

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

Journal of Comparative Economics

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jce

State and religion over time

Metin Coşgel*, Matthew Histen, Thomas J. Miceli, Sadullah Yıldırım

Department of Economics, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 16 July 2015

Revised 30 October 2016

Accepted 1 November 2016

Available online xxx

JEL codes:

H10

P5

N4

Z12

Keywords:

State

Religion

Secular

Legitimacy

Institutions

Religious concentration

Political economy

Regime

Historical inertia

ABSTRACT

Coşgel, Metin, Histen, Matthew, Miceli, Thomas J., and Yıldırım, Sadullah—State and religion over time

State and religion, two of the oldest institutions known to mankind, have historically had a close relationship with each other, but the disestablishment of state religions has been one of the most drastic institutional transformations that has taken place in the modern era. We offer a systematic analysis of the development of secular states based on a political economy approach that is centered on the notion of legitimacy. Viewing religion as a legitimizing force for political leaders, we consider the factors affecting the cost and benefits of alternative sources of legitimacy, such as the differential abilities of religious and secular sources to legitimize political rulers and historical inertia that shaped the cost of monitoring legitimizing agents. To examine this argument empirically, we built a cross-national time-series dataset for the relationship between state and religion since the year 1000. We first use the data to examine the evolution of secularism over time and its variation across religious traditions. We then use regression analysis and an instrumental variables approach to identify the influences on the adoption of secular state, such as concentration in the religion market, religious differences between rulers and the general population, historical inertia of a state, and the prevailing political regime. We address endogeneity concerns regarding the relationship between religious concentration and state secularism by exploiting variation among territories in their geographic distance to religious “capitals” of the world as an instrument. *Journal of Comparative Economics* 000 (2016) 1–15. Department of Economics, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269, USA.

© 2016 Association for Comparative Economic Studies. Published by Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The disestablishment of state religions has been one of the most drastic institutional transformations that has taken place in the modern era. Throughout history, states typically had an established religion, an arrangement that often went back hundreds or even thousands of years. In recent history, however, this arrangement has increasingly given way to secular states that moved away from official relationships with religion towards varying types and degrees of independence. Whereas almost ninety percent of the territories corresponding to today's nation states were under a state religion at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the fraction has fallen to below twenty-five percent by the twenty-first century.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: metin.cosgel@uconn.edu (M. Coşgel).

Although researchers have recently studied state regulation of religion in isolated episodes in history, and more comprehensively in today's societies and in recent history, the literature lacks systematic analysis of the rise of secular states during the period before the twentieth century. Among recent studies, [Barro and McCleary \(2005\)](#) have identified countries with a state religion in 1900, 1970, and 2000, and used cross-national data to investigate the factors contributing to the likelihood of state religion in 1970 and 2000. [Fox \(2008\)](#) has constructed a "Religion and State" dataset to examine how government involvement in religion has differed among countries and changed during the period between 1990 and 2008. [Coşgel and Miceli \(2009\)](#) have similarly used cross-national data to study forces affecting a government's decision to establish a state religion or to support, control, or suppress religion at the beginning of the twenty-first century. However, the nature, timing, and correlates of the secularization of states during the modern era has yet to be identified.

In this article we offer a systematic analysis of the evolution of secular states based on an argument that considers religion as a legitimizing force for political leaders and examines the factors affecting the cost and benefits of alternative sources of legitimacy. We also examine the argument empirically by tracing the significant patterns and causal relationships in the adoption of secular and religious states since the year 1000.¹ Our empirical analysis uses a unique time-series cross-national dataset that includes annual information on the political and religious histories of today's nation states. By necessity, the analysis uses an admittedly narrow concept of secularism; namely, whether a state has an official religion, either by decree or based on evidence indicating a specific role of religious authorities in the apparatus of government. This definition is dictated by the available data (or lack of it), which necessitated an all-or-nothing definition for what is in reality a complex relationship. We believe, however, that the sacrifice in generality is more than compensated for by the scope of the analysis.

We first use the data to demonstrate two fundamental transformations that have taken place since 1000: the shifting adherence from indigenous to missionary/universal religions, and the development of secular states. We then use regression analysis to determine the influences on the adoption of a secular state, such as the degree of concentration in the religion market, ethnic and religious differences between rulers and the general population, historical inertia of a state, and the prevailing political regime. To identify the effect of religious concentration on the secularization of states, we implement an instrumental variables strategy that exploits the variation among territories in their distance to religious centers of the world, the first use of such an instrument in the literature. Specifically, we postulate that the farther was a territory from the center of a so-called "missionary religion," the lower would be the possible influence of that religion in causing a more concentrated religion market. Using this strategy, our results show that concentration in the religion market influenced the secularism of states negatively, as expected. But the effect was reversed and rose in magnitude if the ruler had a different religion than the general population, indicating that the presence of such a difference in a monopolized market likely had a delegitimizing effect by facilitating resistance against the ruler. Consequently, the net effect of religious concentration on secularism was positive in such circumstances, a novel result identified by our instrumental variable analysis.

Our results are closely related to the recent literature on the state regulation of religion. For example, [Gill \(2008\)](#) has proposed a theory that depends on the political self-interest of government officials, and he has used the resulting predictions to explain state-religion relationships in the early United States and in Latin America during the 1800s. Building a model to compare theocracies with secular governments, [Ferrero \(2013\)](#) has offered evidence to explain the rise of theocracies in Ancient Israel and among Muslim countries in the twentieth century. In an analysis closest to our project, [Johnson and Koyama \(2013\)](#) have studied the relationship between the centralization of state institutions and increased religious toleration in medieval and early modern Europe. Developing a model to identify the conditions under which legal centralization raises the cost of religious persecutions, they have offered an argument for the birth of the secular state in Europe and supported it by historical evidence consisting of two case studies drawn from French history. We contribute to this literature by offering a comprehensive historical analysis of the relationship between state and religion since the year 1000, and by identifying the factors affecting the secularization of states during this period.

Our analysis is also related to the secularization debate, which has so far been typically framed as a matter of the religious beliefs and behavior of individuals, rather than the actions and policies of states, in the modern era. Whereas most seminal social thinkers of the nineteenth century argued that the importance of religion would gradually disappear in people's lives, this argument has recently come under serious criticism by social scientists who have found evidence that religiosity has instead risen in some societies.² Because the indicators of religiosity include state policy and its influence on the behavior of people, an important component of the secularization debate is the historical or current presence of state religion in a society. We contribute to this debate by updating the knowledge regarding the historical evolution and correlates of the rise of secular states.

2. Religious vs. secular state: a simple model

To express the basic argument in a simple framework, we develop a political economy model of secularism that is centered on the notion of legitimacy. Consider the interaction between the ruler and an agent whose role it is to support, or

¹ For a recent study that goes even further back in time, see [Vaubel \(2015\)](#).

² For reviews of this debate and recent contributions, see [Fox \(2008: Chapter 2\)](#), [Franck and Iannaccone \(2014\)](#), and [Norris and Inglehart \(2004\)](#).

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات