

Regulation, Economics and the Churching of France and Italy: analyzing religion as a public good.

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Abstract:

This paper considers the effects of institutional variations in religion-state arrangements by reflecting on their relationship to national averages of religiosity. Drawing on an analytical narrative of the modern history of religiosity in Italy and France, I argue that states which promote a predominant, society-wide religion as a public good during moments of economic growth help that religion mediate the downward effects which modernization and religious monopoly are expected to have on national rates of religious participation. In other words, certain types of state subsidies to an official religion can have a positive impact on rates of religiosity. While the paper does not call into question the theoretical usefulness of either secularization or religious market explanations of religiosity, it argues that variations in religion-state arrangements offer an important conditioning element to either theory. In particular, these variations can help demystify what seem to be the abnormally high religious rates associated with the “Catholic effect,” which both secularization and religious market theories have had difficulty affronting.

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This paper is part of a larger research project on the role of predominant, society-wide religions in democracies which analyzes how that role is conditioned by the institutional relationship between religion and state. The basic premise of the project is that the institutional arrangements governing religion and state at once reflect the history of the relationship between faith and nation but also conduct that relationship in a reciprocal fashion. Religion-state arrangements in this project are understood to be multi-faceted and their variations as having important consequences for the way religious and political goals are framed in any one nation. While the sociology of religion or the study of church histories have long scientific traditions in the West, systematically categorizing religion-state arrangements for a cross-national sample and theorizing about the expected effects of those arrangements on political, social and religious life has only recently been undertaken as an research endeavor (see, especially, Fox 2006, Grim and Finke 2006, Durham 1996, Linz 2004). This paper considers one of the effects of institutional variations in religion-state arrangements by reflecting on their relationship to national averages of religiosity.

I argue that the recent insights of this research program on religion-state arrangements, and most especially the broad distinction which has been made between the dimensions of government regulation of religion (GRI) and government favoritism of religion (GFI), help account for the high levels of religiosity in a certain set of predominantly Catholic countries in Europe. This religious activity, which has sometimes been referred to as the “Catholic effect,” is unexpected by either of the prevailing theoretical frameworks which scholars of religion continue to employ to understand variation in societal levels of religious participation, namely, secularization theory and religious market theory. This set of Catholic countries are too politically modern and industrialized to have so much religious participation according to secularization accounts, and they are too religiously monotonous and lacking of religious competition for religious market accounts of religiosity.

Not all predominantly Catholic countries, of course, have high levels of national religiosity. In what follows, therefore, I make use of a controlled comparison of two relatively similar Catholic countries with a rather striking divergence of national religious participation, namely Italy and France, and build a theoretical account to explain that divergence which focuses on the two state's varying levels of government favoritism towards the Catholic Church. By doing so I hope to help fill in some theoretical gaps left by secularization and religious market theory and shed some light on the apparent anomaly of high religiosity in Italy. I argue that the government favoritism which a state offers its religion, if it has one, can be thought of as some indicator of the extent to which a state promotes religion as a public good. When a national religion is promoted as a public good by the state, that promotion helps to protect that religion from the adverse effects that either modernization or religious monopoly can have on national levels of religiosity. This government favoritism towards religion, I contest, is theoretically distinct from various types of government regulation which religious market theorists expect to be associated with less active religious markets. Statistical models, therefore, aimed at explaining cross-national variation in religiosity, should add control variables for government favoritism, in addition to measures of modernization and government regulation and religious pluralism.

In what follows, I briefly review the current literature on secularization and religious market theories and discuss why either seems to offer an inadequate explanation for the high religious rates of participation associated with a predominant, society-wide religion in Catholic countries. I then present the paper's cases and explain why a closer examination of them serves as a useful inductive tool for refining our theoretical expectations of the effects of various components of religion-state institutional arrangements on different measures of national rates of religiosity. I do so by considering the causal mechanisms at work in both secularization and religious market explanations of the structure and level of religiosity in Italy and France. In the final part of the paper I take the hypotheses generated by this exercise of theory refinement and perform a simple test of them on a cross-national sample of countries using recent data collected on religion-state institutional arrangements by Grim and Finke (2006). I end with some concluding remarks on what the data does not explain and some further questions for research.

Paradigm Wars

There are, still, roughly, two major paradigms animating research programs aimed at understanding cross-national trends in religious participation. These are the paradigms of secularization theory and religious market theory. Theories of secularization generally make a claim that the various forces of modernization are associated with a general decline in religion. These forces are a complex bundle and include the rapid acceleration of urbanization, democratization, and education; the increase of per capita income, recreation and consumer goods; and the rationalizing effects of science, bureaucracies and the welfare state. There are many versions about how the processes connected with modernity interact with the demand and supply of religion and what the general decline of religion that follows actually looks like.¹

Some scholars emphasize the change in societal demand for religious goods which occurs when a more diversified and competent set of non-religious goods become available with processes of modernization. Functionalists since Durkheim have pointed out that movie theaters are more interesting places to gather on evenings than churches, that hospitals do a better job curing people than miracles, and that modern technology does more for farmers than prayers and fasting. Many of these scholars over the years have wondered whether the increasing availability of these new goods meant that institutional religion would have any useful function left to offer the modern individual. Some thought it would not and predicted the rapid or eventual demise of institutionally-connected religious belief in the world. Other scholars, especially those working in the tradition of Weber, focus on the structural changes caused by modernity which demarcated the proper sphere of religious influence. Most especially among these changes was the modern separation of church and state relative to government which transferred governmental authority's source of political legitimacy away from a divine source (popes and their anointed kings) to secular ones (constitutions and their elected ministers). This demarcation implied a de-sacralization of society through the reduction of the sphere of religious influence and the public and

¹ For recent review of the various versions of secularization, see Taylor 2007, Norris and Inglehart 2004, and Philpott, forthcoming.

coercive ability of its institutions and leaders to convince citizens to participate in religious rituals of belief. These structural theories are less certain about the total collapse of religion, which they allow might survive within a private, specialized sphere as the provider of private goods. However, once taken out of the public sphere as the underlying legitimator and guide of politics, these scholars are in agreement that some inevitable decline in national religiosity occurs. In either case, therefore, the forces of modernity are expected to be associated with less mass attachment to institutional religion and some society-wide decline in individual religiosity.

Religious market theory, which is also variously referred to as a supply-side or rational choice theory of religion, is much more ambivalent about any process of general decline in society-wide religious participation. Roughly working from the assumptions of supply-side economic theory, these scholars assume some level of general religious demand in any society.² The *homo religiosus* who is the object of this demand functions much like economic theory's version of *homo economicus*: he is a rational consumer of religious goods. The expression of religious demand, which could be thought of as the societal level of consumption of religious goods (how often individuals in society "buy" spiritual products by attending church services, consuming religious rites, praying, etc) is more or less determined by the market structure of that good's supply.

Again, working from classic economic theory, these religious market theorists expect that a "freer" (i.e. less regulated) and "more competitive" (i.e. more pluralistic) religious market will provide better and more diverse religious products for the religious consumer, thereby increasing national levels of religion-consumption, i.e. religious participation and religiosity. When, on the other hand, one religious monopoly dominates any religious market, the resulting decrease in competition among religious firms for souls and the monotony of a less diversified religious line of products combine to create a less dynamic societal religious landscape and lower levels of religious participation. The classic, model-generating case for religious market theory is the United States, whose persistently high national rates of

² For the more standard and classical accounts of supply-side religious market theory, see Finke and Iannaccone 1993, Stark and Iannaccone 1994, and Gill 1998.

religiosity always seemed to pose a problem to secularization theory, but which could be explained by the insight of the massive, jostling religious market of the country. Northern European Protestant nations, especially Scandinavia and Great Britain, are often used as an illustration of the effects that established churches have in creating dull and moribund religious markets.

While a few scholars do not treat these paradigms as jockeying for the exclusive rights to theoretical supremacy (Barro and McCleary 2006, Diotallevi 2001), the tendency has been more often than not to engage and marshal evidence under the banner of one of the two and win this particular set of paradigm wars.³ Chaves and Gorski's (2001) important article on the validity of presenting religious market propositions as a "general theory," called into question the utility of this sort of theoretical warfare. On the basis of the cumulative evidence of the moment, they encouraged scholars to abandon attempts at proving the superiority of religious market theory's causal logics and predictive capacities. Their advice for future research was to focus on placing religious markets into larger cultural and institutional contexts by better bounding theories, specifying models and methods. Regardless of this advice, many scholars since then have continued to use new and larger datasets to present evidence to support either the secularization paradigm (e.g. Norris and Inglehart 2001) or some sort of religious market-rational choice one (e.g. Introvigne and Stark 2005). Following Chaves' advice this paper attempts to refine our expectations about how the various explanatory forces which secularization theorists focus their attention on, along with the various explanatory forces religious market theorists concentrate on, interact with cross-national differences in the institutional relationship between religion

³ It should be noted that this warfare has mostly carried itself out in the academic journals and conferences of North America. There has been relatively little written about supply-side religious theory, and only recently, by European trained social scientists. Because much of Europe seems so thoroughly secularized and so little religiously plural, European sociologists have been skeptical of religious market theories. Where national religious markets remain on the continent, they are often treated as anachronistic cultural leftovers and the recent introduction of relatively modest numbers of diverse religious adherents, normally as the result of immigration, was suspected to relativize even further the absolute-ness of Christian Truths and the authority of its institutional guardians, as the introduction of competing secular ideologies had already so effectively done before. The wholesale privatization of religious belief in certain North European countries led these euro-sociologists to theorize that future (post-secularization) religious belief would be such an individualized choice that (where it outlasted the mega-forces of modernity) would continue to separate spiritually interested individuals from traditional religious institutions, creating the phenomenon of believing without belonging (see Davie 2000).

and state and together affect various components of national and individual levels of religious participation.

One of the great thorns in the side of both of these theories is the so-called “Catholic effect” (Smith and Sawkins 2003, Diotallevi 2001). The Catholic effect refers to the observation that there seems to be a good deal of religiosity happening in a number of European countries whose religious markets are totally dominated by the Catholic Church. Poland (participation 85%), Ireland (88%), Italy (51%), Austria (44%) and Slovakia (40%) could all be cited in reference. How could religious market or secularization theory explain such high levels of religiosity in such comparatively industrialized nations whose religious markets are so devoid of stimulating religious competitors?

In some ways, the important insights of José Casanova’s (1994) work on “public religion” could be framed as a theoretical response to the Catholic effect. Noting that there is a great variety in the magnitude of the effects of secularization, even within the boundaries of industrialized, Western Europe, Casanova suggested that some religions in certain countries (most notably Catholicism in certain Catholic countries) survived modernization and transformed themselves into public religions. Drawing on those versions of secularization which focused on the separation and specialization of modern spheres of influence, Casanova argued that while religion in Europe lugubriously suffered through the dissection of the totalizing world of “christendom,” over time, some religious actors also figured out ways to flourish in their newly demarcated spheres of influence. Casanova points out that these religious actors (once showcasing certain catholic countries) have been capable of using their base of organization in civil society to re-exert public, national influence by contesting political programs, orienting national debates, and shaping cultural identities and societal mores.

It is not entirely clear from Casanova’s work, however, what it is that makes one religious market, and Catholic religious markets in particular, more likely than another to resist the effects of modernization, reproduce themselves as a public religion and help sustain higher national rates of religious participation. As alluded to above, Catholicism as a dominating societal force does not seem good enough to guarantee high religiosity: countries like France and Uruguay, both overwhelmingly

Catholic at the cusp of modernity, are among the world's most thoroughly secularized nations today. In what follows I will argue that taking account of whether a state institutionally promotes religion as a public good can help explain why some Catholic countries have proved to be more resilient than others to the effects of modernization on religious participation.

Before doing so, I now turn to an analysis of religious activity in the two illustrative Catholic nations of Italy and France and dissect the various causal mechanisms that have been summoned by both secularization and religious market theorists to explain what appear to be anomalously high levels of religious participation in Italy. Doing so helps to ascertain whether there really is any exceptional amount of religious activity in the case of Italy and confront competing explanations as to its source. After presenting some recent data on religiosity in both countries, I turn to secularization attempts to explain high religiosity in Catholic countries, and Italy in particular, as the result of "cultural residuals." I then consider religious market explanations for the same phenomenon which hinge on the presence of a burgeoning external pluralism or a thriving internal pluralism. Finally, I analyze the institutional relationship between church and state in France and Italy. After discussing two different ways in which government regulation of religion may affect lower levels of national religiosity, I distinguish between government regulation of religion in general as opposed to government favoritism of religion and the promotion of religion as a public good. In Italy, but not France, religion was promoted as a public good during the Post-World War II economic and political transformation of Europe, and this helped propel the notable differences that state institutions had in mediating the effects of modernization and religious pluralism on national levels of religious participation.

Case selection: France and Italy

Italy has been under recent scrutiny as social-scientists have tried to explain what appear to be abnormally high levels of religious participation. Because the data, itself, on religiosity in Italy is the object of some debate (Castegnaro and Dalla Zuanna 2006, Introvigne and Stark 2005, Pisati 1998) I want to clarify what I intend by religiosity, and how I measure it in this paper. There are many different

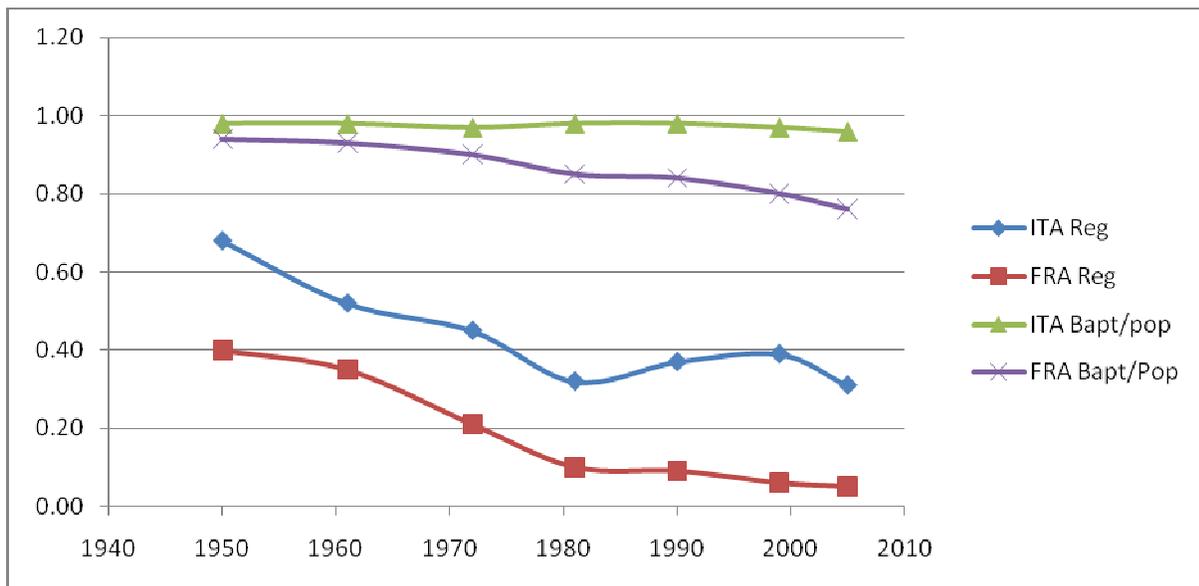
indicators by which scientists measure average national⁴ rates of participation. These indicators generally either count raw numbers on religious practice from hard data (i.e. how many members have registered in a given church; how many people subscribe to religious news services; how many cars are parked in a church parking lot on Sunday; how many official religious associations, charities and schools does a religion have, how many baptisms, marriages, funerals and ordinations are performed each year), or they calculate national percentages of various types of religious belief from survey data (how many respondents claim to be affiliated with a religious institution, believe in God, go to church on Sunday, go through rites of initiation, pray outside of church services, morally obey their tradition's theological imperatives, or celebrate major church feasts). Each indicator tells a slightly different story about religious participation and are often only appropriate for one religious creed (i.e. counting church attendance) or denomination (i.e. counting priests) or country (i.e. counting membership registration). For the purposes of this paper, while acknowledging a large range of types and rates of religious participation, I focus on two very general categories of religiosity: 1) the regular practicing faithful (who freely choose to have regular contact with an institutional religion and express that choice by regular participation in church services) and 2) the cultural or identity religious (who, while not regular institutional religious participants, still self-identify themselves with one religious institution or creed, either through their actual membership or their participation in its rites of religious passage and feast days).

Given the above it is little wonder that there is some discussion among scholars of Italy about whether there is truly any exceptional level of Italian religiosity. According to what indicators? And compared to what others? Based on World Values Survey (WVS) data on the number of self-reported regularly participating religious faithful and numbers of priestly ordinations, some have argued that Italian religiosity has experienced a recent period of growth (Introvigne and Stark 2005, Diotallevi 2001) and, what is even more interesting, that the locus of that growth has been in the more industrialized, wealthy and secure northern regions of Italy (Diotallevi 1999). Other Italian scholars point out that many

⁴ And many other ways for analyzing sub-national and local religiosity rates.

of those respondents who say they go to mass every Sunday actually do not (Castegnaro and Dalla Zuanna 2006), and other scholars drum the reminder that the great majority of Italians who claim that they are “Catholic” on surveys do not claim that they believe in or follow church principles (Cipriani 2003). In addition, survey data which is specific to Italy alone generally show slightly lower levels of self-reported, regular religious participation than the WVS data does. However, even when we examine the second set of data, self-reported regular Italian religious participation and religious cultural identification with the Catholic Church are higher than what would be expected if compared with other average European levels of religious participation, even when national indicators of modernization or religious pluralism are taken into account (McCleary and Barro 2006, Norris and Inglehart 2004). In other words, Italy seems to be off the regression lines of either secularization or religious market models. Attempts to explain why this is the case by either dismissing Italy as an outlier or by modulating the hypothesized mechanisms of secularization or religious market theories, I argue, are not quite satisfactory, especially when studied under the comparative light of religious participation in France.

Graph 1: National trends in religiosity: Italy and France



When analyzing the numbers referred to above, it needs to be emphasized that Italian religiosity can only be considered statistically “high” when it is compared to the religiosity of other countries with similar demographic characteristics, but not when compared to itself. Italian religiosity at the end of the 20th century was significantly lower than Italian religiosity at the beginning of the 20th century. In other words, Italy did not escape the dramatic effects of processes of secularization and suffered significant declines in national levels of religious participation during specific moments of the twentieth century.

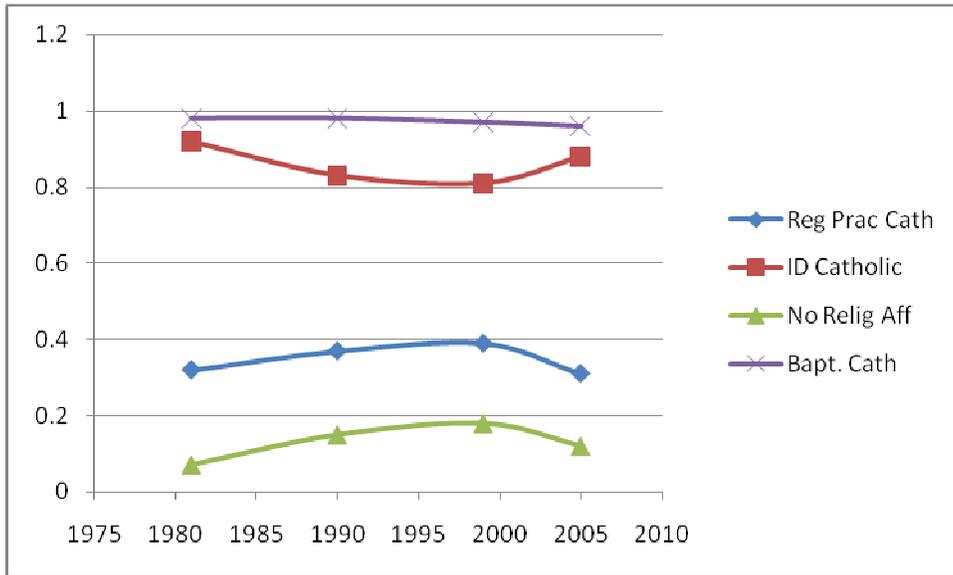
This decline in national religiosity, in both Italy and France as elsewhere in Europe, paced with that of increases in education, income, urbanization and the consolidation of democracy. However, as graphs two and three suggest, secularization seems to have had greater limitations in Italy than in France over the period of post-World War Two European period of economic growth. These graphs show both the aggregate numbers of baptized Italian and French as a percentage of their total populations,⁵ as well as the percentages of Italians and French who continue to claim that mark of identity later in life.⁶ While the aggregate numbers decline in both (at a faster rate in Italy than in France) many more Italians than French continue to identify themselves with that religious-identity heritage. Even if they have no intention of actually “obeying” the Church, Italians are much less likely than their French counterparts to declare themselves atheist (17.1% of French and 2.7% of Italian respondents in the WVS 2005 sample) or simply as someone without any institutional church identity.⁷

⁵ Using data registered by the Catholic Church’s *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*.

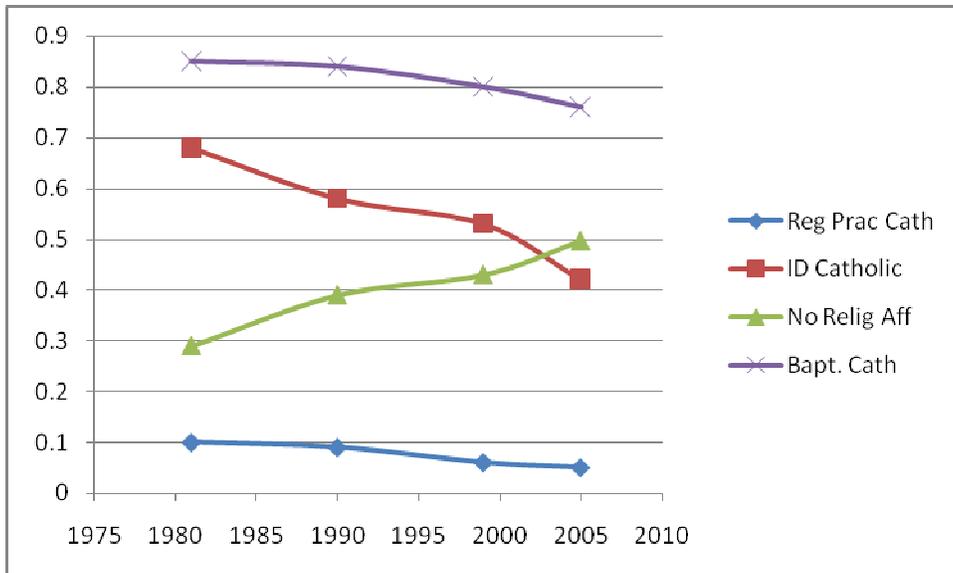
⁶ Using World Values Surveys.

⁷ As graph three indicates, in 2005, for the first time in recorded survey history, more French designated themselves as having no religious affiliation than did identify themselves with some loose Catholic identity.

Graph 2: Italian Religiosity (on cultural and regularly practicing indicators)



Graph 3: French Religiosity (on cultural and regularly practicing indicators)



One attempt to explain this relative difference from within the framework of secularization theory is with the use of the concept of “cultural residuals,” as Norris and Inglehart (2004) have coined it.

Modernization, they point out, reaches each national history at various religious starting points. Italy, it could be argued, had a higher cultural store of Catholic identity than France did when modernization occurred, respectively. Italy's national levels of religious participation (of both kinds) might have declined from a much higher starting point or declined much slower (but declined nonetheless) because of the cultural and structural imbeddedness of Catholicism in the Italian social fabric. Garelli (1991, 2007) and Cartocci's (1990, 1994) analyses with respect to exceptional Italian religious participation lean in this direction of structural explanation. Garelli (1991) points out that Italy has always been the land of thousands of Church steeples, or *mille campanili*, and modernity or not, it is difficult to erase the path dependent effects of that sort of architectural presence so easily,⁸ nor the militaries of religious orders, Catholic political movements and Catholic boy scouts which set up shop in Italy and thrived on top of that structure for centuries. Both structural-secularization and many other explanations (e.g. Introvigne and Stark 2005) for why Italian religiosity was relatively more successful in resisting secularization also usually point out that the Pope's residence is in Italy, creating a very non-negligible residual-cultural effect. Rome is the global headquarters of Catholicism, and Italians literally ran the Catholic Church's bureaucracy (the Roman Curia) and named themselves the Church's supreme ruler (the Pope) for centuries. It would be strange if all this combined Catholic physical presence did not have some effect on Italian religiosity.

While the argument is not without merit, I contest that this sort of structural thesis gets carried out of hand with respect to Italy and needs to be deflated. France has powerful claims to similar Catholic inheritance rights herself. The French Catholic Church has always understood herself to be the firstborn (daughter) of the Catholic Church, *la fille ainée*, and with good reason. France is the origin and home of an immense and historic set of Catholic theologians and great monastic, fraternal, religious and lay orders which can rival that of Italy. This theological-spiritual richness parallels France's long-time political

⁸ It would be very interesting to pursue this logic of architectural path dependency and its effects on religiosity in places like Germany or Japan where allied bombing campaigns did, in a short span of time, wipe out that physical religious structure.

position as the symbol and defense of global Catholic identity, for centuries before Italy was even a nation. In the 1600s and 1700s, when France was the most powerful and populous⁹ nation of Europe, this marriage of Catholic tradition and French political identity was at its high-watermark. French monarchic rule was sanctified by the Pope's coronating blessing, and French kings and emperors provided military aid and troops to the pope when he was in difficulty.¹⁰ French citizens of this period were compelled upon pain of expulsion or worse to profess the Catholic faith by participating in the paschal feast and annually confessing before a priest and receiving Holy Communion during the Easter Triduum. Gabriel LeBras' (1956) monumental study of 8,000 parish registries across France reports that 90% of French citizens most probably did exactly so until at least 1789 and could, therefore, be considered to be regular-practicing Catholics. While the century following the French revolution saw the beginning of a long struggle between anti-clerical and clerical forces who vied over the proper political arrangement between church and state, that struggle was mirrored in Italy, and the two countries entered the 20th century at relatively similar structural starting points of religion. For the 1931 census, a year in which Italy's population, for the first time, reached par with that of France, at forty million citizens each, both countries had similar levels of priests per capita and both were home to a peaking level of active Catholic lay participation and public influence.¹¹ While the frequency of French church attendance of this time was probably lower than that of Italy, the great majority of both countries (over 90%) were still baptized Catholics; they both had similar levels of diocesan priests (45-50,000); and France had 10,000 more parishes (and *campinili*) than Italy (see graph four).¹² It is difficult to claim how the simple presence of Italian cultural Catholicism could prove to be so much more resistant than French cultural Catholicism

⁹ Throughout a period when Italy's collective population was only one half the size of France's.

