

Religion and Party Politics in the West

Zsolt Enyedi (enyedizs@ceu.edu)

Department of Political Science
Central European University

Winter semester 2019-20 (2 credits, 4 ECTS credits)

Class meetings: Wednesdays, 9-10:40

Office hours: Monument Building, Room 210, by appointment

Course description

Religion has always been an important factor in shaping the attitudes and party preferences of citizens, in influencing the identities of parties and of social movements, and in structuring their alliances. This prominent political role was expected to diminish in the developed world as part of the process of modernization and secularization. The course investigates the historical background and the current validity of this expectation, focusing on party political aspects, but also considering the attitudinal and institutional environment of the religion-politics linkage. The politicization of religious differences, church-state relationships, and the interaction between religiosity and political values will receive special attention throughout the course. The geographical focus of the course will be on Europe and Northern America, but issues related to other regions will be also discussed.

After introducing the most relevant historical antecedents, the course will turn to the discussion of the cooperative relations of churches with the state and the competitive relations with each other. The first part of the course will conclude by the examination of the links between religious background, values and policy preferences in the public.

The second part will start with a discussion of specific party families. We will focus on Christian democratic and radical right wing parties and we will analyze the relationship between religion and populism. Then we move to the discussion of voting behavior and religion, to the changing role of religion in US politics, and to the influence of religion on European party systems. The course will end with reflections on the relationship between religion and democracy and with a discussion of the politics of atheism.

Course requirements

This is a two-credit course. Students are expected to be present at all meetings. If one is unable to attend the class, (s)he should signal this via an e-mail to the lecturer. Activity in the classroom can be complemented with questions, suggestions and comments (maximum 200 words) sent to the lecturer or uploaded to the e-learning site. The use of electronic devices (laptops, tablets, e-readers, phones, etc.) is kindly discouraged.

Evaluation

Presentation: 15%

Two position papers: 40%

Class activity: 15%

Questions uploaded to the e-learning site: 10%

Final mini-essay: 20%

Presentation. You need to give a short (ten-minutes long) presentation that covers, with the help of one or more of the recommended readings, a sub-topic of the theme of the week. The presentations need to be based on a short handout, circulated to other seminar participants by Tuesday 4 pm.

Position papers. You need to submit two 800 words-long position papers, excluding bibliography. The position papers should summarize the content of the readings assigned for a particular week and comment on them relying on previous readings and lectures. In the position paper you must refer to at least two academic texts on the topic that are additional to the mandatory readings. The reproductive part (intelligent, selective summary that covers the major claims and techniques of the readings) is supposed to provide about 60 percent of the paper. The rest should consist of original ideas, commenting critically on the readings' concepts, design, methods, or findings. The first position paper must be submitted by the sixth week, uploaded to the e-learning site not later than Tuesday 4 pm.

Class activity and submitted comments. Participation is measured not only by the quantity but also by the quality of contribution. In addition to the activity in the classroom, you need to upload to the e-learning site - by 4 pm, Tuesday, each week - one question suggested by that week's readings, with a brief explanation. The question should address important substantive or methodological issues that emerge from that week's readings.

Final mini-essay. The final 2000-words long paper should be focused on two recently published articles that present opposed, or at least different, views on a substantive, conceptual or methodological matter in the field of religion and politics. The essay should highlight and evaluate

the differences and aim at solving the controversy. The deadline for the submission of the essay is one week after the course ends.

Learning outcomes and their assessment

With the help of the course the student should acquire the ability to:

1. understand basic concepts used in the subfield of politics of religion;
2. competently describe and discuss key phenomena such as secularization, populism, political parties, church and state relations, religious values, atheist politics, etc.;
3. understand major sociological and political science approaches to the study of religion, learn about institutionalist, psychological and functionalist explanations of the changes in the role of religion in politics ;

The position papers are expected to improve the ability to identify the most relevant aspects of a scholarly argument, to establish links between different publications, to discriminate between scholarly and unscholarly arguments, and to channel the knowledge one obtained from sources inside and outside of class-work into the criticism of particular articles. The class activity will center on the readings, helping the students to synthesize information, determine focus points, and discern the main line of argumentation. The obligation to submit an essay will develop the skills to build up a coherent argument. All aspects of the class contribute to develop the skill of problem analysis in international context: the ability to understand problems in cross-national comparative perspective and to discuss them with students of different cultural background.

