

# **THEOCRACY OVER TIME**

**by**

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**ABSTRACT:** Political authorities have historically had a mysterious tendency towards theocracy, exemplified by their religious titles, close affiliations with religious figures, or even divine powers. To examine theocracy over time, we constructed two unique datasets, one that includes information on the political and religious characteristics of over five hundred polities observed in history and another that uses today's nations as units of analysis and tracks in 50-100 year intervals which polities have ruled in these lands. Combining the information from the two datasets, we examine the evolution of theocracy over time and its variation across geographic regions and religious traditions.

## THEOCRACY OVER TIME

Social scientists have long puzzled over the importance of religion within modernity. Durkheim, Marx, Weber, and numerous other seminal thinkers postulated the gradual demise of religion in modern times, a phenomenon known as the influential “secularization hypothesis.” Contrary to this hypothesis, however, recent evidence indicates that religion has instead enjoyed continual, even rising, importance in some societies (Iannaccone, Finke, and Stark, 1997). The relationship between religion and state has also followed differential patterns among societies rather than a uniform trend towards the postulated separation.

In a parallel development, the puzzle over the continual and complex vitality of religion has recently attracted rising interest among empirically-oriented social scientists (Fox, 2008: Chapter 2, Chen and Hungerman, 2014). Researchers have built cross-sectional datasets that include detailed information about religious beliefs and institutions in today’s societies, as well as the relationship between religion and state.<sup>1</sup> Examining these data systematically, these scholars have recast the secularization hypothesis and have also shown the separation of religion and state and government involvement in religion (Norris and Inglehart, 2004; Fox, 2008). Although these studies show the differential importance of religion in modern societies, the puzzle largely remains unsolved regarding the long-term trends leading to current outcomes and the mechanisms causing the divergence between nations.

We offer a political economy approach to the importance of religion and examine the historical relationship between state and religion. Focusing on theocratic ties between religious and political authorities, we aim to make two contributions to the literature. First, we provide a simple theoretical framework that identifies conditions favoring the emergence of theocracy in

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the “Religion and State” dataset of Fox (2008) and the Norris and Inglehart (2004) data based on the World Values Survey and European value Survey.

some contexts but its demise in others. Our approach is centered on the legitimizing relationship between religious and political authorities (Coşgel and Miceli, 2009, 2013; Coşgel, Miceli, and Ahmed, 2009; Coşgel, Miceli, and Rubin, 2012). We use the framework to examine how the emergence of theocracy depends on such factors as the degree of monopolization of the religion market and on whether the dominant religion is monotheistic or polytheistic.

Second, we evaluate our arguments systematically by developing a unique dataset on the political and religious histories of today's countries. We developed the data in two steps. We first constructed two separate types of data, one that includes information on the religious and political characteristics of over five hundred polities observed in history, and another that uses today's nations as units of analysis and tracks in 50-100 year intervals which polities have ruled in these lands. We Then combined the information from the two subsets to examine the evolution of theocracy over time and its variation across geographic regions and religious traditions.

### **SECULARIZATION?**

Until recently the secularization hypothesis was the conventional view on the importance of religion. Ever since the Enlightenment, leading thinkers typically held the expectation that religion would gradually disappear, an expectation that continued largely unchallenged in academic circles until the late twentieth century. In the last two decades, however, the basic postulates of the secularization hypothesis have come under serious attack, as summarized forcibly in the title of Stark's (1999) influential essay: "Secularization, RIP." The basis for this bold statement was the accumulating evidence which indicated that religion's total demise, at least as measured by religious participation by individuals, was nowhere in sight. Viewing religion as a market phenomenon and the vitality of this market as depending on its

competitiveness, Iannaccone, Finke, and Stark, (1997) have argued that religiosity has actually increased in Canada, the United States, and other countries in which religion has been deregulated. Other evidence of the continuing vitality of religion in the twenty-first century includes rising fundamentalism in the Middle East and evangelical movements around the world.