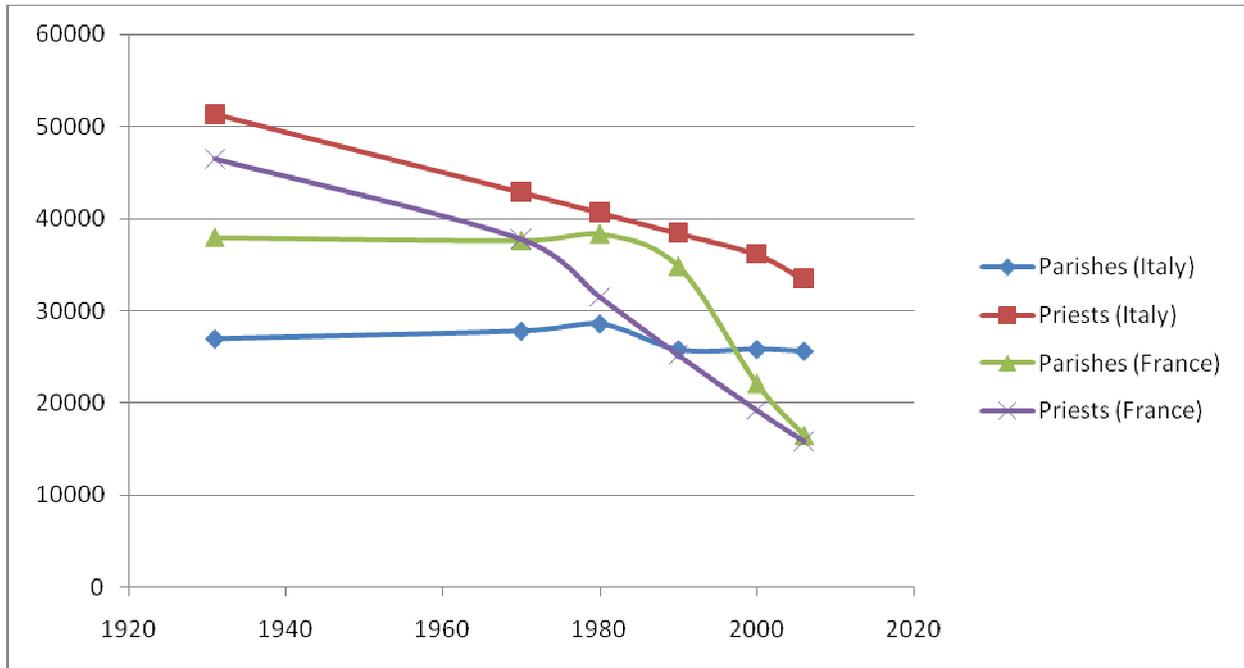
¹⁰ It should also be remembered that France is the only other nation besides Italy whose territory happened to physically house the Roman Popes, who officially resided in Avignon from 1305-1378 (and where rival French popes continued to reside until 1423).

¹¹ Effectively organized under the umbrella of Catholic Action, a dense structure of civil association inspired by Pope Leo XIII's social encyclicals.

¹² France, incidentally, has also understood herself to be the land of church steeples, perhaps even more so than Italy. At Easter time Church bells and not bunny rabbits herald the return of sweets and feasts, and as Hervieu-Leger (1992a) points out, the church steeple continues to remain a prominent political symbol of French tradition and civic organization.

without making some argument about how that identity was regenerated and re-proposed over time in either country.

Graph 4: National trends in parishes and priests



This is one reason why some Italian authors have focused their attention on the growth of religious pluralism within Italy as a possible explanatory factor of Catholic religiosity that is more or less disconnected from historical, structural or institutional forces. Arguments of this type focus on the effects of the growth of two different types of religious pluralism, either external or internal, and attempt to employ a classic religious market approach to explain Italian religiosity.

1. External pluralism

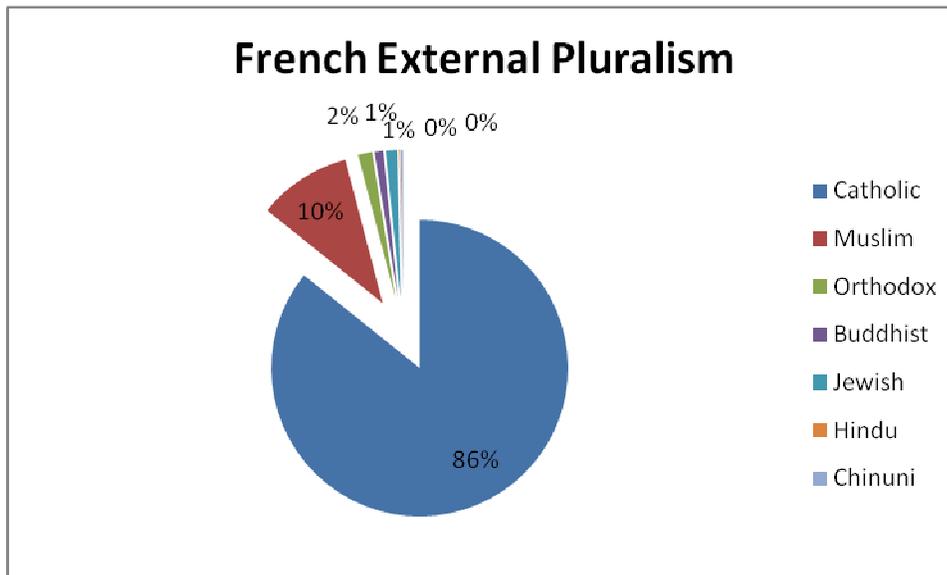
Many Italian scholars have noted that the Italian Catholic Church has faced a growing amount of external religious competition in recent years (Introvigne and Stark 2005, Garelli et al. 2003, Pisati 1998). On an official scale, connected to some institutional deregulation of the national religious market in 1984, six non-Catholic religious entities established concordats with the Italian state for the first time, including the Waldesian Church, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Assemblies of God, The Union of Jewish

Communities, the Baptists and the Lutherans, and other religious entities, such as the Testimonies of Jehovah and some bodies representing unions of Islamic communities are moving in a similar direction. Legislation proposals have also been on the parliamentary agenda for several years to completely revise the system of concordats under use now to further de-regulate the religious market. This modest growth of officially operating religions in Italy, however, does not capture the perceived scale of the very notable and new waves of recent immigration to Italy. The majority of these immigrants are either from the East, of Orthodox religious origin, or the South, of Islamic or Christian origin, and their collective presence has been adding thousands of non-Catholic (and potentially evangelistic) faithful, as well as their churches and ministers, into Italy's pool of citizens each year. Faced with competition for their faithful's souls, money, and building space,¹³ some scholars working within the religious market tradition have argued, has forced the leaders of the Catholic Church to improve and diversify their services as well as their publicity of them in order to protect their market share. As Gill (1998) has described was the case among Catholic and Protestant religious competition in Latin America, even as the Catholic Church attempts to lure Catholics back into its fold, these new, non-Catholic religious actors also continue to win converts, and the end result of their combined efforts has been the stabilization or even growth of religious participation registered in Italy since the 1990s.

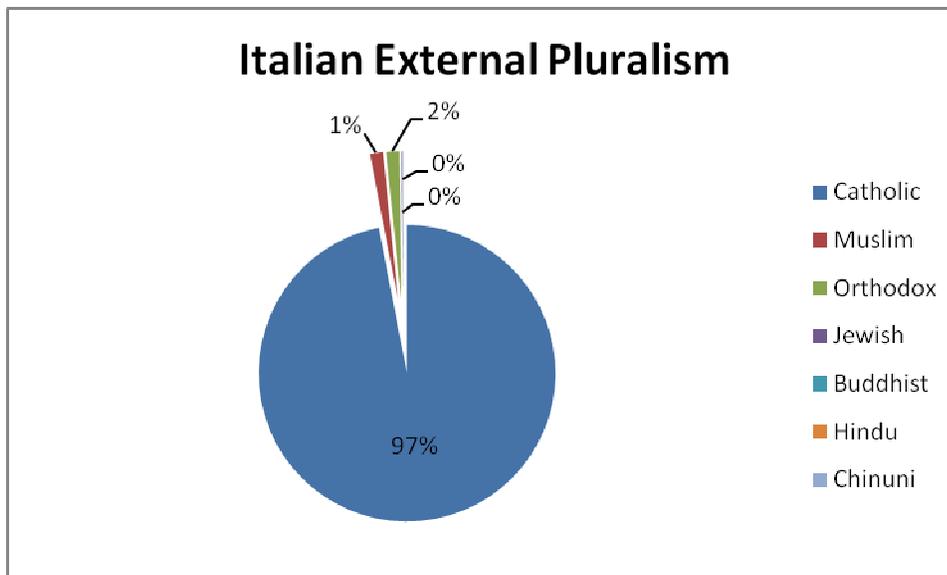
France's experience is helpful for thinking through the weakness of this mechanism as the driver of Italian religiosity in and of itself. Using the numbers given by Barrett et al. (2001) on religious adherents in either country, we can see that France's religious pluralism is much greater than that of Italy's, and it is a population that is likewise increasing.

¹³ Even a little bit of new competition works with the force of a lash, religious market theorists point out (Jeremy 1988).

Graph 5*:



Graph 6*:



Data based from Barrett et al.'s World Church Encyclopedia. Here all Protestant Churches are collapsed into the Catholic category, and non "non-religious category is calculated.

As graphs five and six indicate, non-Catholic competition still remains a marginal, if important, phenomenon in Italy, representing perhaps 2-4% of its population. In France, non-Catholic religious competitors occupy a much larger share of the religious market. France is home to much larger and growing populations of Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish, Protestant and Hindu faithful than Italy and similar levels of Eastern Orthodox. What is more, as expected by religious market theorists, this heightened pluralism in France seems to correspond to a more fluid religious market than in Italy. Since the 1980s, especially, more French (20%) claim that they have changed religious denominations than Italians (13%) (WVS 2005), and more French Catholics choose to be baptized each year as an adult than in Italy (19,400 in 2006 in France, 4,200 in Italy). Both figures suggest a higher level of religious conversion associated with a wider range of offer in religious goods, but without any correspondence to an increase in the robustness of French religiosity, as religious market theory would expect. While it would be difficult to claim that this heightened pluralism and increase of market fluidity has drove down religious participation in France, it certainly has done little to stop its decline over the last fifty years. If, then, an increase in external religious pluralism is really at work in fortifying Italian religious participation, it is difficult to imagine that it is the driving force alone.

2. Internal pluralism

As other scholars have done working on the Catholic effect elsewhere (Smith and Sawkins 2003) some Italian researchers, therefore, have turned to theorize about the possible effects of an internal competition within a religious monopoly (Pisati, 1998, Diotallevi 1999, 2001 and Introvigne and Stark 2005). Their argument posits that the Catholic Church is a large world unto itself, with its own internal religious market, so to speak, which supports all sorts of religious participation and expression (including the most extreme forms of the completely secularized, ethno-national Catholic). Coupled with the de-regulatory measures of the Second Vatican council of the Catholic Church, which encouraged the creation of a larger variety of Catholic lay communities, the 1960s-1980s saw an upsurge in the numbers of Italians participating in various new Catholic organizations. These organizations are theorized to have created a much better and diversified religious project which has catered to the spiritual needs of a new

generation of Italian Catholics. If the older Catholic religious orders and organizations like Catholic Action and Catholic scouts are included in this panorama, the Italian Catholic world appears to contain huge diversity within itself. As Diotallevi (2001) and others have pointed out, Catholic religious consumers can move freely within this internal market, making this sort of intra-denominational pluralism more effective and satisfying than the normal inter-denominational pluralism studied by religious market theorists. Consumers get all the religious benefits of religious product diversification and competition among religious firms, but avoid paying any of the costs associated with conversion: it is relatively easy to switch Catholic parishes, for example, or transition from being a boy scout to a Franciscan tertiary or to achieve both at the same time, all the while remaining a conventional Catholic.¹⁴

While the new religious movements which flourished in the aftermath of World War Two have certainly seemed to breathe energy into the Italian Church, it is not obvious that Italy has *more* internal pluralism than other Catholic nations or that these intra-Catholic religious firms are necessarily even in competition with each other. As Pace (2007) writes, while a competitive spirit may have certainly characterized Catholic communities outreach efforts in the 1960s, as new movements tried to establish themselves, the Church hierarchy has been vigilant about the shape these internal factions form or the authority that any of them exerts within the hierarchy. In the 1980s, for example, the Vatican gathered lay community leaders to Rome and ordered them to work together with one another under the direction of Church authority. This forceful centralization of Catholic authority and guidance strikes at the sort of competitive activism market theorists have described animating the activity of pluralistic inter-denominational religious markets.

In this respect, it should be remembered that France, along with the whole of the Catholic world, was also deeply affected by the reforms of Vatican II. While secularization ruthlessly destroyed parishes

¹⁴ There are, of course, limits to this postulation. Many Catholic associations have entrance costs and exit barriers much higher than those associated with the “conversion fees” for entering or exiting many non-Catholic churches. It takes years to be a Jesuit, for example, and once in, if a Jesuit wants out, it takes year to do that, too. Even many of the new Catholic lay communities require rather restrictive covenants, life commitments or even vows of their lay members.

across the hexagon, France also saw the introduction and growth of an impressive array of new Catholic movements. Contemporary French Catholicism is especially marked by the presence of a dozen Charismatic Catholic communities, of American inspiration, alongside traditionalist Catholic communities, predominantly organized in the Fraternité Saint Pie X founded by the schismatic Catholic bishop, Mgr Marcel Lefebvre. While some of Italy's most active new communities, such as the Focolarini, Comunione e Liberazione or the Neocatecumenali (of Spanish origin), barely register in national French surveys of new Catholic movements, neither the charismatic or traditionalist communities have had comparable success in Italy. Both countries are also home to a range of small, but influential new communities with a strong presence in their host country but little in their neighboring countries. These include the Frères de Saint-Jean, the Soeurs de Bethléem and L'Arche of Jean Vanier in France, and the communities of Sant'Egidio and Bose in Italy. Along with these new movements, an account of French or Catholic internal pluralism also needs to add the continuing presence in either of ancient movements and monastic orders;¹⁵ Catholic scouts (120,000 to 180,000) and active remnants of various Catholic Action associations; and, especially in the case of France, a much more diversified Catholic immigrant culture.¹⁶

It is difficult to accurately count members of these communities in any aggregate way¹⁷ or measure their influence, and there have been few systematic efforts to do so. According to World Values Surveys, there appears to be proportionally greater numbers of regular practicing French Catholics (40%) than Italian Catholics (20%)¹⁸ who report that they are active members in some Catholic association. However, among all Catholics, or the population in general, those numbers look very similar and hover

¹⁵ Similarly reported Catholic Almanacs from the middle of last century (1951 in Italy, 1964 in France) counted 93 masculine religious orders which had either originated or held their general superior's home in Italy and 62 for France. The same count for feminine religious orders, however, put 186 in Italy, but over 400 in France.

¹⁶ Including large numbers of Italian, Portuguese and Algerian Catholics who emigrated to France in the 1950s and 1960s. As Cholvy and Hilaire (2005) note, Portuguese immigrants, despairing at the unbelief of French Catholics, created their own sub-diocesan catechism books, churches and masses, much as immigrant Catholic communities had done in the United States. This has not been the case in Italy.

¹⁷ Numbers for active Catholic charismatics in France, for example, range from 5,000 to 500,000.

¹⁸ A number which concurs with recent surveys by the Bishops' conference in Italy (CEI) which have attempted to measure their faithfuls' activism in religious movements.

around 6-8% of the total population, with total Italian activism in religious associations slightly higher than that of the French.

That said, although their exact numbers elude us, surveys of both countries do not indicate a wild divergence in the levels of internal pluralism within the national Catholic market and explanations which refer to the deregulatory measures of Vatican II do not tell us why those reforms ought to have been more effective in stirring an active internal pluralism in Italy instead of France in the first place. From the numbers that are available, in fact, it appears that both countries have relatively similar levels of Catholic faithful active within the various associations which establish their internal plurality. It is, therefore, once again, hard to make the claim that internal religious pluralism by itself could be the driver of the differences between French and Italian levels of religious participation, without referring to the conditions that make one internal pluralism more successful than the other.

