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Religion and the Gender Vote Gap: Women's Changed Political Preferences from the 1970s to 2010

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Abstract

For many years women tended to vote more conservative than men, but since the 1980s this gap has shifted direction: women in many countries are more likely than men to support left parties. The literature largely agrees on a set of political-economic factors explaining the change in women's political orientation. In this article we demonstrate that these conventional factors fall short in explaining the gender vote gap. We highlight the importance of a religious cleavage in the party system across Western European countries, restricting the free flow of religious voters between left and right parties. Given that surveys show us a constantly higher degree of religiosity among women and a persistent impact of religion on vote choice, religion explains a substantial part of the temporal as well as cross-country variation in the transition from the more conservative to the more progressive voting behavior of women.

Keywords

gender vote gap, religion, party system, cleavages, swing voters

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For many years women tended to vote more conservative than men (the "old" gender vote gap), but since the 1980s this has changed: women in many countries are now more likely to support left parties than men of the same age from the same income bracket and educational level.[1] The literature has offered several explanations for this finding, but largely agrees on a set of determinants to explain the change in women's political orientation: changed employment patterns, women's higher educational achievements, higher divorce rates, and consequently more single mothers. These trends turned women into supporters of generous social programs that promise to "de-familialize" services formerly provided privately, in other words, overwhelmingly by women.[2] De-familialization of social service provision makes it easier for women to find employment, primarily in the private service sector or in the welfare state itself, *if* the welfare state offers women enhanced employment chances in public social services.[3] This explanation generates both a temporal prediction: over time, the new gender vote gap should widen, and a comparative prediction: it should vary with female labor-force participation and divorce rates.[4] This could account for the fact that in some countries (Scandinavia, North America) women developed pro welfare-state preferences: they voted left much earlier than in other countries (Southern Europe).

The conventional explanation leaves a couple of important questions unresolved. Most importantly: Why did women's and men's voting behavior in the 1950s and 1960s differ (the old gender gap)? With low female labor-force participation and low divorce rates, political preferences should have predominantly been formed at the household level and therefore—according to the dominant explanation—should have been harmonious between the sexes. It also remains unclear why we can observe such gendered divisions of labor in the political economies of Western Europe in the first place. Since the conventional political-economic factors apparently fall short in explaining the old gender differences in political preferences, we also doubt whether they fully explain the new patterns. With respect to the new gender gap, existing explanations have a hard time accounting for the quite uneven development observed at the country level or finding robust determinants at the individual level.[5]

In this article we highlight the importance of religion for the gendered pattern of voting behavior that we observe. We argue that where a religious cleavage is prominent in the party system, in particular in the Catholic countries of Continental and Southern Europe, competition over religious voters remains restricted.[6] In those countries, left parties with their often-vociferous anticlericalism are simply not an electoral option for voters with any attachment to the church. Given that surveys show a constantly higher degree of religiosity among women and a relatively persistent and strong impact of religion on vote choice,[7] religion can indeed, we argue, explain a substantial part of the old *and* the new gender vote gap. We argue that women, as religious core voters, for a long time could not credibly threaten to become socioeconomic swing voters, i.e. to switch to a left party. That is why religious parties, for example Christian Democrats, could afford—at least to some extent—to ignore women's socioeconomic interests. However, given the declining religiosity in the electorate, in particular among women, political parties have begun to compete for the female vote by catering to their socioeconomic interests,[8] even in countries that are characterized by a

prominent religious cleavage, thereby giving (a delayed) rise to the new gender vote gap. Elsewhere, the inter-party competition for the female vote was not or much less religiously contorted, and therefore left and right parties' programmatic adjustment to the changed employment and family patterns happened much earlier. Importantly, our argument pertains not primarily to religious determinants of the individual vote choice,[9] but rather to the strategic configuration among parties[10] and the salience of the religious cleavage. It is therefore different from previous accounts highlighting the role of religion for the female vote.[11]

In the following we show that religiosity remains a strong *and independent* factor in vote choice in Western democracies, that gender differences in religiosity accounted for much of the old gender differences in voting behavior, and that gender differences in voting substantially decrease once we control for religiosity. We also found that the share of religious voters has decreased over time, thus allowing the new gender vote gap to belatedly appear also in countries with a prominent religious cleavage. We provide evidence that religious voting is more pronounced in party systems with a strong religious cleavage and we show that the gender vote gap can almost be explained fully with controls for employment, marital status, and religiosity.

We also point to one intervening factor which up to now has been rather neglected in the literature, even if its full analysis is beyond the scope of this paper: although women may develop an interest in more generous child care provision, all-day schooling, and other welfare programs that de-familialize services initially provided privately, these political preferences often, but not necessarily, translate into a vote for a left party. This is because women's interests in easy labor-market entry may also translate into preferences for less employment protection, lower minimum wages, and higher labor-market flexibility—given that high minimum wages crowd out private services (like private child care) and given that high employment protection discriminates against women with their higher probability of career interruption.[12] But these "outsider" interests in less labor-market regulation are not served by traditional left parties.[13] We therefore need to control for labor-market and welfare-state context if we want to identify the determinants of the female vote choice: where the provision of *public* social services by a generous welfare state is a likely option, women might increasingly vote for social democratic parties.[14] Where it is not, a new gender vote gap will only appear if the left develops a credible commitment toward progressive family-work policies.[15]

Our argument contributes to the literature in several respects: we offer a consistent explanation for the alignment and realignment of the female vote and for the substantial variation in the timing of these trends across countries. In accordance with a larger voting literature,[16] we stress the enduring importance of noneconomic factors, in particular the impact of religion on vote choices. We emphasize that this also means that women's political preferences in conservative welfare states or Catholic countries are not fully explained with their changed socioeconomic interests.[17] Thereby our argument also helps explain a paradox of the comparative welfare state literature, namely that women in Continental and Southern Europe for a long time tended to vote for parties that were particularly unresponsive to their socioeconomic interests.[18] Our

main explanation points to the distorted electoral competition for the religious vote in countries with a strong religious cleavage. Moreover, we point to the context sensitivity of women's vote choice with respect to the public provision of social services and to the strategic positioning of parties. We thereby also demonstrate the relevance of the service economy trilemma for the new gender vote gap in Western European countries since the 1970s.[19]

The paper proceeds as follows: after a brief summary of the literature, we develop our own hypotheses, describe our data, and report our empirical findings and finally conclude.

Explaining the Gender Vote Gap: the Literature

The literature on electoral behavior in the first three postwar decades finds a persistent pattern of "female conservatism": women are more likely than men with the same socioeconomic characteristics to vote for conservative parties.[20] These gender differences in voting behavior were often not very large and they varied across countries, but they existed and persisted. However, this old gender vote gap seemed to have dissolved by the late 1970s and early 1980s. With the United States as a forerunner and the Scandinavian countries close behind, students of electoral behavior observed first women's political dealignment and subsequently their realignment: not only did the old gender vote gap disappear in many countries, a new one appeared in its stead, with women now being more likely to vote left than men of the same age, income, and educational level.[21]

The literature has explained the traditional gender differences in political preferences and behavior with women's lower degree of labor-market participation and longer life expectancy. The literature also refers to women's educational role in the family and the corresponding stronger emphasis on moral and value issues as the cause of political preferences and of a voting behavior that seems to be less well predicted with socioeconomic status.[22] The new gender vote gap then could—so it seemed—be consistently explained by changes in the determinants of the old one: higher female labor-force participation, higher divorce rates, and more generally changed family patterns and encompassing value change. With a higher chance of being or becoming economically independent of the male partner's income and his labor-market fate, with a higher chance of their own labor-force participation, and with higher educational attainment, women's voting decisions should more and more mirror their distinct (welfare) policy preferences. Women's changed economic roles went hand in hand with a broader value change, a stronger emphasis on self-expression, equal opportunity, the erosion of traditional gender roles, more liberal views on the family, and sexual mores. According to the "developmental" theory of the old and new gender vote gap, structural and cultural changes—mutually reinforcing each other—both contributed to women's political dealignment and realignment.[23] Behind these explanations lies an argument in which a lesser degree of labor-market participation or generally of economic involvement in the past allowed noneconomic considerations to more forcefully affect the individual voting decision. Jelen et al.[24] summarize this position as

follows: "relatively sheltered lives led by most women in much of the West in earlier decades…rendered women relatively pure carriers of a culture's traditions. (…) as women increasingly enter the paid labour force, these traditional differences are likely to be reduced or eliminated." More recent studies on the impact of religion on political preferences are compatible with this argument.[25] These studies argue that a second, "moral" issue dimension explains deviations from purely economic, interest-driven voting because it forces voters to choose between their moral and economic preferences. Race or religion in the context of US politics or religion in the context of European politics can be such a second dimension.[26] In a variation of this argument, Roemer[27] explains deviations from economic voting with "issue bundling." Political parties adopt positions on several issue dimensions. Voters then choose among these issue bundles. Given a limited number of parties, poor religious voters might be forced to choose between a pro-redistribution secular and an anti-redistribution religious party (see Gill[28], Norris, and Inglehart[29] and Scheve and Stasavage[30] for other variants of the "religious vote" argument).[31]

An alternative argument holds that traditionally the gender division of labor had aligned women's political preferences with that of their male partners.[32] Due to women's advantages in caring for newborns, so the argument goes, families in the past tended toward an "efficient" division of labor with men in formal employment and women responsible for the nonmarket family work.[33] But once divorce and/or female labor force participation become more likely events, women start to care more about their labor-market "outside options." Men's and women's economic—and subsequently their political—preferences become distinct.

Women's new interests primarily concern the compatibility of work and family; easier labor-market access; a (public) infrastructure for early child care, all-day schooling, as well as for caring for the old and frail; their own welfare entitlements instead of those that are linked to the male's employment status; the reform of tax provisions that discriminate against female labor-force participation; et cetera.[34] The traditional gender division of labor—epitomized in the "male breadwinner" model—becomes contested, because women's household skills are only partially marketable and are developed at the cost of their marketable skills. With higher divorce rates, women therefore develop political preferences for welfare state policies that would ease their labor-force participation.[35, 36] In this perspective, different position taking of men and women in a second, "moral" dimension is perceived as being rather *caused* (and therefore to be fully explained) by the different degrees of women's inclusion in the labor market: "In countries where the demand for female labor is limited…women are more likely than men to be socially conservative…the reason is that women for whom the marriage market is the principal way to secure a livelihood seek to shore up the sanctity and strength of family values. Once committed to the life of a married woman, that marriage is the best that binds securely and for which obligations are taken seriously by the man as well as by the woman."[37]

The above explanations leave a couple of open questions. First, if the old male breadwinner model was simply based on the small, but universal differences between the sexes with respect to caring for very young children, it remains mysterious why in

the past female labor-force participation was so much lower in some countries than elsewhere. Economic structure is not a plausible explanation, because the Southern European countries with low female labor-force participation from early on had small industrial and relatively large service sectors. One also would still need to prove that women's moral conservatism indeed *followed* from their lower degree of labor-market integration. One implication of the argument would be that gender differences vanish once we control for labor-market status—which we show below is not the case. The conventional explanations also suffer from problems of observational equivalence. Taking divorce rates as an example, Edlund and Pande[38] found a nexus between a country's "divorce risk" and women's left voting. But it is not clear whether higher divorce rates indicate a weakening of religious norms—which then would also set free a vote that previously had been "captured" by religious parties (i.e., Christian Democrats)—or whether women confronted with higher divorce rates react rationally to the risk of income loss due to a family breakup by voting for left parties and their pro welfare-state programs.

We argue that religiosity has a persisting *independent* causal impact on vote choices, independent from characteristics of a country's political economy, and from women's degree of labor-market participation or their marital status. Our argument, which emphasizes the influence of the party system, posits that in countries with a strong religious—pro-/anticlericalism—cleavage pious voters *could not* vote for left parties because of the latter parties' strong anticlerical stances. In the mono-denominational Catholic countries of Southern Europe, partly also in the mixed countries of Continental Europe, religion always had a clear place on the left-right political spectrum: if it was not utterly right, it was at least unwaveringly nonleft.[39]And in religious questions, no Downsian "median voter" theorem helped moderate the conflict. No devout Christian could bring himself or herself to vote for a party that mobilized its voters *inter alia* with at times quite aggressive variants of anticlericalism. Also, the other pole on the political spectrum left no doubt about its political stance; for instance, when the Italian Church excommunicated members of the Communist Party in the 1950s and 1960s.[40] Even periods of "rapprochement" between the parties and their elites (like between the DC and the PCI in the 1970s) had little influence on the behavior of their voters.[41]

Given the higher religiosity of women, the religious cleavage and how it spelled out in inter-party dynamics is one very important yet largely neglected factor in the explanation of the old and new gender vote gaps. One central prediction following from our argument is that the influence of religion on the formation of political preferences and voting will not go away once we control for female labor-force participation or for differences in marital status. Our empirical investigation, in fact, shows that religiosity remains a strong determinant of vote choices and political preferences even if we control for all relevant economic and familial factors. The higher degree of religiosity among women combined with the declining religiosity in the electorate are the factors that consistently explain cross-country and temporal variance in the old and new gender vote gaps, with their consequences for the partisan composition of government, for redistribution, design of welfare state schemes, gender division of labor, etc.[42] Our main causal path, therefore, does not go primarily through the labor market or the family, as in previous accounts, but through the party system.

One implication of our argument is that where traditional religious voting loses its former strength, religious parties (like Christian Democrats) may want to keep their voters by appealing increasingly to their material interests. Social protection may be a substitute for religiosity, not because religious people demand less social protection, but because religious parties supply more social protection once religious motives lose strength.[43] Put pointedly: the welfare state expansion of the 1970s and beyond may not have caused secularization,[44] but it may have been *caused* by secularization, a waning religiosity. As we know, Christian Democratic parties have used social policies to become independent from the church hierarchy[45] and—we can add—more recently to become independent from exclusively religiously motivated voters, particularly when these voters are declining in numbers. The complement to this explanation, why Christian Democratic parties now try to woo female voters once they have turned from core to potential swing voters,[46] may explain the "women unfriendliness" of the Christian Democratic welfare state of the past: these parties could afford to neglect the interests of the groups that were most loyally attached to them.

Our argument generates a series of hypotheses that will be tested in the following section: we expect religiosity to be a powerful *independent* predictor of voting decisions, in particular in countries characterized by a strong religious cleavage. In addition, we expect the old (new) gender vote gap to become weaker (stronger) when we control for religiosity. Hence, the weaker the religious cleavage in a country, the earlier the old gender vote gap disappears. We now turn to the empirical analysis of these hypotheses.

Empirical Analysis

Data and some Descriptive Findings

We use two data sources, the World Value Survey and the Eurobarometer Surveys. Eurobarometer is a biannual survey conducted in all EU member states with around 1,000 respondents per country. The eighty-six surveys from 1970 to 2002 have been integrated and standardized in the EB trendfile as provided by the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research with around 1.13 million observations. We have combined the trendfile with more recent Eurobarometer surveys to cover four full decades of socioeconomic and cultural change from 1970 to 2010. The Eurobarometer surveys are a surprisingly underused data source. Along with a battery of EU-related questions, the surveys include a large number of standard questions relating to the respondents' demographic, socioeconomic, and attitudinal profiles. Surveys ask respondents for their left-right self-placement, their vote intention, and whether they "feel close" to a particular party or are party members. This information can be combined with the additional basic demographic and socioeconomic information on gender, income, age, education, marital status, and occupation. The Eurobarometer surveys also provide information on denomination, religiosity, work for charitable or religious organizations, and—of particular importance for our context—church attendance. This exceptionally rich data set allows for a longitudinal study of the changing political and

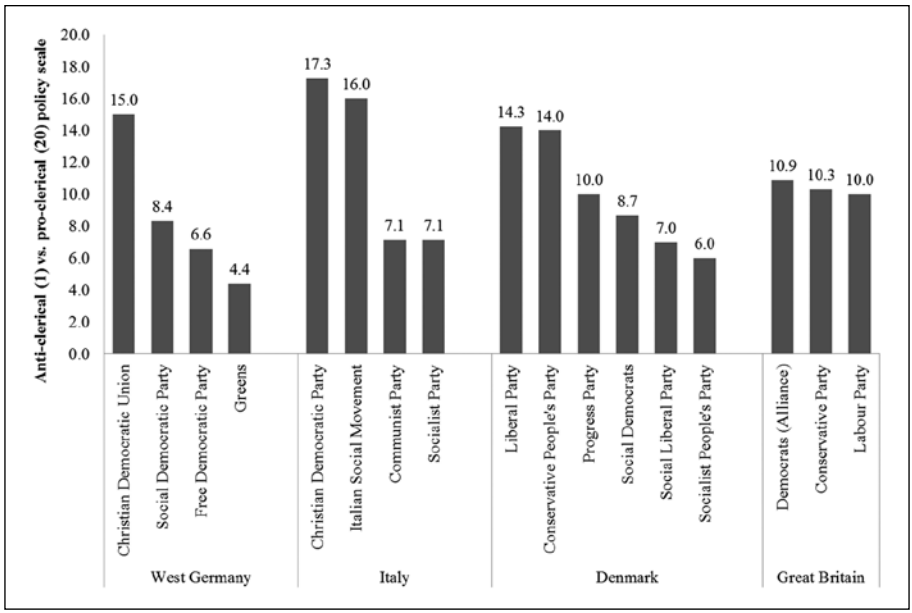

Figure 1. Position of the party leadership on the anticlerical (1) vs. proclerical (20) policy scale (in 1989).

Note: Position of party leadership on the anticlerical (1) vs. proclerical (20) policy scale based on an expert survey conducted by Laver and Hunt (1992). Only parties that had a vote share higher than 5 percent at the time of the expert survey (1989) are listed. Source of party vote share: Armingeon et al. (2010).

religious affiliations of men and women, although such an endeavor is hindered by the fact that some basic categories have not been reported continuously.[47]

The World Value Survey is the largest cross-national survey on political attitudes. As of now, five waves are available. In the following analyses, we use waves 1 (early 1980s), 2 (early 1990s) and 4 (early 2000s) from the four-wave integrated data file produced by the WVS data archive. There are approximately ten years between each wave. The following ten advanced industrialized democracies are included in all three waves: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Spain, and the United States. The World Value Survey provides information on the parties respondents would vote for, church attendance, labor-market participation, marital status, and a range of control variables.

We start with some descriptive findings based on the long-term trends documented by four decades of Eurobarometer surveys. For presentational reasons, we first pick four diverse countries that differ widely with regard to the strength of the religious cleavage (Figure 1), levels of religiosity (Figure 2), and the development of the gender vote gap (Figure 3)[48]: Italy as a prototypical Catholic country with a strong religious cleavage line and high levels of religiosity,[49] with a conservative, "women-unfriendly"

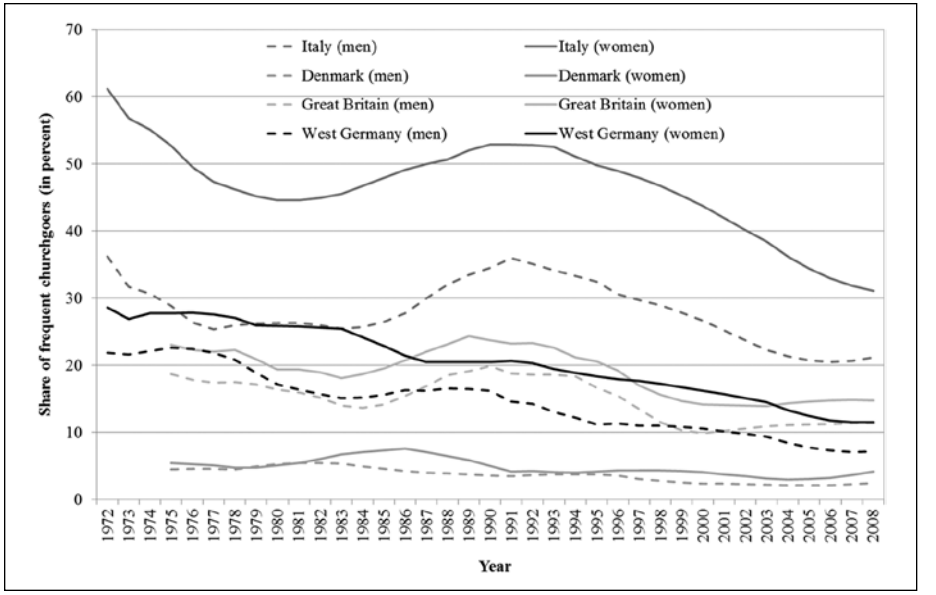

Figure 2. Development of share of frequent churchgoers (once a week or more) by country, year, and gender, 1970-2010 (five-year running averages).
Source: Mannheim Eurobarometer trendfile 1970-2002 (EB 1996 omitted). 2005: EB63.1, EB63.4, EB64.3; 2006: EB65.2; 2010: EB73.1. Data for 1972, 1974, 1979, 1982-84, 1986-87, 1996-97, 1999-2004, and 2007-2009 linearly imputed.

welfare state and—paradoxically—a particularly strong conservative gender vote gap;[50] West Germany as another conservative welfare state with a historically strong conservative gender vote gap, a comparatively strong religious cleavage, and moderately high levels of religiosity;[51] Denmark as an initially Protestant, today very secular society (with a moderately strong religious cleavage) in which women early on shifted their allegiance to left parties in support of the generous Scandinavian welfare state policies; and finally Great Britain as a country with an intermediate level of religiosity (and a dominant Anglican state church, therefore *no* strong religious cleavage line)[52], with a liberal-residual welfare state, in which women did not find employment in public (social) services, but mainly in private services,[53] where women's interests with respect to the welfare state therefore were much more equivocal. Without employment in the public sector as a very likely option, female labor-force participation rests on a flexible labor market both in the sense of allowing to substitute private family services via a cheap private service sector and of easing labor market entry by "outsiders."[54]

Figure 1 displays the strength of the religious cleavage in these four countries. Using the data by Laver and Hunt[55] and for parties with a vote share higher than 5 percent at the time of the expert survey (1989), Figure 1 shows the position of the party leadership on the anticlerical (1) vs. proclerical (20) policy scale. The strongest

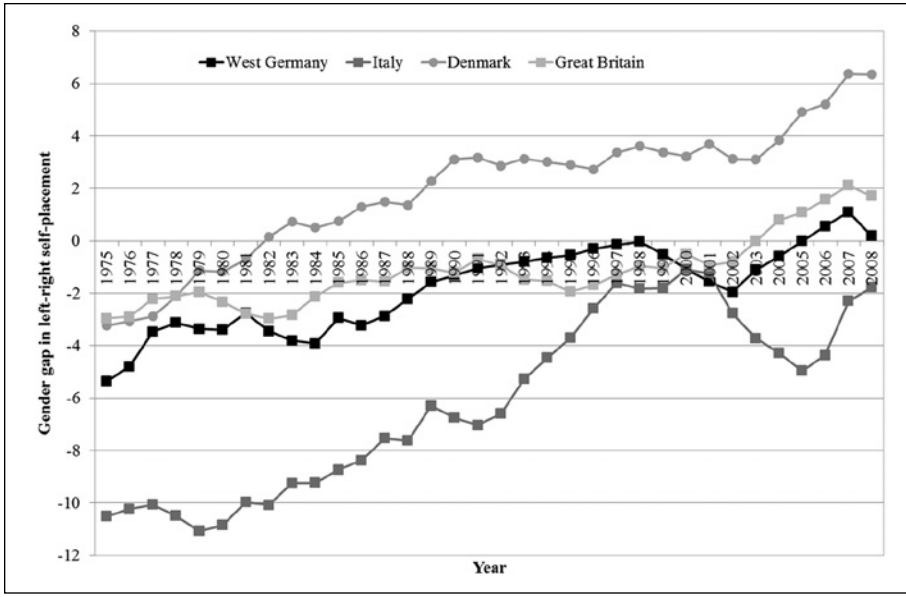

Figure 3. Development of gender gap in left-right self-placement by country and year, 1973-2010 (five-year running averages). Positive values indicate a left self-placement.
Source: Mannheim Eurobarometer trendfile 1970-2002; 2003: EB59.1; 2004: EB61; 2005: EB63.4; 2006: EB65.1; 2007: EB67.2; 2008: EB69.2; 2009: EB71.1; 2010: EB73.4. Data for 1974 and 1975 are linearly imputed.

religious cleavage can be observed in Italy. Virtually no religious cleavage can be observed in Great Britain. Denmark and West Germany are located somewhere in between, although the religious cleavage seems to be somewhat stronger in West Germany than in Denmark. What is more, as we show below, the level of religiosity is considerably lower in Denmark than in West Germany, hence reducing the salience of the religious cleavage.