While admitting the failings of the original version of the secularization hypothesis, Norris and Inglehart (2004) have followed a more moderate approach by revising the thesis in light of new evidence rather than conceding its demise. They have argued that the critiques of the secularization thesis have relied too heavily on selected comparisons of religion's vitality. For a more comprehensive analysis of cross-cultural differences in religiosity, they have built a dataset that draws on the evidence gathered by the four waves of the World Values Survey for the period between 1981 and 2001 and uses other evidence from multiple sources. Examining this evidence from the perspective of a theory built around the notion of existential security, they have found significant global differences in religiosity between advanced industrial societies and poorer agrarian societies, differences caused by the sharply rising levels of existential security in the former group during the twentieth century. Although the people have become more secular in advanced industrial societies, they argue, the proportion of those with religious orientations for the world as a whole has increased because of the higher growth rates of population in the latter group.

A fundamental piece of the puzzle about the importance of religion is the relationship between religion and state. For systematic analyses of this relationship, Barro and McCleary (2005), Coşgel and Miceli (2009), and Fox (2008) have used cross-national data to identify systematic patterns in government involvement in religion. Fox's "Religion and State" dataset includes over 60 variables measuring the ways in which government can intersect with religion,

initially for the period between 1990 and 2002, but later expanded to cover more recent years to 2008. Consistent with Norris and Inglehart's (2004) findings on the religiosity of people, Fox's (2008) analysis finds certain broad patterns in the religiosity of governments as well as certain exceptions to these patterns. For example, although most states continue to display religiosity by giving preference to some religions over others, there is also great diversity in application and exceptions to this pattern. Barro and McCleary (2005) and Coşgel and Miceli (2009) investigate forces affecting a government's decision to establish a state religion or to support, control, or suppress religion.

As for changes over time, Fox finds the basic structural relationship between religion and state to be relatively stable in the world during the period between 1990 and 2002.<sup>2</sup> As Fox (2008: 362) also admits, however, the 13 year segment of his study is too short to use these results to derive general conclusions about the secularization thesis or the mechanisms generating patterns of religiosity. Focusing on the three dates at which they have data, Barro and McCleary's (2005) find a downward trend in state religion between 1900 and 1970 but no trend between 1970 and 2000. Although their result covers a longer time period than Fox's, it is still not clear if the fall in religiosity between 1900 and 1970 was the continuation of a long-term trend or caused by world event unique to this period, such as the two world wars and the rise of newly independent nation states following the end of colonialism. It is also not clear whether the pattern differed systematically across regions and religious traditions.

Although systematic cross-national studies show continuing vitality of religion, the puzzle about long-term trends in religiosity as postulated by the secularization thesis remains

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<sup>2</sup> Within this stability, however, Fox (2008) observes a trend towards rising government involvement in religion because of changes in policies. Interestingly, he finds government involvement in religion to be increasing the most in advanced societies, precisely the same societies that Norris and Inglehart have found the religiosity of people to be falling.

largely unsolved. What we do learn from these studies is that religiosity is a complex phenomenon that varies systematically over time and across nations, and also that we need to distinguish between the religiosity of the people and the religiosity of states. Building on these insights, we seek to solve two remaining pieces of the puzzle-- namely, to uncover the mechanisms generating the religiosity of states, and to identify the long-term trends in the evolution of religiosity. Although Norris and Inglehart have argued that the religiosity of people depends on their need for existential security, while Iannaccone, Finke, and Stark (1997) have pointed to the role of the religion market, we know little about the mechanisms generating the religiosity of states in history. We also know little about long term trends in the way the religiosity of states have evolved. In what follows we plan to fill these gaps by offering a theoretical framework that will put these ideas in a coherent whole and by analyzing our arguments quantitatively.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In previous work (Cosgel and Miceli, 2009, 2014; Cosgel, Miceli, and Rubin, 2012) we have argued that an important factor underlying the emergence of theocracy, or alliance between religion and state, is the legitimizing function that religion can play for political leaders. That is, to the extent that religious leaders can increase political leaders' legitimacy, for example by declaring the sovereign divine or divinely inspired, they can lower the cost of governance. We represent this relationship as follows:

$$T = f(L), \tag{1}$$

where  $T$  is an index of theocracy,  $L$  is a measure of legitimacy, and  $f' > 0$ .