3. Institutional Mediations

As recent research on types of church-state relationships and government involvement in religion has shown, there are many different ways by which governments and religions institutionally entangle themselves (Fox 2008). For this paper I want to focus on two broad distinctions among this variety by first making a distinction between two types of government regulation of religion; and then making a distinction between government regulation of religion in general and what I define as government favoritism of religion which, I argue, some states use to promote religion as a public good.

There are two ways, I argue, by which government regulation can contribute to a decline in the national rates of religious participation. The first kind of regulation, which I refer to as **type A** government regulation of religion, has to do with the direct regulation of a religion's *organization* by the state. This type of regulation is in keeping with the causal logic story of religious market theory and hastens secularization. **Type A** regulation could be most associated with the established churches of the Protestant Northern European states of Scandinavia and Great Britain.

A religious monopoly is especially poor at offering convincing religious products to individuals in modern democracies when that monopoly is the product of a national church whose clergy are

functionaries of the state and whose leaders are appointed by politicians.¹⁹ Adding to the natural indolence of monopolistic markets, the establishment of a church as a national religion technically makes the religion a political entity which is directly or indirectly organized and regulated through political appointments. The national clergy are, therefore, dependents of the state and their leaders chosen by politicians. In addition, established churches often automatically register their citizens as members of the national faith. This makes the clergy's salary dependent not upon whether or not they attract new members or persuade their automatically registered ones to become faithful or fervent believers, but simply whether they continue to perform their codified functions. These functions are set by a religious hierarchy populated by church leaders who have been picked because they have proven to be leaders who were in tune to the modern development of that state, and not those who actively fought it.²⁰ While not necessarily prohibiting other religious firms from operating, establishing the national faith skews the religious market so much in favor of this one religious monopoly that it becomes very difficult for any new religious firm to pretend equal competition,²¹ all the while offering little incentive for those leading the predominant religious firm to not turn into complacent religious entrepreneurs.

There is a second kind of regulation, however, what I refer to as **type B** government regulation of religion, which could be thought of as being relative to the enforcement of individuals' religious *behavior* in society. Except under limited circumstances **type B** regulation is much more difficult for modern democracies to tolerate.²² In fact, most European countries have very low levels of **type B** regulation today. **Type B** regulation can be employed on behalf of or against religion and can also contribute to less national religious participation, but not exactly because of the causal logics of religious market theory. When it is employed by the state against religion, **type B** regulation can significantly raise the costs of religious participation, either in the private or public realm, and fuel national declines in religiosity.

¹⁹ This concept parallels Chaves and Cann's 1992 measurement of government regulation of religion which registers whether or not the government appoints its church leaders.

²⁰ Thus claims by some scholars of a secular clergy complicit in the decline of religion.

²¹ If they ever attempt to sail for their shores.

²² Although I argue was still rather present in earlier waves of democracy.

Ironically, for religious market theorists, as was the case in France, **type B** government regulation of religion can actually speed decline in the influence of religion even as it does so in the name of encouraging religious pluralism. By actively regulating against any public religious influence which challenges the secular authority of the state, France has often raised the costs for expression of religious belief over the last two centuries. In the early years of the French republics, the French government did this by passing anti-clerical laws meant to disestablish Catholicism's totalizing role over politics and society and, ostensibly, make it safer and more free for all individuals to hold a wide range of religious and non-religious beliefs. This type of regulation against the Catholic Church had very different results on subsequent levels of French religiosity than the same type of government regulation employed on behalf of the Catholic Church by French monarchs before the French revolution.

3.1. Religion as a Public Good

While economists have a lot to say against monopolies, there is another important economic literature which posits that some kinds of "public" goods are best subsidized by the state in the form of something which resembles a monopoly, either as the most efficient means to ensure that product's quality or because it is too sensitive a product to outsource. Public education is the standard textbook example of a public good, and its design is explicitly connected to whether religion is promoted as a public good through the part it plays in socializing a nation's youth.

Public education systems are created to achieve a range of things. They are meant to provide a nation's citizens with an important set of working skills (through reading, writing, arithmetic and gym class), and, at the same time, socialize those citizens into a common set of civic values meant to create some loose sense of shared national identity. In such a way the state plays a part in the formation of a productive, loyal, responsible and harmonious citizen body that is hoped will help maintain a healthy human society. Although there is a lot of discussion in the United States about where its civic values came from, there exists some consensus that their spirit is relatively codified in the writings of the founding fathers, the constitution and the personhoods of great American leaders and heroes: Lincoln, Tubman, Roosevelt, Kennedy, King and so forth.

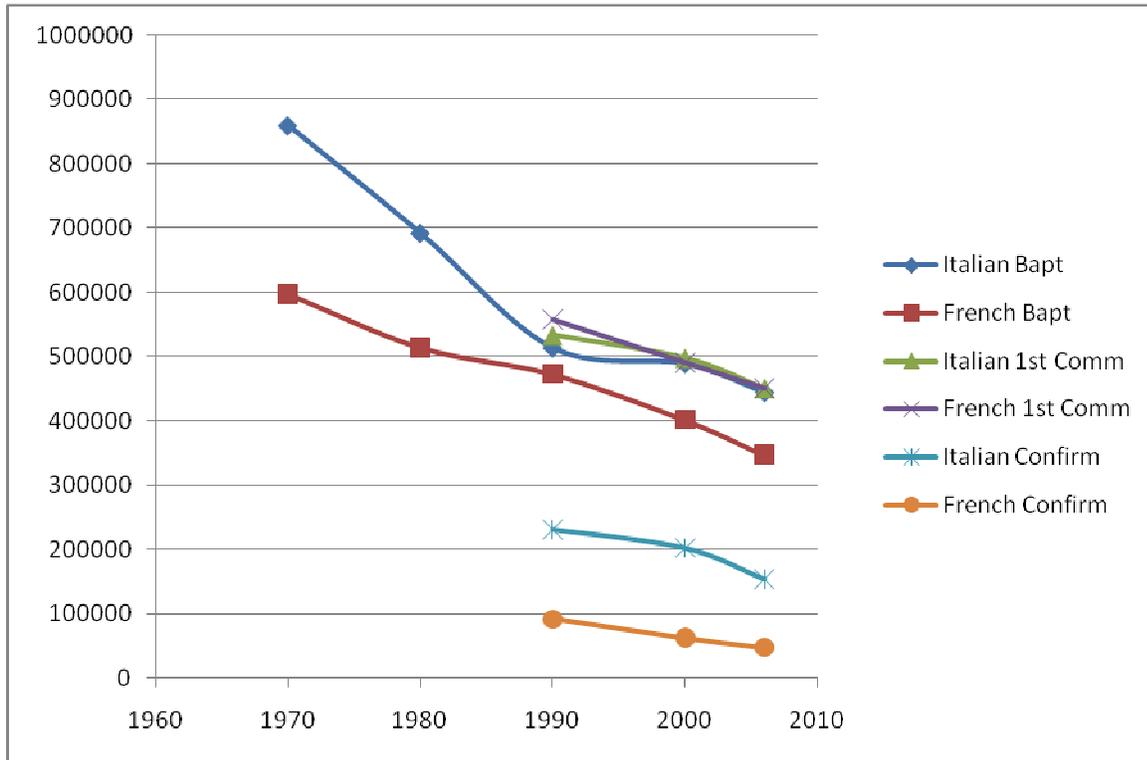
In France, as alluded to above, government regulation of religion was carried out within the framework of *laïcité*, institutionalized by the laws of separation of church and state in 1905, and the constitutions of 1946 and 1958. *Laïcité* was designed to help promote the civic values of the 1789 revolution, *liberté*, *fraternité*, *égalité*, and to do so without reference to any Catholic or Christian values. The promotion of a French national identity, and a common set of values intended to provide the ontological undergirding of a national social contract between its citizens, has been explicitly and continuously secular since 1905. In Italy, on the other hand, from 1929 to 1984, the Italian state's constitutional social contract was not so explicitly secular and carried with it some religious framework. The form of that framework had been negotiated between Mussolini and Pope Pius XI in 1929 and made institutionally binding in the Lateran Pacts. The pacts, which were intended to garner Catholic support for the Italian state, required the state to institutionally promote the Catholic religion as a public good, even after Italy democratized and codified a level of separation of church and state.