We focus on church attendance as our indicator for religiosity. This is a better indicator than religious beliefs "because it ties religiosity to existing institutions instead of more abstract religious concepts and values."[56] In addition, church attendance captures the element of social control that is central to our argument. Finally, this operationalization enables us to use the same variable in both datasets and across all countries. We are aware that this indicator tends to bias against Protestant countries, since Protestantism is a more individualized religion and puts stronger emphasis on individual forms of religious practice, like prayers.[57] We are also aware of tendencies to overreport church attendance. The main reason that speaks for this variable is that it is the only one allowing us to study long-term trends while controlling for a host of other important variables, including data availability and comparability. Church attendance is better covered in the Eurobarometer surveys with thirty-three surveys including this question in the trendfile alone (from 1972-2002), but only twenty-one surveys asking

about the respondents' religiosity. Most importantly in our context, church attendance has figured in an additional five surveys in the 2000s (see the online Appendix [pas.sagepub.com] for surveys in 2005, 2006 and 2010), which allows us to study four full decades of changing religious behavior and attitudes, while religiosity or the importance of religion has not been an explicit topic in these more recent surveys.

The same reasoning also guides our choice of dependent variables. We use the vote intention variable in our analysis of World Value Survey data on ten countries over three decades. However, in the case of Eurobarometer surveys, data availability speaks in favor of using the left-right self-placement of respondents (seventy-seven surveys) as our dependent variable, rather than their vote intention (fifty-nine surveys) or their last vote (covered in thirty-one surveys). Very unfortunately, vote intention has disappeared altogether from Eurobarometer surveys after 2002;[58] the last vote question has been asked only once, in 2008 (EB 69.2), but not in a survey with information on church attendance. However, we arrive at similar conclusions when using vote intention as our dependent variable in the analysis of Eurobarometer surveys (results are available upon request).

Figure 2 displays the share of frequent churchgoers (attending church services once a week or more) by gender for Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, and West Germany in the period 1970 to 2010. It shows that religiosity is clearly strongest in Italy, but even there we see very marked gender differences. Almost 50 percent of all Italian women go to church once or several times a week, compared to about a third of all Italian men. This already shows that a substantial share of the old gender vote gap in the Southern European countries may have been due to the marked gender differences in religiosity. In the more secularized countries of Denmark, Great Britain, and West Germany, gender differences are less marked, although we find constantly higher church attendance rates among women in these countries, too. In addition, Figure 2 shows that the share of frequent churchgoers has declined in all countries except Denmark, where the share of frequent churchgoers was already below 5 percent in the early 1970s. In Italy, the share of frequent churchgoers has declined from more than 50 percent in the early 1970s to less than 30 percent in 2010; in Great Britain and West Germany the share of frequent churchgoers has declined from about 25 percent in the 1970s to about 10 percent in the mid-2000s.

In parallel to these decreasing levels of religiosity, we observe a change in the political positions of men and women. Figure 3 displays the gender vote gap for the four countries in the period 1973 to 2010 using Eurobarometer data. For reasons of data availability, we use the respondents' left-right self-placement, which is a highly significant predictor of respondents' vote intention and party affiliation. The gender vote gap is measured as the difference between the share of women who score themselves as "left" (1 to 3 out of 10) and the share of men who score themselves as "left." Figure 3 shows a clear old gender gap in Italy up to the mid-1990s and a clear new gender gap in Denmark from the mid-1980s onward. Gender differences are less pronounced in West Germany and in particular Great Britain. However, a move from a rather old gender gap to a new gender gap in left-right self-placement is clearly discernible.

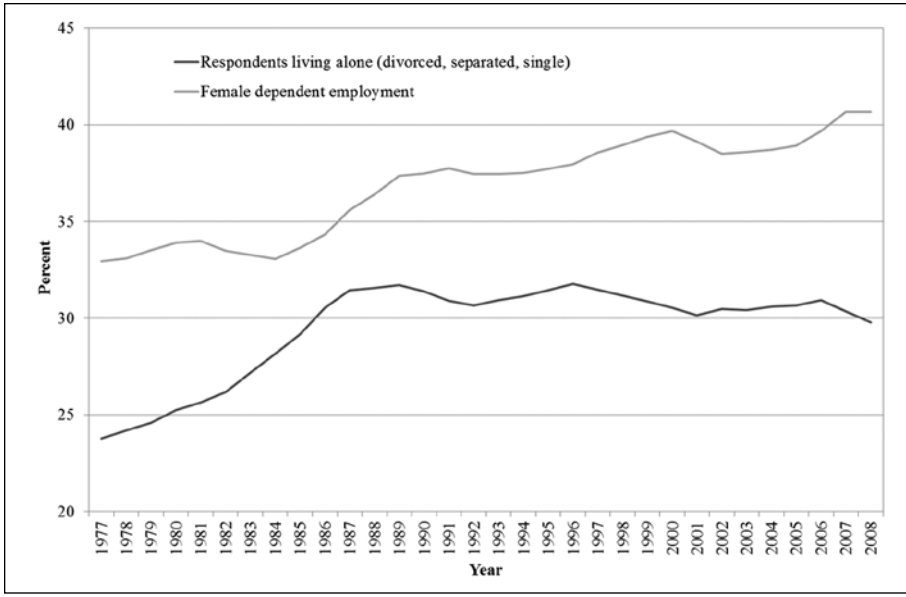

Figure 4. Development of respondents living alone (divorced, separated, without partner) and female dependent employment, 1975-2010 (five-year running averages).
Source: Mannheim Eurobarometer trendfile 1970-2002; 2003: EB59.1; 2004: EB61; 2005: EB63.4; 2006: EB65.1; 2007: EB67.2; 2008: EB69.2; 2009: EB71.1; 2010: EB73.4.