Legitimacy is a complex concept, however, that will itself be a function of various characteristics of the polity in question as well as of the religion market. We have argued, for example, that theocracy is more likely to emerge as the religion market becomes more monopolistic, reflecting the increased concentration of influence that a single or dominant religion can have on citizens (Cosgel and Miceli, 2014). Legitimacy will also depend on doctrinal aspects of the religion, such as whether it is monotheistic or polytheistic, as well as characteristics of the polity itself, such as the literacy of the population, the presence or absence of democratic institutions, the level of technological advancement of the society, the extent of trade relations with other polities, and so on. We capture all of these effects by the following relationship:

$$L = L(M, \mathbf{X}), \tag{2}$$

where  $M$  is the degree of monopolization of the religious market (higher  $M$  means more monopolistic), and  $\mathbf{X}$  is a vector of exogenous variables. Based on the above arguments, we conjecture that  $L_M > 0$ , while the sign of  $L_X$  will depend on the particular variable in question. For example, in previous work we have argued that a higher degree of monotheism will be more conducive to the legitimizing function of religion, implying that  $L$  will be higher for monotheistic as opposed to polytheistic religions (Cosgel and Miceli, 2014).<sup>3</sup>

It seems reasonable to suppose that the political authority will often have the ability to affect the nature of the religion market, either by tolerating entry of different religions, or by suppressing competing religions so as to maintain (or create) monopoly power on the part of the

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<sup>3</sup> This is true for the same reason that a monopolistic religion market will be more conducive to theocracy—namely, that concentration of religious authority in a single god will facilitate the conferral of legitimacy on the ruler. We assume that the political authority takes the degree of monotheism as exogenous, given that rulers will rarely have the ability to alter the fundamental tenets of established religions. There are exceptions, such as Akhenaten’s reign, which briefly instituted monotheism in Egypt, and Constantine’s reign, which introduced Christianity to the Roman Empire. In contrast, Henry VIII may have successfully abandoned Roman Catholicism as the state religion in England, but he did not alter the general tenets of Christianity.

dominant religion. Since we argued above that theocracies benefit from the existence of a dominant religion, we would expect that a regime that is more theocratic will have an interest in promoting monopoly in the religion market by suppressing entry. We capture this relationship as follows:

$$M = M(T), \tag{3}$$

where  $M_T > 0$ .<sup>4</sup> Putting all of this together, we obtain the following expression for the degree of theocracy

$$T = f(L(M(T), \mathbf{X})). \tag{4}$$

As discussed above, previous work on the economics of religion has sought to explain the factors underlying religious participation by the population. In particular, the influential argument of Iannaccone, Stark, and Finke (1997) maintains that increased competition (openness) in the religion market increases participation by expanding the range of religious “providers” available to consumers as well as possibly lowering the price of religious “goods.” We capture this by defining an index of “religiosity”:

$$R = g(M, \mathbf{X}) \tag{5}$$

where the preceding argument implies  $g_M < 0$  (i.e., less monopolization implies more participation).  $R$  will also likely depend on several factors included in the vector  $\mathbf{X}$ .

Recognizing the endogeneity of  $M$  yields

$$R = g(M(T), \mathbf{X}). \tag{6}$$

Together, equations (4) and (6) simultaneously define the degree of theocracy in the government and of religiosity in the population.