Course programme

Week 1. Antecedents to modern configurations of religion and politics

Required readings:

Assmann, J. (2007) Monotheism and Polytheism. In: *Religions of the Ancient World. A Guide*, edited by S. I. Johnston. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 17-31.

Dendle, P. (2008) 'The Age of Faith': Everyone in the Middle Ages Believed in God. In: *Misconceptions About the Middle Ages*, edited by S. J. Harris and B. L. Grigsby. New York: Routledge, 49-53.

Harari, Y. N (2014). *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. London: Vintage Books, 233-245.

Week 2. Secularization

Required readings:

Berger, P. L. (2008) Secularization falsified. *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion & Public Life*, 17 (180), 23-27.

Halman, L. and V. Draulans (2006) How Secular is Europe? *British Journal of Sociology* 57 (2), 263-88

Week 3. Church and state relations in historical perspective

Required readings:

Madeley, J. T. S. (2013) Religion, state and civil society in Europe: Triangular Entanglements. In J. de Hart, P. Dekker, and L. Halman (eds.) *Religion and Civil Society in Europe*. Dordrecht: Springer, 69-86.

Fox, J. (2016) Secular-religious competition in Western democracies: 1990 to 2014, *Journal of Religious and Political Practice*, 2(2), 155-174

Week 4. Church and state relations in normative, political and legal debates

Required readings:

Casanova, J. (1994) *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 40-66

Davis, D. (2001) Separation, Integration, and Accommodation. *Journal of Church and State*, 43(1), 5-17

Monsma, S. V. and J. C. Soper (2009) *The Challenge of Pluralism: Church and State in Five Democracies*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 3-12

Week 5. Values, attitudes and policies

Required readings:

Storm, I. (2016) Morality in Context: A Multilevel Analysis of the Relationship between Religion and Values in Europe, *Politics and Religion*, 9(1), 111–138.

Halman, L. and T. Pettersson (2004) Normative orientations towards the differentiation between religion and politics, in W. Arts and L. Halman (eds) *European Values at the Turn of the Millennium*, Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 318-339.

Week 6. Christian (democratic) parties

Required readings:

Kalyvas, S. N. (1996) *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1-20.

Kalyvas, S. N., and K. Van Kersbergen (2010). Christian democracy. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 13, 183-209

Week 7. Radical right

Required readings:

Betz, H.-G. (2013) The New Front National: Still a Master Case? RECODE Online Working Papers, no. 30, 1-18

Montgomery, K. A. and R. Winter (2015) Explaining the Religion Gap in Support for Radical Right Parties in Europe, *Politics and Religion*, 8(2), 379–403.

Week 8. Religion and voting behavior

Required readings:

Minkenberg, M. (2010) Party politics, religion and elections in Western democracies, *Comparative European Politics*, 8(4), 385–414.

Van der Brug, W., S. B. Hobolt and C. H. De Vreese (2009) Religion and Party Choice in Europe, *West European Politics*, 32(6), 1266–1283.

Week 9. Religion in US politics

Required readings:

Patrikios, S. (2008) American Republican Religion? Disentangling the Causal Link between Religion and Politics, *Political Behavior*, 30(3), 367-89

Wilcox, C. (2016) Toward a Theory of Religious Coalitions, *Politics and Religion*, 9(2), 234–248.

Week 10. European party systems and religion

Required readings:

Whyte, J. H. (1981) *Catholics in Western Democracies. A Study in Political Behavior*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 117-129.

Raymond, C. D. (2016) Not all social cleavages are the same: On the relationship between religious diversity and party system fragmentation, *Politics and Religion*, 9(2), 364–388.

Week 11. Religion and democracy

Required readings:

Anderson, J. (2004) Does God Matter, and if so whose God? Religion and Democratization. *Democratization*, 11(4), 192–217

Minkenberg, M. (2007) Democracy and religion. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33(6) 887–909.

Week 12. The politics of atheism

Required readings:

Schulzke, M. (2013) ‘The Politics of New Atheism’, *Politics and Religion*, 6(4), 778–799.

Kettell, S. (2013) Faithless: The politics of new atheism, *Secularism and Nonreligion*, 2, 61-72.