Thus, we can observe a parallel trend in Western democracies: although the gender vote gap has turned from "old" (women vote more conservative than men) to "new" (men vote more conservative than women), the share of highly religious voters has declined in parallel. Not only religiosity has changed in the last four decades, however. Figure 4 shows the average development of the share of respondents living alone (divorced, separated, without partner) and the female dependent employment rates in the period 1975 to 2010. In all four countries, we are observing secular trends toward single households and marital instability—in particular in the 1970s and 1980s—as well as increases in female labor-market participation. As in the case of religiosity, these secular trends run in parallel to the changes in the gender vote gap.

Multivariate Analysis

Given these parallel developments presented in the previous section, we now turn to a multivariate analysis of the gender vote gap. In a first step, we analyze World Value Survey data to identify general trends across Western democracies. The advantage of this data is that we can analyze more countries (ten), vote intention rather than left-right self-placement, and incorporate more control variables into our regression models. The drawback is that we only have data for the early 1980s, early 1990s, and early

2000s.[59] In a second step, we use Eurobarometer data for the detailed analysis of the gender vote gap in Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, and West Germany. Eurobarometer data have the advantage that we can cover a longer time period (1970 to 2010). However, we are more limited with regard to use of control variables.

In the subsequent analysis of World Value Survey data, we use the intention to vote for left or center-left parties as our dependent variable. Respondents were asked which party they would vote for if national elections were held tomorrow. We use a dummy variable to distinguish between respondents with the intention to vote for left or center-left parties and respondents with the intention to vote for any other party. We classified parties using ParlGov's party classification scheme.[60] Our four main independent variables are gender, religiosity, labor-market participation, and marital status. We code respondents as religious if they attend religious services once a week or more. For labor-market participation, we code respondents as economically active if they are employed (full-time and part-time), self-employed, or looking for work (unemployed). The operationalization of gender is straightforward. Finally, marital status is measured using a dummy variable, which distinguishes between respondents living alone (divorced, separated, without partner) and the remaining respondents. In addition, we add interaction effects between gender and religiosity, gender and labor-market participation, and gender and marital status. We use the three interactions to test whether religiosity, labor-market participation, and marital status have different effects on women than on men. Finally, we follow the literature in controlling for age, education, income, unemployment, and union membership.[61] See the Appendix (pas.sagepub.com) for a detailed discussion of the operationalization.

We are primarily interested in the interaction effects between gender on the one hand and religiosity, labor-market participation, and marital status on the other hand. The interpretation of interaction effects is fundamentally different for nonlinear regression models such as logit models compared to linear regression models. For instance, an insignificant estimate of the interaction coefficient does not necessarily indicate an insignificant effect; nor does the sign of the coefficient necessarily denote the correct direction of the effect.[62] Consequently, we predict probabilities based on our regression models for all three waves, only varying the four dummy variables of interest (gender, church attendance, labor market participation, and marital status).

Figure 5 displays the average effect of church attendance, labor-market participation, and marital status on vote intention across the three waves (early 1980s, early 1990s, and early 2000s) of the World Value Survey for both men and women. In the case of gender, Figure 5 displays the average effect across the eight possible combinations (2^3) of the three dummy variables for church attendance, labor-market participation, and marital status for the three different decades. Due to limited space, the regression models and the predicted probabilities are displayed in Tables A1 to A5 in the online Appendix (pas.sagepub.com) and available upon request from the authors.

The findings of our analysis of World Value Survey data can be summarized as follows: First, religiosity has a strong negative effect on the intention to vote for left or center-left parties. This effect is significant for both men and women, and for all three waves. No meaningful gender differences can be observed.[63]

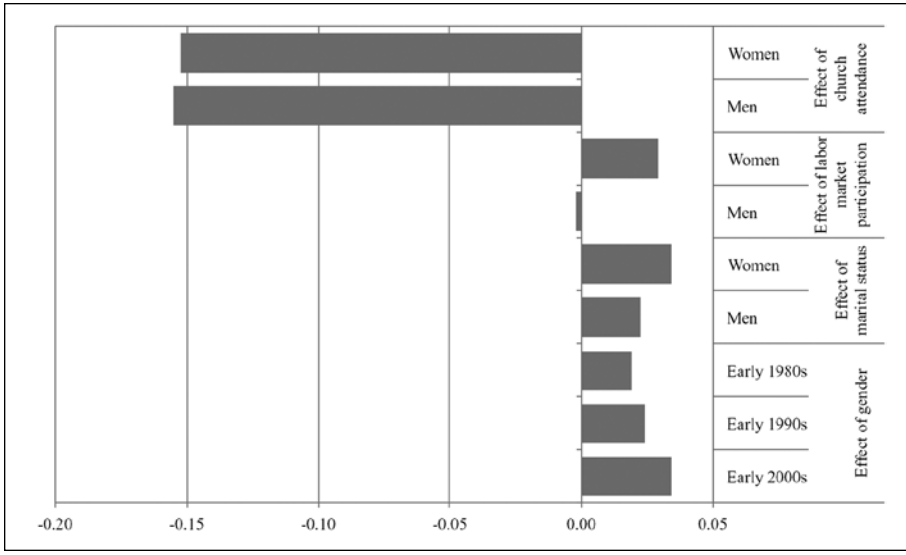

Figure 5. Determinants of vote intention by gender (average effects of the main independent variables, early 1980s to early 2000s, World Value Survey data).
Note: The figure displays the average effect (coefficients) of church attendance, labor-market participation, and marital status on vote intention across three waves of the World Value Survey (early 1980s, early 1990s, and early 2000s) for both men and women. In the case of gender, the figure displays the average effect across the eight possible combinations (2^3) of the three dummy variables for church attendance, labor-market participation, and marital status for the three different decades. Due to limited space, the regressions models and the predicted probabilities are displayed in Tables A1 to A5 in the Online Appendix and available upon request from the authors.