Differentiating (4) and (6) yields the following comparative statics with respect to the exogenous variables:

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<sup>4</sup> For notational simplicity, we suppress the possible effect of the factors in  $\mathbf{X}$  on this function.



$$\frac{dT}{d\mathbf{X}} = \frac{f' L_X}{1 - f' L_M} \quad (7)$$

$$\frac{dR}{d\mathbf{X}} = \frac{(1 - f' L_M) g_X + f' L_X g_M M_T}{1 - f' L_M} \quad (8)$$

The signs will depend on the sign of the denominator, which reflects the second-order effects arising from endogeneity of the religion market to the existence of theocracy. Assuming that the denominator is positive, note that the stronger are the second order effects, the larger will be the impact of any particular exogenous variable.

Observe that (7) and (8) provide an explanation for the paradoxical decline in theocracy over time, coupled with a rise in religiosity among the population. Let us say that this change is triggered by some exogenous occurrence that reduces the value of religion as a legitimizing force; that is, some component of  $\mathbf{X}$  such that  $L_X < 0$ . This will cause  $T$  to fall according to (7). If we suppose for sake of argument that the direct effect of this change on  $R$  is negligible (i.e.,  $g_X \approx 0$ ), then (8) implies that  $R$  will *rise* given  $g_M < 0$ . Intuitively, the declining benefit of religion as a legitimizer of the political authority will reduce the degree to which the government is theocratic, which will tend to result in an opening of the religious market (all else equal), with a consequent rise in religious participation by the population. As a result, the measured influence of religion on the government versus the populous will be in opposite directions.

## DATA

For an empirical investigation of our arguments, we have developed a unique dataset that includes long-term information on the political and religious histories of today's countries. We constructed the data in three stages. In the first stage we built the "Country Ancestry Data" (CAD), which identifies the polities that have ruled today's countries in history. We separately

built the “Historical Polities Data” (HPD) in the second stage, which includes all of the polities encountered in CAD and contains information on the religious and political characteristics of these polities. Finally, we combined HPD and CAD to arrive at a dataset that includes information on the political and religious evolution of today’s countries since the year 1,000.

Taking today’s countries as the unit of analysis, we developed CAD as a cross-national dataset that identifies the polities that have ruled today’s countries in their history. For each country, we recorded the name(s) of the polity that dominated this country’s land area in 50-100 year intervals since the year 1000. If at a certain interval this land area was dominated by two polities, we recorded this information as well. To have a direct correspondence between CAD and HPD, our second dataset, we used a unique code to identify historical polities entered in CAD.

HPD’s units are the polities observed in history, dating back to about 3,700BCE, consisting of those ancestor polities recorded in CAD. To construct HPD, a team of research assistants combed through a wide variety of sources to gather information about the basic characteristics of these polities, their religion market, and the relationship between political and religious authorities. We started with polities that have been included in readily available datasets constructed by other researchers, and we resorted to other sources as necessary to expand on the list of polities and to code variables that were not available in these sources.<sup>5</sup> In cases of conflicting information about a particular variable, we looked for consistency by giving priority to sources with comprehensive coverage, such as *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Legal History*, and the book series “Cambridge Histories Online.” Rather than restrict the dataset to polities of certain size, duration, or type, we included all

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<sup>5</sup> For example, the anthropological database called the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (Murdock and White, 1969) and the Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1967). See Turchin et al (2012: 286-89) for a discussion of the contents and limitations of these data. See also Iyigün (2010) for a similar dataset.

polities for which we could find complete information. The final set includes information on over 500 polities observed in history, listed in Appendix A.

For each polity, the HPD includes four groups of variables: its basic characteristics, its religion, the organization and regulation of the religion market, and the relationship between political and religious authorities. The basic characteristics of a polity include variables on its size (e.g., peak land mass), geographic location, political type, and years of duration.<sup>6</sup> In addition, we included a set of variables on the process of a polity's formation and the cause of its demise.

