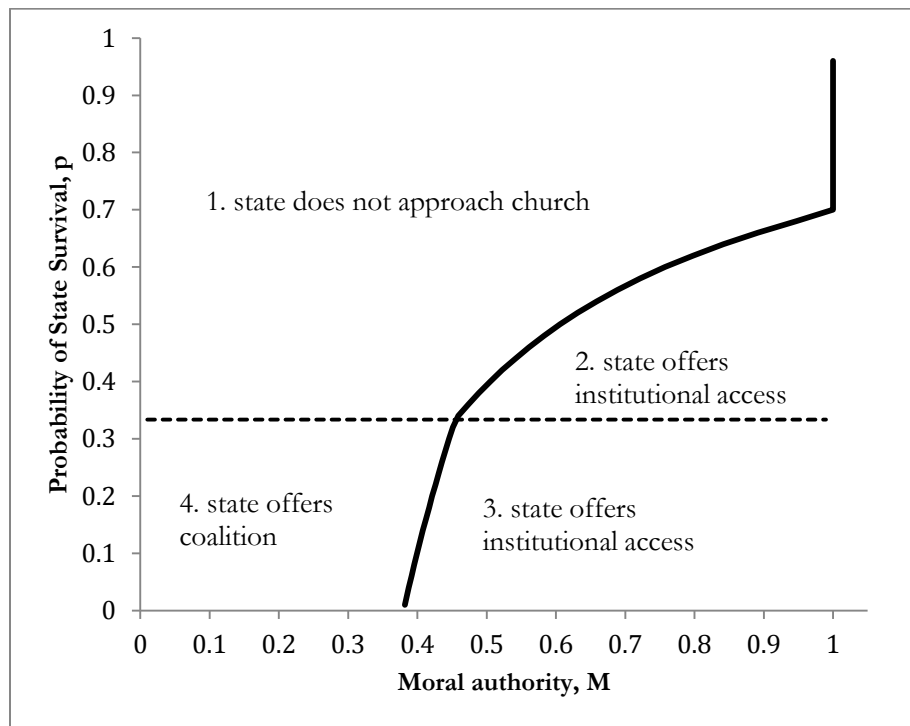


Table 3. Institutional Access: OLS Regressions, Policy Influence as DV

	Model 1: Institutional	Model 2: Inst. Access Fusion	Model 3: All
additive			
	Access		
fusion	0.046* (0.02) [0.05]	0.045* (0.02) [0.06]	0.029 (0.03) [0.27]
attend	0.053** (0.02) [0.04]	0.045* (0.03) [0.10]	0.042 (0.03) [0.15]
logGDP	-0.378 (0.56) [0.51]	-0.214 (0.60) [0.72]	-0.881 (0.68) [0.21]
Catholic	0.009 (0.01) [0.39]	0.011 (0.01) [0.30]	0.013 (0.01) [0.34]
institution	1.442** (0.66)	0.721 (1.07)	2.424** (0.83)

	[0.04]	[0.51]	[0.01]
institution*fusion		0.018 (0.02) [0.40]	
demand			-0.015 (0.04) [0.71]
coalition			-0.593 (0.63) [0.36]
constant	2.476 (5.92) [0.68]	0.991 (6.20) [0.87]	9.218 (8.17) [0.28]

Obs	28	28	24
R-sqr	0.84	0.85	0.87

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01 (standard errors in parentheses) [p levels in brackets]			

Table 4. Demand and Coalitions: OLS Regressions, Policy Influence as DV

	Model 4: Demand	Model 5: Coalition	Model 6:

Coalition Religion			

fusion	0.052* (0.03) [0.07]	0.048* (0.02) [0.06]	0.057* (0.03) [0.05]
attend	0.069** (0.03) [0.04]	0.077*** (0.03) [0.01]	0.074** (0.03) [0.01]
logGDP	-0.461 (0.69) [0.51]	-0.286 (0.65) [0.67]	-0.227 (0.67) [0.74]
Catholic	0.008 (0.01) [0.58]	0.003 (0.01) [0.83]	0.004 (0.01) [0.76]
demand	-0.034 (0.04) [0.43]		

coalition		0.066 (0.62) [0.92]	0.985 (1.44) [0.50]
coalition*fusion			-0.022 (0.03) [0.49]
constant	5.377 (7.99) [0.51]	1.423 (6.94) [0.84]	0.515 (7.13) [0.94]
Obs	25	29	29
R-sqr	0.79	0.79	0.80

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 5. The impact of Religiosity: OLS Regressions, Policy Influence as DV.