Second, labor market participation only has a weak effect on the intention to vote for left or center-left parties. Although the coefficient is consistently positive for female respondents, only the coefficient for the first wave (early 1980s) is significantly different from zero. No effect of labor-market participation can be observed in the case of male respondents.

Third, living alone (divorced, separated, without partner) has a positive effect on the intention to vote for left and center-left parties, in particular for female respondents. The coefficients are positive and significantly different from zero in the early 1980s and the early 2000s for female respondents and in the early 2000s for male respondents.

Fourth, substantively, religiosity is a more powerful predictor of vote intention than labor-market participation and marital status. For instance, religiosity decreases the probability of left party choice by between 5.9 to 22.2 percentage points. In contrast, labor-market participation changes the probability of left party choice by maximum 5.6 percentage points, while marital status changes the probability of left party choice by maximum 5.8 percentage points.

Finally, when we control for religiosity, marital status, and labor-market participation, gender has only a weak effect on the intention to vote for left or center-left

parties. We find significant effects of gender in only six cases (out of twenty-four possible cases[64]). This clearly shows that religiosity, marital status, and labor-market participation can explain a considerable part of the observed gender vote gap.

In sum, we find some evidence in favor of all three secular trends identified above. Respondents living alone are more likely to vote for left and center-left parties, while religious respondents are less likely to do so. With regard to labor-market participation, the evidence is more mixed. Overall, religiosity is clearly the most powerful predictor of left party choice and has a strong and independent effect on vote choice.

In a second step, we now turn to the detailed analysis of our four "prototypical" cases. Above, we argued that we should be able to observe profound cross-national differences because of marked differences in the strength of the religious cleavage and levels of religiosity (see Figures 1 and 2) as well as different employment opportunities for female labor-market participants. Using Eurobarometer surveys, we now follow the developments in these four countries over four decades. We look at the left-right self-placement, a variable which in the Eurobarometer dataset runs from 1 to 10. We have recoded it into one variable capturing whether respondents have placed themselves in the interval 1 to 3 (left) or not. We then look at the covariates for a left self-placement controlling for religiosity, labor-market participation, marital status, age, income, and education. Data availability forces us to drop some Eurobarometer surveys from our dataset. Most importantly, only one Eurobarometer survey in the first decade of the twenty-first century contains all variables needed to estimate these regression models. As a result, the last decade refers to EB 73.1 (2010) only.[65]

Figure 6 shows the effect of controlling for religiosity on the coefficient of the variable "gender." It displays the coefficients with (dark gray) and without (light gray) control for religiosity for four countries and four decades. In each country and in each decade, controlling for religiosity decreases (increases) the negative (positive) effect of gender on left self-placement. Thus, in all four countries and in all four decades, religiosity contributes to the old gender vote gap or inhibits the new gender vote gap from becoming visible. Figure 6 further shows that in Denmark the new gender vote gap emerged already in the 1980s, in Britain only after the 1990s, while in Italy we are still observing a weak old gender vote gap. For West Germany, the old gender vote gap virtually disappeared in the 1990s before it reappeared in 2010. This much more varied picture supports our argument about the importance of the strategic configuration among parties and their programmatic adjustments in the light of an increasing number of female socioeconomic swing voters. In Great Britain, Labour's clear shift to work-family policies, for example, a strong commitment to more generous maternity leave payments and better child care provision, did not occur before the 2000s.[66] Although a strong religious cleavage is lacking in British politics, women interested in easy labor-market access and affordable child care could not have found the traditional, union-dominated social policy stance of the Labour Party of the 1990s very attractive. In the same vein, the German Christian Democrats successful establishment of "issue ownership" in questions of work-family policies under Merkel and her Labor Minister Ursula von der Leyen after 2005 contributed critically to the sweeping success of the Christian Democrats among female voters in the 2009 elections and helped turn around the steady erosion of support among this electoral group.[67] This significant