For information on the religious characteristics of a polity, we entered the names of the majority and minority religion(s) of the population, the religion of the rulers if it was different from the majority religion, and whether there was a religious conversion. Religions could differ significantly on their conception of god, so we recorded whether the majority religion was monotheistic, and we further differentiated among polytheistic religions based on whether they had a supreme god, a local god, and whether the ruler was also considered a god.

To measure the organization and regulation of the religion market, we included variables on whether the provider of the majority religion was organized under a hierarchical structure, whether the political authorities granted monopoly power (state religion) to one of the providers, and whether they suppressed minority religions. Since the rulers could regulate religious behavior through legislation or decree, we entered whether there were "laws" on consumption, business, or family practices that were based on religious prescriptions.

The last group of variables describes the characteristics of religious and political providers and the nature of their relationship with each other. We recorded some of the religious characteristics of the political authority, such as whether the ruler carried a religious title or

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<sup>6</sup> For details, see Coşgel and Miceli (2013).

whether he was divinely inspired or himself divine. To depict the rulers' direct relationship with religious authorities, we included variables on whether the religious authorities were appointed by the political authority, whether they received direct payment from political authorities, and whether religious property and buildings were owned or supported by political authorities. Religious and political authorities could also form a theocratic union, so we recorded whether the political authority dealt with religious affairs as part of his official role and whether there were other government officials dealing with religious affairs.

In the final stage of our data construction, we combined HPD and CAD to arrive at a dataset that includes information on the political and religious evolution of the lands corresponding to today's countries since the year 1000. Between 1000 and 1500, the information is in 100 year intervals, and for the period since 1500 in 50 year intervals. Although the CAD originally covered 249 countries, we dropped some of them from the final analysis because of their size (e.g., small islands, to prevent overrepresentation) or the availability of complete and reliable information about their history. The final set includes 175 countries covered in each interval, for a total of 16 years. It is a cross-national panel dataset that includes information on the current and historical polities dominating these lands during our period, thereby allowing us to identify the long-term trends in the religiosity of states and the relationship between political and religious authorities.

Table 1 shows the distribution of entries in our dataset by continent and majority religion in years 1000 and 2000, the beginning and end dates of our investigation. As seen in the table, there was a fundamental shift in the majority religions of these lands from indigenous religions ("Other Religion") towards predominantly Muslim and Christian polities. The transition is towards Abrahamic faiths, which is particularly striking in the spread of Islam in Asia,

Christianity in Oceania and the Western Hemisphere, and both Islam and Christianity in Africa during this period. Although we did not include the regional breakdown of these trends in the table, our data reflects the spread of Islam mainly in North Africa and Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa. Although the majority of eastern religions remained about the same in Asia, there was a sharp decline in Oceania.

**Table 1**

Majority Religion	Year	Continent				
		Africa	Asia	Europe	Oceania	Western Hemisphere
Jewish	1000		0			
	2000		1			
Christian	1000	2	2	30	0	0
	2000	20	4	34	5	33
Muslim	1000	10	17	0		
	2000	24	26	2		
Eastern Religion	1000	0	21		8	0
	2000	1	17		0	2
Other Religion	1000	33	1	7		44
	2000	2	2	2		0

### **RELIGIOSITY OF STATES OVER TIME**

We now use the data to investigate how the religiosity of states changed over time. As noted, Barro and McCleary have found that the fraction of states with monopoly religion fell sharply between 1900 and 1970 and stayed about the same between 1970 and 2000. Using the same variable as a measure of religiosity, we extend the analysis back to the year 1000. As Table 2 shows, the falling incidence of state-religion that Barro and McCleary observed in the early part

of the twentieth century was part of a longer trend that started much earlier. The fraction rose steadily between 1000 and 1400, remained high until about 1600, and fell steadily thereafter.