	Model 6: Fusion	Model 7: Fusion Religious Attendance
fusion	0.048* (0.02) [0.05]	0.063** (0.03) [0.02]
attend	0.077*** (0.03) [0.01]	0.152** (0.06) [0.03]
logGDP	-0.309 (0.60) [0.61]	-0.697 (0.67) [0.31]
Catholic	0.003 (0.01) [0.80]	-0.002 (0.01) [0.87]
attend*fusion		-0.001 (0.00) [0.21]
constant	1.687 (6.35) [0.79]	4.401 (6.62) [0.51]
Obs	29	29
R-sqr	0.79	0.81

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Figure 4. Marginal effect of Institutional Access on Policy Influence

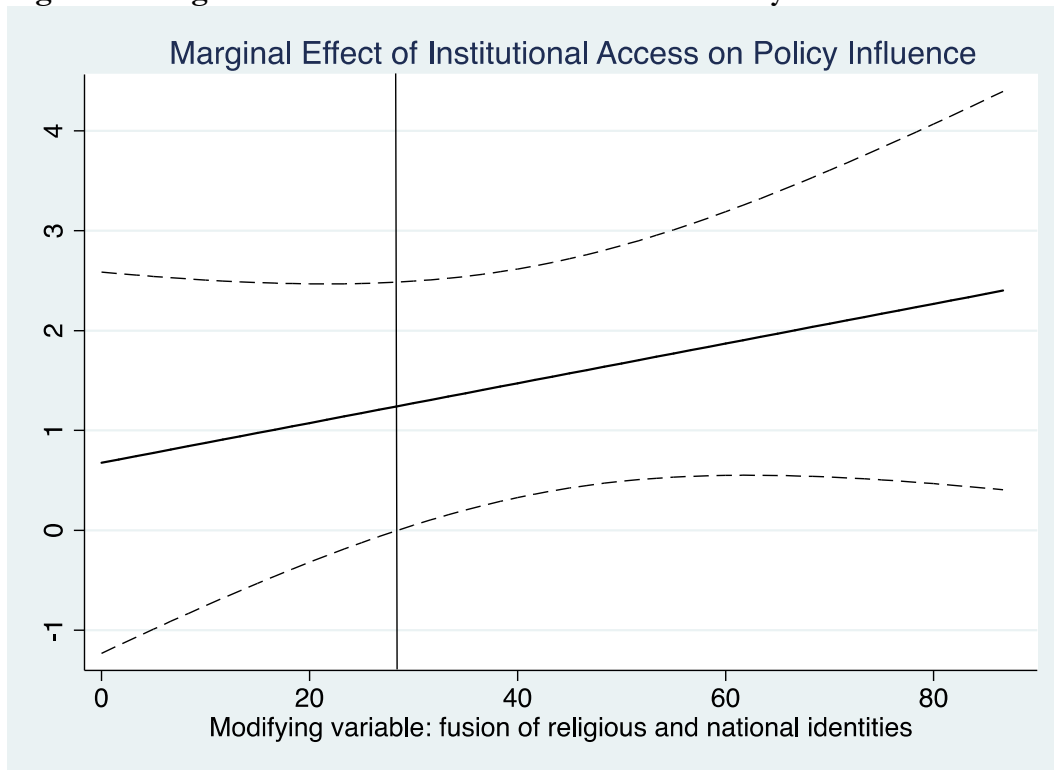
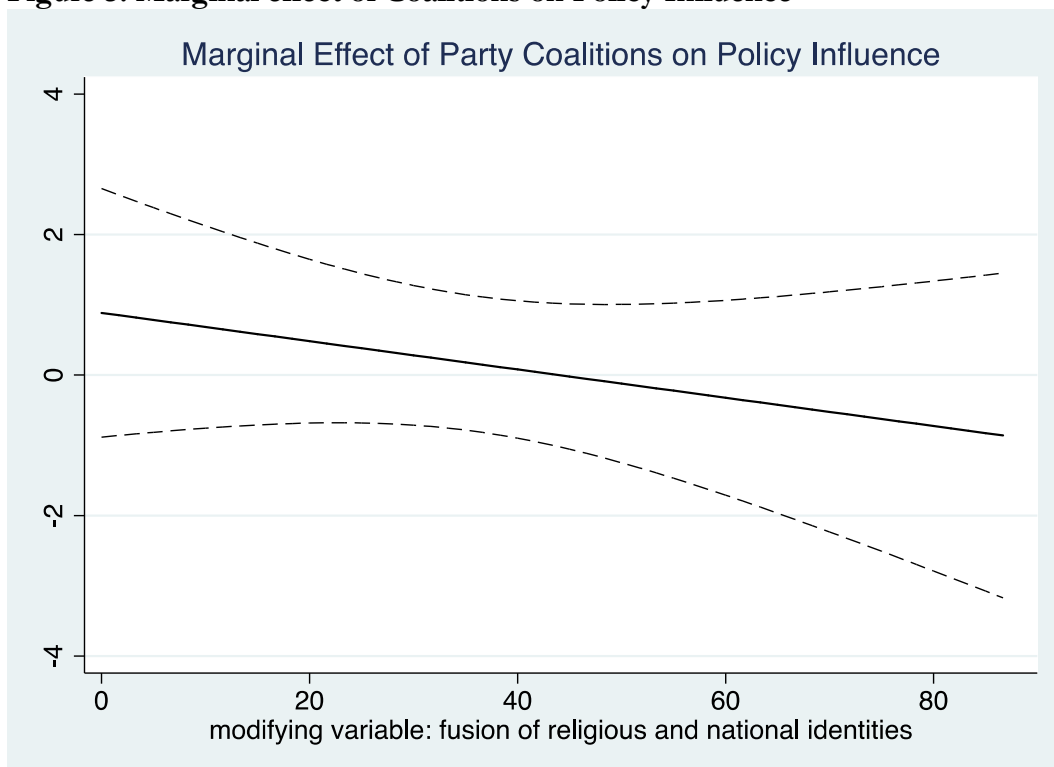