The institutional compromises governing the relationship between church and state and society which resulted from these pacts had important consequences on the mediation of the effects of the oncoming, rapid appearance of the forces of modernity on Italian religious participation. The pacts made the “the Roman, Catholic and Apostolic Church” the official religion of state. In order to protect that status, the pacts included several measures of both institutional governmental favoritism towards the Catholic Church as well as some **type B** governmental regulation of religion on behalf of the Church. With regards to governmental favoritism, the state adopted most of the Church calendar feasts as its national holidays, allowed the Church wide authority in marriage and annulment matters, and, perhaps most importantly, activated the teaching of Catholic religious education in public schools, following a religious curriculum which was to be approved by the Catholic Church. With respect to **type B** government regulation of religion, while other non-Catholic religions were given protective status, offences against the “religion of state” were criminalized in the Italian penal code. Although outright discrimination against non-Catholic beliefs or government regulation of individuals' Catholic religious beliefs was de-regulated or faded away with the end of Fascism, throughout the 1950s, protestants,

communists and irreverent youth were regularly arrested and tried for a variety of misconduct against the official religion of state.

This statal promotion of the Catholic Church in Italy was not a powerful enough measure to stop the forces of secularization. By accepting democracy as the governing principle of politics, even in a “confessionally Catholic democracy,” the Catholic Church could no longer claim the rights to a totalizing or superior position of authority in politics. Nor could such government involvement in religion prevent the large numbers of Italian citizens who stopped spending their leisure time at the parish and turned to more authoritative experts for advice on life matters. The Catholic Church, however, through the government favoritism promised in the Lateran Pacts, remained institutionally woven into the underlying national, symbolic and social fabric. Therefore, while the secularizing effects of modernization had dramatic consequences on national religious life in Italy, they were not as deleterious as they were to be in France. Promoting religion as a public good in Italy gave the Catholic Church some protective incubation time which blunted the effects of modernization on mass attachment to the institutional Church, creating a stop-gap valve which slowed the Italian rate of religious decline. The Church’s state-mandated time of access to the public education of all Italian children helped the Church sustain a continual regeneration of Catholic identity and memory as a nationally shared cultural touchstone. The effects of this are especially to be seen in the remarkable resilience of the numbers of Italian Catholics who, without desiring regular participation in Catholic activities or obligations, continue to consider themselves Catholics and go through the rites of Catholic initiation (see graph seven).

Graph 7: National participation in Catholic initiation rites



While the numbers of Italian baptisms has declined in recent years, most of those who are baptized go on to take their first communion and become confirmed. In France, where many less children are baptized in the Church every year, strikingly fewer of those children go on to receive their first communion and even fewer of them ever become confirmed. This helps explain why so many more French are likely to not identify with any religion on surveys, or declare themselves convinced atheists, and why so many Italians continue to consider themselves both culturally and regular practicing Catholics. The positive effects of any increase in the external or internal pluralism on religious participation in Italy needs to be understood in this context of institutional favoritism which sustained the collective, societal perception of Italy as a culturally religious country throughout the second half of the 20th century.

Despite being the fille ainée of the Catholic Church and sharing a similar history of clerical-anticlericalism; a similarly important canon of Catholic saints, artists, theologians, kings, associations and political movements; similarly diverse numbers of internal religious associations as well as external

competitors; even though all that, France did not promote religion as a public good. Her children were socialized into civic values within the framework of *laïcité* and taught that religion's place was in the private sphere. Institutionally, therefore, France did little to break the fall for the Church from the post-war forces of modernization. As the national memory of equating the identity of French citizen to French Catholic faded and lost substance without any systematic public attempt at regenerating that myth, the numbers of French interested in participating in religious rites of passage or even considering themselves Catholic also began to decline (Hervieu-Leger 1992b). As a result, the French Church was forced to radically restructure its physical presence in French society in a way that the Italian Church has not. As graph four indicated, over the 1980s and 1990s the numbers of active French parishes with a resident priest were reduced by over half, destroying parish networks that been established for centuries. By the time the Church had re-invented herself as a provider of modern spiritual goods to which a new generation of Catholics could adhere to, after Vatican II, the French Church had much less spiritual voice or even physical presence to reach potential buyers of such goods. Young, "modern," regularly practicing Catholics still exist in France, but they do not constitute a wide enough base from which the Church can assert itself as a force of public, contestatory religion, as it has been able to do in Italy and elsewhere.

The state promotion of religion as a public good, therefore, can help explain why some Catholic countries were better positioned to resist the downward forces of secularization on national levels of religious participation, making them, simultaneously, more probable candidates to re-launch themselves as a public religion. To the extent that the promotion of a predominant religious identity as a public good includes *more* government favoritism of religion and *less* **type A** government regulation of religion, or, in democracies, **type B** regulation as well, we would expect that promotion to have a greater effect in sustaining higher levels of religious participation. Democratic states who actively subsidize a culturally religious product but avoid either turning it into a state organized bureaucratic institution (through **type A** regulation) or explicitly coercing belief in that religion (through **type B** regulation) will be more successful in helping that religion survive the downward effects of modernization. This also

makes a plausible explanation as for why Catholic countries with institutional government favoritism of religion are also more likely to resist the negative effects of religious monopoly.

Throughout the negotiations of the Lateran Pacts, Pope Pius XI avoided as best as he could to allow the Italian state to institutionalize any sort of regulation of **type A** over the organization of the Church on Italian territory. Much of this drive, and the difference between the Catholic Church and other Protestant Churches, has to do with the millennia nature of the Catholic Church as a supra-national organization. In earlier centuries the Catholic Church, like its Northern Protestant cousins, vigorously sought an intimate connection with the authoritarian political regimes of the day in order to provide for their security and to couple the state's monopoly on the use of force and coercion to compel religious belief. As an international organization whose pope was not tied to any one nation, however, the Catholic Church was also more concerned with losing any autonomy to national politicians and minimizing any sort of state control over Catholic organization or belief. The optimal Catholic institutional arrangement was a confessional state as opposed to an established Church, which allowed the Church to dictate the national moral economy, but prevented the state from any interference in the Church's organization. Under such an arrangement, Catholic Bishops and theologians were promoted by the Vatican, not a national state bureaucracy, and much more likely to resist any sort of strengthening of an autonomous political sphere which would weaken Church authority, decouple nation and faith or break the bond between Catholic individuals and the Catholic Magisterium. In its ideal scenario, therefore, the Church was at once protected and subsidized by the state, but also at liberty to organize itself in a way that maximized church authority relative to state authority. In some countries, like Italy, the Church was successful in obtaining something nearer to an optimal confessional state, while in other Catholic nations, like France, it failed to do so.

Brief Statistical Analysis.

While this paper is primarily a theory-generating one, thanks to the availability of the recent datasets of Grim and Finke (2006) and Fox (2006), we can conduct a relatively simple cross-national statistical analysis of that theory. Future research will need to refine these analyses further, but I present

one here nonetheless as a means to clarify the hypotheses of the previous sections and to generate some credence that they are capable of carrying explanatory weight to a larger sample of countries.

In the preceding paragraphs several binary distinctions were made among what could be construed to be independent and dependent variables of interest. Before moving on to a regression analysis of those variables, I present a summary of the theoretical distinctions and their hypothesized effects.

Distinctions:

1. *2 types of religious participation (DV):* religious identity and regular religious practice
2. *2 types of secularization theories:* those which concentrate on the forces of modernity which affect the supply of religion (diversification of spheres) and those which affect its demand (individualization, rationalization, recreation)
3. *2 types of religious market theories:* those concentrating on the effects of pluralism and those on the effects of regulation
4. *2 types of religious pluralism:* internal and external
5. *2 types of government regulation of religion:* relative to religious organization and relative to religious behavior
6. *2 types of government involvement in religion:* government regulation and government favoritism towards religion.

The table which follows charts out the hypotheses of the effects of interactions among these variables on religious participation through the use of ideal examples.

Table 1: Interactive hypothesis chart of variables affecting religiosity

	<i>Independent variables</i>						<i>Dependent variables</i>	
	GRI A	GRI B	GFI	Econ. Dev.	Demo.	Pluralism	ID	ATT
France	Low	Med	Low	Hi	Hi	Med	Med	Low
Italy	Low	Med	Hi	Hi	Hi	Low	Hi	Med
USA	Low	Low	Low	Hi	Hi	Hi	Hi	Med
Sweden	Hi	Low	Med	Hi	Hi	Low	Hi	Low
Algeria	Hi	Hi	Hi	Low	Low	Low	Hi	Hi
Kenya	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Hi	Hi	Hi
Laos	Hi	Hi	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

The regression analysis results below make use of Grim and Finke’s (2006) measures of Government regulation of religion (GRI) and Government favoritism of religion (GFI). While these measures were specifically designed to make a distinction similar to the two dimensions of religion-state arrangements discussed above, Fox’s (2006) more comprehensive, but less bundled dataset could also be used in the analysis. For the sake of brevity I consider only Grim and Finke’s 2006 data here.