**Table 2**

<b>State Religion</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
1000	0.86	0.35
1100	0.87	0.33
1200	0.88	0.33
1300	0.90	0.31
1400	0.90	0.30
1500	0.91	0.29
1550	0.91	0.28
1600	0.90	0.30
1650	0.80	0.40
1700	0.79	0.41
1750	0.79	0.41
1800	0.76	0.43
1850	0.62	0.49
1900	0.36	0.48
1950	0.26	0.44
2000	0.23	0.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.44</b>

To see whether we would observe the same trend under different measures of religiosity, we used other variables in our dataset to construct two additional indices of state-religiosity. The first is a measure of theocratic alliance between political and religious authorities. This index is simply the average of two dummy variables about the relationship between these authorities—more specifically, whether the political authority dealt directly with religious affairs as part of his official role (=1 if yes), and whether, besides the political authority, there was a government official who dealt with religious affairs (=1 if yes).

The second index includes variables that consider state involvement in religion. We took the simple average of three dummy variables, asking whether the religious authorities were appointed by the political authority (=1 if yes), whether their salaries were paid by the political authority (=1 if yes), and whether their property and buildings were owned by the political authority (=1 if yes).

**Table 3**

<b>State Involvement in Religion</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
1000	0.66	0.32
1100	0.66	0.31
1200	0.66	0.30
1300	0.68	0.29
1400	0.71	0.30
1500	0.72	0.30
1550	0.72	0.29
1600	0.70	0.30
1650	0.74	0.31
1700	0.75	0.30
1750	0.76	0.30
1800	0.76	0.31
1850	0.73	0.37
1900	0.72	0.41
1950	0.56	0.44
2000	0.22	0.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.34</b>

<b>Union between Religious and Political Authorities</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
1000	0.46	0.22
1100	0.46	0.22
1200	0.48	0.21
1300	0.49	0.23
1400	0.52	0.24
1500	0.55	0.26
1550	0.51	0.23
1600	0.49	0.23
1650	0.49	0.25
1700	0.51	0.25
1750	0.51	0.26
1800	0.54	0.25
1850	0.53	0.27
1900	0.48	0.26
1950	0.34	0.26
2000	0.27	0.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.25</b>

As Table 3 shows, all three measures of state religiosity followed the same broad trend over time. Specifically, they rose steadily until about the sixteenth century, remained high for the next three centuries, and fell thereafter. There were some subtle differences, however. Whereas the sharpest fall in the incidence of state monopolies happened between 1800 and 1950, the sharp fall in state involvement in religion and in theocratic alliances between political and religious authorities did not start until about 1900 and continued throughout the twentieth century.

### **DIFFERENCES AMONG RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS**

Going beyond aggregate trends, we now examine whether the temporal rise and fall of state religiosity varied among religious traditions. Since the three measures of religiosity examined above followed the same general trend, here we focus on one of these measures—the presence of state monopoly—to keep things simple. Table 4 shows this measure as calculated separately for the lands with majority Jewish, Christian, and Muslim populations, and for those following Eastern Religions and Other Religions.

**Table 4**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Jewish</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Eastern Religion</b>	<b>Other Religion</b>
1000		1.00	0.81	0.90	0.81
1100		1.00	0.86	0.89	0.83
1200		1.00	0.80	0.85	0.87
1300		0.97	0.90	0.79	0.90
1400		0.98	0.91	0.87	0.87
1500		1.00	0.92	0.93	0.85
1550		1.00	0.95	0.91	0.85
1600		0.98	0.95	0.91	0.83
1650		0.84	0.93	0.89	0.64
1700		0.83	0.95	0.86	0.61



1750		0.84	0.91	0.89	0.62
1800		0.80	0.91	0.83	0.60
1850		0.63	0.85	0.65	0.42
1900		0.44	0.37	0.37	0.10
1950	1.00	0.28	0.17	0.10	0.42
2000	1.00	0.11	0.48	0.17	0.00
Total	1.00	0.71	0.77	0.75	0.73

It is easy to see in the table that all Christian states started off our period as dominated entirely by established monopolies, and they maintained this high level of religiosity until about 1600. State monopolies in eastern religions were also high from the beginning, though not as high as those in the Christian world, and remained high until about 1750. Note also that they started to decline somewhat later than the Christian world.