Figure 5. Marginal effect of Coalitions on Policy Influence



Appendix: Equilibria and Derivations

The church will accept an offer $X > 0$ iff the offer is sufficient to offset the church's loss of moral authority, such that $X \geq (1 - \delta_X) M_{t-1} \equiv X'$. The state, in turn, prefers offering X' and having the church accept to offering $X = 0$ and having the church reject if:

(Condition 1)

$$p + (1-p) \delta_X M_{t-1} - X' \geq p \text{ (the coalition will increase the likelihood of survival for the state).}$$

Substituting $X' = (1 - \delta_X) M_{t-1}$ yields

$(1-p) \delta_X M_{t-1} - (1 - \delta_X) M_{t-1} \geq 0$ (the church's contribution to state survival is greater than the loss of moral authority it suffers), which reduces to

$$(2-p) \delta_X \geq 1$$

In contrast, if $(2-p) \delta_X < 1$, the state would rather offer the church $X = 0$ and live without church support, rather than making an offer sufficiently large to gain the church's acceptance.

Thus, we have two scenarios:

I. If $(2-p) \delta_X \geq 1$, the state has the choice between offering A (which the church accepts) and X' (which the church also accepts).

II. If $(2-p) \delta_X < 1$, the state has the choice between offering A (which the church always accepts) and $X = 0$, which the church rejects.

I. In scenario I, $(2-p) \delta_X \geq 1$, the probability of state survival p without church support is sufficiently small, and δ_X the church's retention of its moral authority in a coalition, is sufficiently large. In this scenario, the state prefers offering A to X' (and in turn offering i' to no church support) iff:

(Condition 2)

$p + (1-p) \delta_A M_{t-1} - A \geq p + (1-p) \delta_X M_{t-1} - X'$ (the payoff for the state for the church accepting access is greater than for the church accepting a coalition)

and

$(1-p) (\delta_A - \delta_X) M_{t-1} + (1 - \delta_X) M_{t-1}$ (the difference in the church's retention of moral authority between access and coalitions *and* the loss of the church's moral authority under a coalition are equal or greater than the size of the institutional access.) Put differently,

$$M_{t-1} \geq \frac{A}{(1-p)(\delta_A - \delta_X) + (1 - \delta_X)}$$

If both conditions (1) and (2) hold, the state offers institutional access to the church in the subgame perfect Nash equilibrium; the church accepts institutional access.¹³

¹³ And the church would accept any offer $X \geq X'$, which does not happen.

If condition (1) holds and (2) fails, the state offers a coalition X' to the church in the subgame perfect Nash equilibrium; the church accepts any offer $X \geq X'$ and would accept institutional access if offered (which does not happen.)

Therefore, churches with larger levels of moral authority will be offered institutional access; while churches with lower levels of moral authority will be offered a coalition, as condition (2) shows, and as long as (1) holds. The size of coalition benefit X' increases as the moral authority of the church does.

II. If condition (1) fails, so that $(2-p)\delta_X < 1$, the state would be better off offering $X = 0$ than offering X' and having the church accept. The state thus has to weigh the option of offering institutional access against living without church support. The state prefers offering institutional access iff:

(Condition 3)

$p + (1-p)\delta_A M_{t-1} - A > p$ (the value of church institutional access to the state is higher than its probability of survival without church support.) Put differently, $M_{t-1} \geq \frac{A}{(1-p)\delta_A}$

The state offers institutional access to the church, and the church accepts, so that the equilibrium outcome in this case is the same as above. When condition (1) fails and condition (3) holds, the state offers institutional access to the church; the church accepts and rejects any offer $X < X'$ (which in equilibrium does not happen.) If the church's moral authority is particularly compromised by forming a coalition with the state (in other words, when condition (1) fails, condition (2) is easier to satisfy than (3)), then relatively low levels of moral authority are sufficient for a church to gain institutional access. Finally, when both condition (1) and (3) fail, the state offers $X=0$, the church rejects any offer $X < X'$, and would accept any offer of institutional access, which does not happen in this equilibrium. In this case, the state is neither sufficiently threatened to seek church support nor is the church's moral authority sufficiently large to make a coalition attractive.