It should be noted, however, that Grim and Finke’s (2006) measure of Government favoritism of religion is not a complete measure of whether a religion is promoted as a public good in the sense above. Their indicator was created for one point in time, and, as such, does not capture the generational process of socializing the youth in a nation over time to a set of identity values. Nor does it capture whether governmental support for religion is in a state of growth, regression or stability. Nevertheless, Grim and Finke’s measure of Government Favoritism ought to give some indication of the extent to which a state promotes and subsidizes a religion, and, from our theory, we would expect higher levels of state promotion of religion to be positively correlated with higher levels of religiosity levels of religiosity.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Church Attendance

	All			Democracies		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
HDI	-3.047**	-3.184**	-2.997**	-7.240**	-7.289**	-5.601**
GRI	-0.008*	-0.003		-0.149**	-0.141**	
GFI	0.025**		0.021**	0.030**		0.003
Pluralism	-0.699**	-0.726**	-0.696**	-0.721**	-0.796**	-0.603**
GINI	0.039**	0.040**	0.040**	0.017**	0.015**	0.020**
Sex	-0.051*	-0.049*	-0.051*	0.283*	0.283**	0.274**
Age	0.15**	0.014**	0.015	0.018**	0.018**	0.018**
R^2	0.080	0.084	0.080	0.116	0.120	0.110
Constant	-3.936	-3.553	-3.881	0.032	0.300	-1.643

Coefficients of multi-variate regression analysis on World Values Survey (WVS) question, “How often do you attend religious services?” The dependent variable is reported at the individual level of analysis. Models 4-6 control for whether the individual lives in a democracy as determined by Freedom House’s “fully free” designation. GRI is “Government Regulation of Religion” and GFI is “Government Favoritism of Religion,” both from Grim and Finke (2006) coded for the year 2003. HDI is the United Nations Human Development Index coded for the year 2003. *P= .05 level, **P= .01 level

The results of this cross-national sample give some support of these hypotheses. In all of the models government regulation has a negative association with individual rates of religious participation, measured according to World Values Surveys’ classic indicator of individual religious participation, and government favoritism has a positive one. In all but two of the models that association significant although substantively modest. These results are strengthened when the pool of countries analyzed is limited to those listed as “fully free” by Freedom House’s democracy rankings. This makes sense from our theoretical discussion above: in democracies, the capability to employ **type B** government regulation of religion is greatly reduced. Therefore, most of the positive effects stemming from the use of coercive power to enforce religious belief are also reduced. As such the negative consequences of **type A** regulation of religion and the bureaucratic defects of a state monopoly on religious organization appear to

be statistically stronger. In this context, whether or not the government offers favoritism to its religion also remains important.

While our government regulation indicators support religious market expectations, our religious pluralism indicator does not. Here the indicator is statistically substantive and significant in every model and suggests a negative relationship between religious pluralism and religious participation. This concurs with studies by Halman and Draulans (2006) and Chaves and Gorski (2001) and calls into question any general link between increased religious pluralism and increased religious belief. While the pluralism argument might seem to work in certain cultural-geographical settings, as other European sociologists have noted, the presence of more religious pluralism is also often the result of a more open, secularized society, not a force driving the growth of more religious belief.

The most substantive explanatory variable in all of these models, in the absolute, however, remains the human development index, offering further evidence of the explanatory power that modernization and economic development have with respect to rates of religious participation. The process of modernization in marginalizing the institutional influence of religion in society and politics and the corresponding decrease in rates of religious participation can be mediated and refracted to some extent by variation in levels of pluralism, regulation and favoritism. Changes in this dominating variable, however, prove to be more significant than variations among religion-state institutional arrangements or the structure of the religious market.

Conclusions:

The major intent of this paper was to make a theoretically compelling case for the importance of studying national variations in religion-state arrangements and whether states promote religion as a national public good when attempting to explain cross-national rates of religiosity. The paper did not call into question the explanatory power of the independent variables at work in either secularization theories or religious market theories, but insisted that religion-state arrangements can provide a mediating context for the interaction of those forces with an average individual's religious belief. The explanatory power of governmental favoritism as an indicator of whether religion is promoted as a public good seems to take on

special importance in those countries where very little religious pluralism is present. Even in the democratic context of a relatively free religious market, with little coercive governmental regulation of religion, states which promote one predominant religious identity as a public, national good, often help that religion to better navigate the process of modernization and maintain some public role in society.

Making this point was a large task and necessitated brushing aside or downplaying a whole range of other theoretically important ideas and processes that are intimately connected with it. As a means of conclusion I want to come back and make a few qualifying observations about some of those points.

1. It is important to be clear that this paper is not trying to make any normative claims about any ideal religion-state arrangement, for Catholicism or other religions. Italy's higher level of religiosity and its more public expression does not necessarily make it qualitatively better than France's lesser lived and less politically influential expression of religion. Some claim that the average French Catholic is more "authentic" than the average Italian Catholic on account of the Church's condition in France. Others claim that Italian Catholics have done a "better" job reflecting on the connection between their religious and political values. The evaluation of these claims is not the point of this paper.

2. The process of promoting religion as a public good is slow but not static. As Fox (2008) emphasizes, states can decide to stop promoting a religion or even actively begin to regulate it. Levels of religiosity and the content of religious belief is also not a static thing and, even in a post-modern epoch, can further change over time. In 1984, for example, the Italian state negotiated some institutional changes to its relationship with the Catholic Church, making Catholic education facultative for public school students, striking old legislation on crimes against the Church from its penal code, and placing an opt-out for taxpayer's to not give the previously allotted 0.8% of their taxes to the Catholic Church. With these changes, it will be interesting to see whether Italy's relatively consolidated bloc of regularly practicing and cultural Catholics, who had been helped and protected by the state during society's transition to modernity, will now be strong enough to independently continue to regenerate itself without that help.

3. The process of secularization comes across as a bounded one here. The tight correspondence between religious decline and the rise of a specific bundle of "modern" forces seems especially true for

the post-World War Two boom in Europe. More nuanced versions of the connection between various individual pieces of that bundle and new or evolved forms of religious belief still need to be better theorized in order to predict and understand their connection to contemporary and future trends of religiosity.

4. This is particularly the case for rates of religion in the developing and, especially in the Islamic world. Many predominantly Islamic countries have experienced relatively high rates of economic growth over the last forty years. However, unlike many countries during the post-World War Two era or throughout the third wave of democratization, that economic growth in the Islamic world did not tightly correlate with more democracy. In many of these predominantly Islamic countries, especially in the Arab world, Islam is both highly regulated and shown high favoritism by the state, and their societal levels of religious participation remain very robust. Because of this difference in the modernization sequence, it is not clear how the introduction of fuller democracy would effect religiosity in these states. It is quite possible that the creation of “Islamic democracies” which reduce **type B** regulation of religion by the state may still sustain relatively high rates of societal religious participation by keeping high levels of both **type A** regulation and state favoritism towards religion. Alternatively, if more waves of economic growth do not produce more democracy in these countries it is conceivable that the current mix of high regulation and favoritism of religion will be able to maintain contemporary rates of religious participation.

5. The promotion of religion as a public good is largely beneficial to sustaining high numbers of the identity or culturally religious in society by underwriting the religious identity of the national myth. This makes it easy for the majorities of new generations to understand themselves as having some national and religious identity and that paring also helps reinforce those smaller numbers of the regularly practicing faithful who invest themselves in the organization and evangelization of that religion. Sometimes, however, it appears that this identity connection between faith and nation is able to traverse the harsh effects of modernization without any institutional support by the state through a deep correspondence, written in the blood of liberation struggles, between one religious institution and the very idea or existence of a nation. Ireland and Poland seem to embody these kind of countries.

6. The role of religious political parties have taken a backseat in this paper. They are important, and more needs to be said about the ways in which they mediate the relationship between religion and state and societal religiosity. In some ways we would expect that the creation and consolidation of a religious political party would reflect both the level of state, institutional involvement with religion as well as the experience of that religion over time with the democratic process. We might expect, therefore, that religious parties have more of a chance of surviving and projecting power in states which offer greater favoritism to a national religion. However, as that religion adapts to, and is marginalized by or extracts itself from, the democratic process, we would expect that an analysis of religious parties over time to tell us much less about the connection between nation and faith and more about the organization, goals and evolution of a political party.

7. Finally, the focus of this paper has been on the effects of an institutional relationship between religion and state on societal levels of religiosity and made use of two countries who had similar religiosity starting points but who instituted different religion-state arrangements. For a fuller analysis, it would be useful to reverse the causal arrows and think about how different levels of national religiosity could affect changes in the institutional relationship between religion and state. This would be an interesting question to ask of contemporary secularized countries in Europe who sometimes find themselves moving to protect certain national religious practices as species on their way towards extinction. It would be an equally interesting question to pose of those countries currently involved in regime transitions, and whose national forces are not dominated by clerical-anti-clerical forces as was much of Europe during the time of their transition to democracy.

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