These observations indicate that the early rise in state religiosity observed in the aggregate came not from the Christian world or from eastern religions, but mainly from the rise of religious monopolies in Muslim states and in lands populated at the time by other religions. The fraction of state religions observed in the Muslim world rose steadily until about the seventeenth century, remained high until about 1800, and fell afterwards. The fraction in other religions followed a slightly different trend by rising until about 1300 and fell steadily thereafter.

### **DIFFERENCES ACROSS CONTINENTS**

Finally, we turn to geographic differences in the evolution of state religiosity. Table 5 shows the fractions of states with religious monopolies in the five continents.

**Table 5**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Africa</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Europe</b>	<b>Oceania</b>	<b>Western Hemisphere</b>
1000	0.74	0.89	0.90	1.00	0.89
1100	0.74	0.89	0.89	1.00	0.94
1200	0.83	0.80	0.92	1.00	0.94
1300	0.85	0.86	0.93	1.00	0.94
1400	0.82	0.90	0.92	1.00	0.94
1500	0.80	0.92	0.98	1.00	0.94
1550	0.81	0.92	0.98	1.00	0.94
1600	0.79	0.92	0.98	1.00	0.92
1650	0.73	0.88	0.98	1.00	0.59
1700	0.79	0.88	0.95	1.00	0.51
1750	0.79	0.90	0.93	1.00	0.52
1800	0.81	0.86	0.86	0.88	0.49
1850	0.75	0.80	0.81	0.50	0.18
1900	0.23	0.62	0.55	0.00	0.11
1950	0.19	0.37	0.46	0.00	0.09
2000	0.21	0.44	0.16	0.00	0.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.64</b>

Consistent with the patterns observed in Table 4, state religiosity was initially high in Christian Europe and in lands with majority eastern religions in Asia and Oceania. The fraction of state monopolies rose even higher in Europe in the 1400s with the penetration of the Ottoman Empire into eastern Europe and the Balkans. The fraction was the lowest in Africa at the beginning of our period. Although it rose in the thirteenth century, it generally remained lower than the fractions in Asia and Europe.

State religiosity started to decline first in the Western Hemisphere in the seventeenth century, an outcome of increasingly colonial administration. Elsewhere, the decline started at the end of the eighteenth century.

## CONCLUSION

Using a political economy approach to religion and using a new dataset, we have examined the history of the relationship between state and religion. Focusing on theocratic ties between religious and political authorities, we contributed a theoretical framework to the recent literature on secularization, one that emphasizes the legitimizing relationship between religious and political authorities. To evaluate our arguments empirically, we also developed a unique dataset on the political and religious histories of today's countries. Our results show the evolution of theocracy over time and its variation across geographic regions and religious traditions. According to these results, historical trends in the religiosity of states depended to a large extent on broad movements involving polities subscribing to Abrahamic faiths, typified by monopolies in the religion market established through monotheistic doctrines and single providers.

Our investigation contributes a fresh perspective to the secularization debate by shifting attention from the religiosity of people to the religiosity of states, and it provides new evidence on the long-term decline of state religiosity that confirms the secularization hypothesis. True, the religiosity of individuals may have recently risen, contrary to the secularization hypothesis. But the religiosity of states has been declining since the 1600s, and more sharply since the nineteenth century, confirming the informal observations of Enlightenment thinkers and modern social scientists.

We must emphasize that our results and interpretations need to be viewed with some caution because our investigation is still in progress. The entries in our dataset are being checked for accuracy, new variables are being included for other measures of religiosity, and some of the variables are being redefined for better approximation. Given the breadth of the temporal and geographic coverage of the data, standardization of categories is a constant challenge. We look

forward to revised versions of our dataset and improved analysis toward more reliable results in the near future.

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