

Creating support based in local cultures, let alone regionally based development strategies, is neglected. Yet as Petro convincingly argues, democratic development will be sustainable only when these are considered.

The major theoretical contributions of this work center on the causal role of culture and the deliberate use of symbols and history to promote change. The author proposes a multidisciplinary research agenda that investigates the role and impact of culture, myth, and symbols in political change. Whether one accepts Petro's argument that culture is a necessary explanatory variable, he adds an important dimension to transition studies. Twenty years ago, Theda Skocpol issued an appeal to "bring the state back" into social science research. Petro's appeal is similar. He proposes a culturally focused method of evaluating transitions that broadens the research lens and calls attention to a neglected variable. His work makes a valuable contribution to the analysis of political transitions.

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Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 348 pp. Cloth, \$70.00; paper, \$24.99.

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The relationship between religion and politics has become an increasingly important issue in the aftermath of the cold war. Political scientists and sociologists, therefore, have rethought secularization theory, which regards religion as a "traditional" phenomenon that will eventually decay as a result of the modernization process, including industrialization, urbanization, and mass education. Social scientists have been recently divided by three approaches on this theory. The first one is the religious market approach of Rodney Stark, Roger Finke, Laurence Iannaccone, and Anthony Gill, which rejects secularization theory as a normative bias. Their arguments can be

summarized in two points. First, individuals' religious demands do not decay with a so-called secularization process, whereas religious participation changes by the quality of the supply of "churches." Second, state regulation of religion makes religious markets inefficient and decreases religious participation (e.g., in Western Europe), whereas deregulation promotes plural and competitive religious markets, efficiently satisfies people's diverse religious tastes, and increases religious participation (e.g., in the United States; Stark & Finke, 2000). The second approach is Jose Casanova's (1994) endeavor to revise secularization theory by differentiating between its valid and invalid parts. Casanova deconstructs secularization theory in three separate claims: (a) the decline of religion in terms of loss of faith and decrease of religious participation; (b) the privatization of religion, with lacking public importance; and (c) the differentiation of religion from other spheres, such as politics, economy, and science. For him, the first two claims are incapable to explain the rise of religiosity and religion's public importance in many modern contexts, and only the last thesis is internationally valid. The third and last approach is Steve Bruce's (2002) defense of classical secularization theory. Bruce sharply criticizes religious market approach and regards secularization as the fall of religion, a dominant trend in industrialized countries.

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart's *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* can be categorized closer to the final approach. They ignore Casanova's (1994) contribution to redefine secularization and take this concept as simply the erosion of religious belief and participation. They appreciate several of Bruce's (2002) views while criticizing religious market approach of Stark and Finke (2000) on three major points: (a) Religiosity is determined by people's demand, not the supply of "churches"; (b) there is no connection between religiosity and either state regulation or religious pluralism; and (c) secularization has been observed in virtually all advanced industrialized societies during the past 50 years, and the United States is simply an exception.

The basic arguments of *Sacred and Secular* are twofold. First, the processes of economic growth, socioeconomic equality, and human development (including literacy ratio, life expectancy, and infant mortality) result in the long-term changes in existential security, which shapes the erosion of religious values, beliefs, and practices. Poverty, socioeconomic equality, and the lack of human development, on the other hand, link to uncertainty, risks, and threats to survival, which increase religiosity. Second, fertility rates decrease in affluent, secure societies because of increasing birth control, abortion, and divorce, whereas religiosity increases fertility in poor societies because it supports to have a family and encourages women to raise children while forbidding abortion, divorce, or anything that impedes reproduction. In sum, Norris and Inglehart's approach preserves classical secularization theory while adding to it two dimensions. First, it explains the link between development and secularization through the rise of existential security. Second, it sees neither development nor secularization as a linear and universal process. Instead, their approach implicitly assumes that developed societies are more likely to remain developed, whereas underdevel-

oped societies will stay as such. That is why they argue that “the world as a whole now has more people with traditional religious views than ever before—and they constitute a growing proportion of the world’s population” (p. 5).

Sacred and Secular discusses several intriguing subjects, from religion in post-Communist states to the clash of civilization thesis and from the Protestant Ethic to the social capital debate, relying largely on survey data from the various waves of the World Values Survey and European Values Survey. The most politically important data in the book are that the electoral support for religious parties in 16 postindustrial and industrial societies has declined for 50 years from an average of 32.4% to 15.1% (pp. 208-210). The philosophically important observation is that there is no trade-off between having faith in God and science; on the contrary, “societies with greater faith in science also often have *stronger* religious beliefs” (p. 67). The book also provides two counterintuitive observations about Muslim societies. First, there is a popular support for democracy in Muslim societies and the West, and the Muslim world diverges on issues of sexual liberalization and gender equality, not democracy. Second, Protestant societies currently display the weakest work ethic (e.g., self-discipline, hard work, and reinvestment of savings) in comparison to societies with other religions, whereas Muslim societies show the strongest work ethic.

In their critique of religious market approach, Norris and Inglehart succeed in three main issues. First, through a longitudinal analysis, they show the process of secularization in Western Europe for the last several decades. That refutes Stark and Finke’s (2000) claim that perceived secularization in Western Europe mainly depends on an “Age of Faith” myth, which overemphasizes religiosity in medieval Europe. Second, they effectively employ statistical data to refute the alleged religious revival in the former Communist countries by the deregulation of religion. Finally, they provide a serious challenge to the alleged correlation between religiosity and religious pluralism. Norris and Inglehart’s emphasis on the demand at the expense of the supply side, however, is still questionable. On one hand, they claim that the reason for declining religious participation is the decreasing demand to religion in postindustrial societies. On the other hand, they emphasize that people in these societies are “not abandoning private or individualized spirituality. The need for meaning becomes more salient at high levels of existential security so that, even in rich countries, although church attendance is declining, spiritual concerns more broadly are not disappearing” (pp. 74-75). One may interpret this as an indication of the durable demand to religion despite the unsatisfactory supply.

My major reservation to *Sacred and Secular* is that the mechanism that directly links existential security to development and secularization is not clearly explained. “Security” remains as a nontestable subjective concept throughout the book. Therefore, the positive correlation between underdevelopment and religiosity also is not convincingly elaborated by the alleged existential “insecurity.” Even the authors admit at the conclusion that they do not have data to evaluate this mechanism: “Future surveys could look more directly at the perceptions of risk and security, to provide direct attitudinal evidence linking the living conditions of rich and poor societies to

individual level of religiosity. . .” (p. 239). In addition, because all of the 21 post-industrial and 32 industrial societies included in the World Values Survey (pp. 243-245) are Christian societies (in the authors’ categorization), except Japan and Turkey, where there is no secularization, one can easily think the possibility that the correlation between development and secularization may be more connected to Christianity rather than existential security. This requires further analysis.

There are several outliers in Norris and Inglehart’s analyses. I would like to touch on the two most significant, which have opposite characteristics. China, where a fifth of the world’s population live, challenges the book’s arguments by being the least religious society of all cases (p. 226), despite being an agrarian society (p. 245). The authors do not pay attention to China. Yet they devote a specific chapter to another outlier: the United States. This latter case is very significant because it supports religious market approach by combining deregulation, religious pluralism, and high religiosity and challenges Norris and Inglehart’s approach by being a postindustrial yet highly religious society. The authors rely on three explanations of the U.S. anomaly in chapter 4. First, they try to show that there is a certain level of secularization even in the United States. Yet in another chapter of the book, however, their data show the increase of religious participation in the United States from 43% in 1981 to 46% in 2001 (p. 74). Second, they argue that surveys overemphasize religious participation in the United States. That does not seem convincing because they use survey data throughout the book, including a particular survey (Gallup) that they criticize. Finally, they argue that migrants who originally came from poorer nations in the Americas and Asia have brought strong religiosity to the United States. They still need to explain why African and Asian migrants do not create a similar influence in Western Europe.

Sacred and Secular will most probably attract the attention of sociologists, particularly with its emphasis on sociological results of economic development or underdevelopment. Scholars of religion, however, may criticize it for disregarding religion’s relevance to human questions beyond existential security, such as the meaning of life and the life after death. Political scientists, moreover, could criticize *Sacred and Secular* for overemphasizing economics and presenting politics as an epiphenomenon. Throughout the book, it is almost impossible to see an emphasis on agency-based politics (e.g., struggling actors, the balance of power among them, and the winners and the losers of the conflict) on secularization and religious revival. According to the book, neither political nor religious actors play a decisive role in the fall or rise of religiosity: As they state, “there is little that religious leaders can do to revive public demand [to religion]” (p. 231). A new approach that emphasizes the political aspect of religion and politics is still needed in *political science*.

Despite these criticisms, *Sacred and Secular* is a very well-structured book, enriched by valuable survey data. It engages in important debates on development and secularization with its methodological elegance and theoretical parsimony. It is a significant source to understand the classical social scientific approach to religion and a necessary basis to locate conflicting arguments on the field.

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Alastair Smith. *Election Timing*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 286 pp. Cloth, \$75.00.

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Alastair Smith's *Election Timing* is an excellent addition to a growing literature that blends formal theory and empirical testing (Morton, 1999). Smith has written with diverse audiences in mind, producing a book that is accessible to those who engage in mathematical modeling and those who do not, those who use quantitative methods and those who conduct qualitative analysis.

In most parliamentary democracies, the timing of elections is not fixed. Governments often call elections at their discretion before the end of their term. The author investigates the decision to call elections in Britain. The ability of office-seeking leaders to call elections is a powerful tool: They pick the right time. Smith seeks the conditions that make the timing of elections right. He also examines how the timing of elections affects subsequent popular support for the government and postelection economic performance. In addition, he explores how the timing decision influences the length of electoral campaigns and the London stock market's response.

Smith develops an informational theory of election timing. Embedded in this theory are claims about the reasoning of leaders and voters. The logic of the story is as follows: Leaders have a relatively accurate expectation about their future performance. They know the future state of the economy and are aware of their ability to confront economic hardship. When leaders expect their future performance to decline and thus their electoral prospects to worsen, they call elections. The irony is that calling early elections signals to the voters precisely what leaders try to hide from them: the impending decline in economic conditions and government performance. "The worse a leader expects to perform in the future, the greater the leader's incentive to call elections" (p. 47).

Voters engage in "rational retrospection" (p. 39). They use information on past government performance to evaluate the ability of the government to perform well in the future. The argument is based on the median voters who are likely to be concerned more about government performance than policy positions and who practically determine the outcome of elections in marginal districts. When the government calls early elections, voters read the call as a sign of government incompetence. Therefore, popular support for the government is expected to decline following the announcement of