We can summarize the discussion so far as follows:

Claim 1. The following is a unique subgame perfect Nash equilibrium when $A \geq (1-\delta_A)M_{t-1}$ (when the size of institutional access exceeds the church's loss of moral authority by obtaining such access).

A. If $(2-p)\delta_X \geq 1$:

• If $M_{t-1} \geq \frac{A}{(1-p)(\delta_A-\delta_X)+(1-\delta_X)}$, the state offers A . The church accepts A , as well as any offer $X \geq (1-\delta_X)M_{t-1}$, and rejects any other X . *The outcome is that the state offers A and the church accepts.*

• If $M_{t-1} < \frac{A}{(1-p)(\delta_A-\delta_X)+(1-\delta_X)}$, the state offers $X' = (1-\delta_X)M_{t-1}$. The church accepts A as well as any offer $X \geq (1-\delta_X)M_{t-1}$, and rejects any other X . *The outcome is that the state offers X' and the church accepts.*

B. If $(2-p)\delta_X < 1$:

- If $M_{t-1} \geq \frac{A}{(1-p)\delta_A}$, the state offers A . The church accepts A as well as any offer $X \geq (1 - \delta_X) M_{t-1}$, and rejects any other X . *The outcome is that the state offers A and the church accepts.*
- If $M_{t-1} < \frac{A}{(1-p)\delta_A}$, the state offers $X = 0$. The church accepts A as well as any offer $X \geq (1 - \delta_X) M_{t-1}$, and rejects any other X . *The outcome is that the state offers nothing to the church and the church rejects.*

It can also be shown that all of these combinations of conditions are feasible, in that there are parameter values satisfying all relevant combinations of conditions.

The equilibrium has a number of implications. First, churches with sufficiently high moral authority, $M_{t-1} \geq \frac{A}{(1-p)\delta_A}$, will be offered institutional access. If the church's loss of moral authority after X is sufficiently large, the state never offers a coalition. If it is not, the state will offer a coalition to churches with relatively lower levels of moral authority.

If the church loses a great deal of moral authority after accepting a coalition, churches with relatively modest levels of moral authority will be offered institutional access as well: the condition on M_{t-1} for the state to offer institutional access in the first scenario, $(2-p) \delta_X \geq 1$, is more restrictive than in the second, $(2-p) \delta_X < 1$. In this case, since a coalition comes at a very high cost to the church, and compensating for this loss would be too costly for the state, the state can effectively only offer institutional access.

If the state is highly vulnerable (p is low), the state will offer institutional access to churches with sufficiently high levels of moral authority and a coalition to churches with lower levels of moral authority. In contrast, if the state's survival does not depend on support by the church (p is large), the state will offer neither a coalition nor institutional access.

If the state values institutional access highly, only churches with high levels of moral authority will be offered institutional access. Moreover, the larger the loss of moral authority from accepting X and the smaller the loss of moral authority from accepting A , the more likely it is that the church is offered A . The threshold of moral authority above which a church gains institutional access increases in the value of the access to the state (A and in δ_X), but decreases in δ_A . The threshold is largest when δ_X and δ_A approach each other.

Thus far, institutional access has been assumed to be sufficiently valuable for the church to accept it if offered: this implied that $A \geq (1 - \delta_A) M_{t-1}$. While this is a reasonable assumption—institutional access is valuable and does not compromise greatly the moral authority of the churches—for the sake of completeness, the subgame perfect Nash equilibrium if $A < (1 - \delta_A) M_{t-1}$ follows:

Claim 2. When $A < (1 - \delta_A) M_{t-1}$, the unique subgame perfect Nash equilibrium is the following: if $(2-p) \delta_X \geq 1$, the state offers $X' = (1 - \delta_A) M_{t-1}$. The church accepts any offer $X \geq X'$, and rejects any offer $X < X'$ as well as A . If $(2-p) \delta_X < 1$, the state offers $X = 0$. The church rejects any offer $X < X'$ as well as A . Thus, if institutional access is sufficiently unattractive to the church, the state will offer a coalition only if the state is highly vulnerable (p is small) and the church retains sufficiently high levels of moral authority after accepting a coalition.

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