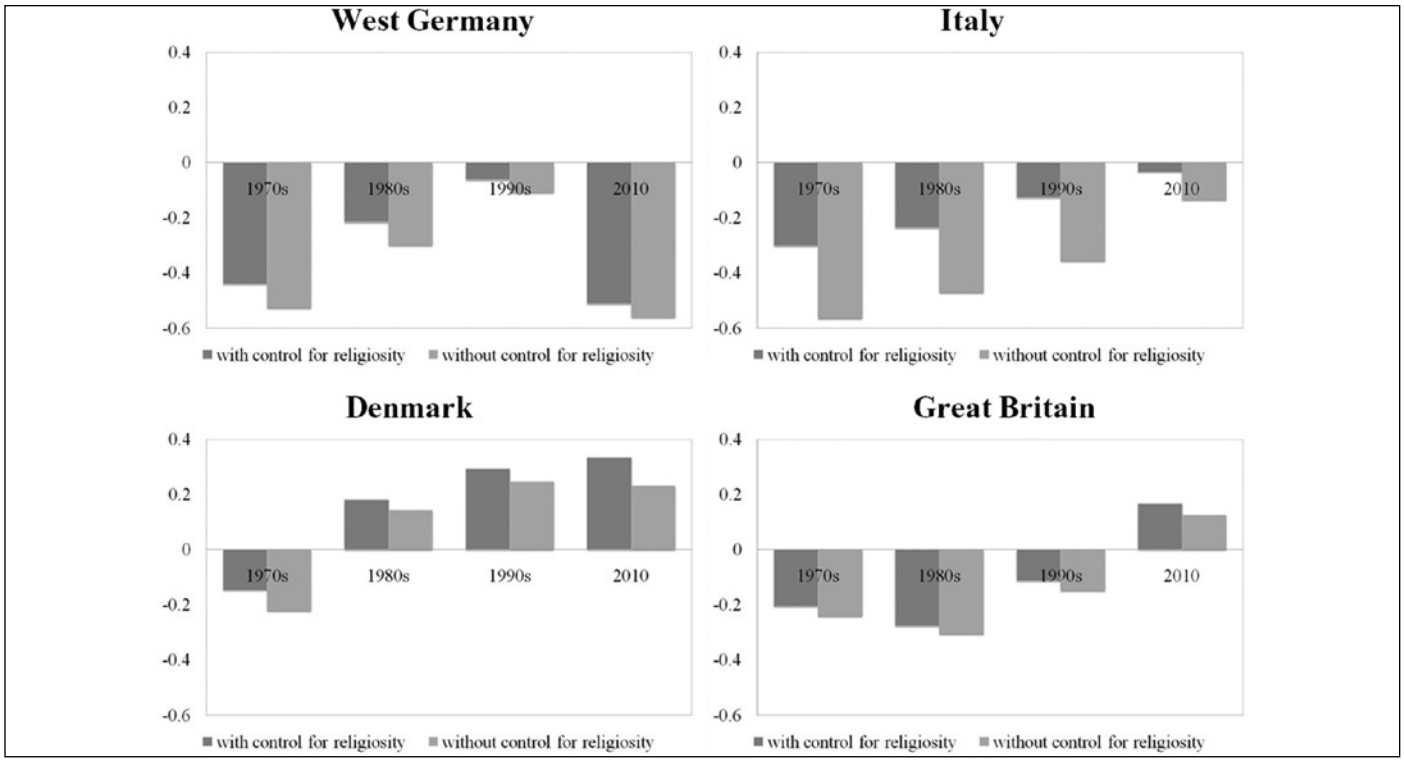

Figure 6. Effect (coefficient) of the independent variable "gender" on the dependent variable "left self-placement" in four decades, with control variable "religiosity" (dark gray bars) and without control variable "religiosity" (light gray bars).
Note: Logistic regressions with the dependent variable left self-placement. The figures show the coefficient of the variable gender. The following control variables have been used: age, education, and income (socioeconomic level in the model using data from 2010). Dark gray bars display the coefficient in models controlling for religiosity (measured with church attendance, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (several times a week)), light gray bars display the coefficient in models not controlling for religiosity. Source: Eurobarometer trendfile and EB73.1 (2010).

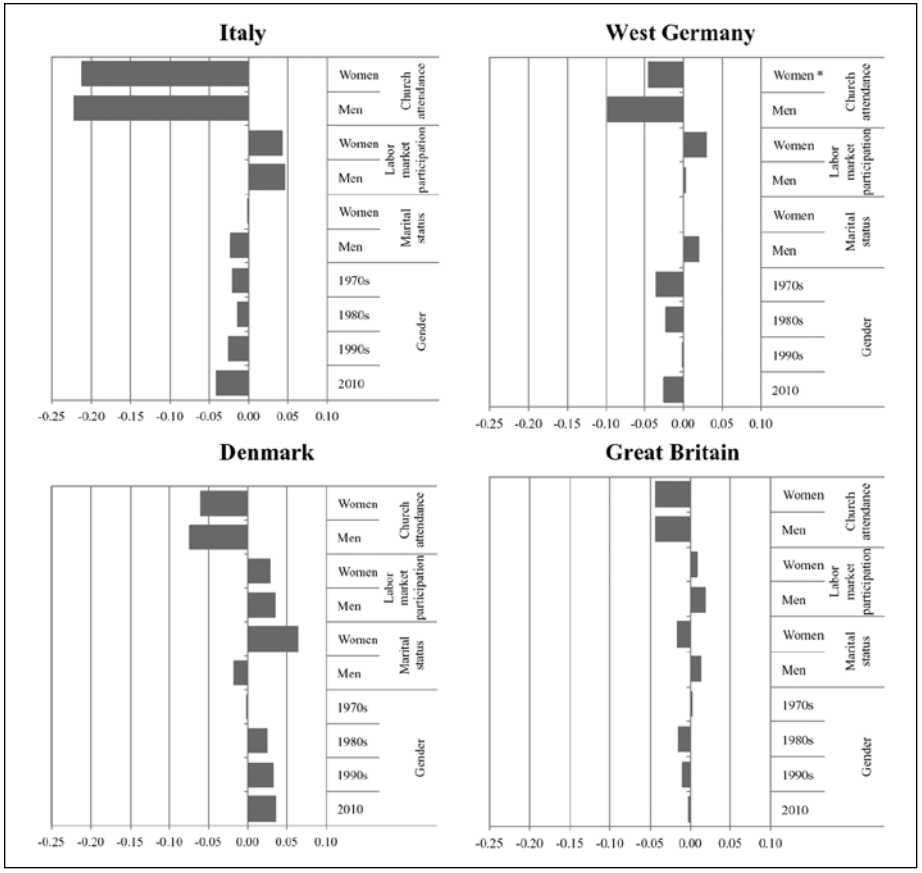

Figure 7. Determinants of left-right self-placement by gender in Italy, West Germany, Denmark, and Great Britain (average effects of main independent variables, 1970 to 2010, Eurobarometer data).

Note: The figure displays the average effect (coefficient) of church attendance, labor-market participation, and marital status on left-right self-placement from the 1970s to 2010 for both men and women. In the case of gender, the figure displays the average effect across the eight possible combinations (2^3) of the three dummy variables for church attendance, labor-market participation, and marital status for the four different decades. Due to limited space, the regressions models and the predicted probabilities are displayed in Tables A7 to A26 in the Online Appendix and available upon request from the authors.

* This average considers only data from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s because the estimated effect of church attendance on the left-right self-placement of West German women in 2010 is likely to be an outlier. As Tables A11 and A12 in the Online Appendix show, the change in predicted probabilities is positive but far from satisfying any conventional levels of significance. We speculate that this outlier is the result of the "Chancellor effect" (the Christian Democrat Angela Merkel is the first female Chancellor) but also the low number of observations (se Table A11 in the Online Appendix). If the data for 2010 are considered, the average effect is reduced to -0.02 (instead of -0.04).

trend reversal finds no explanation in the conventional accounts that stress the secular increase in female labor-force participation or divorce rates.

In a next step, we estimate logistic regressions of left self-placement on the dummy variables for gender, religiosity, labor-market participation, marital status, and control variables (see Tables A7 to A26 in the Online Appendix). As in the case of the World Value Survey data, interaction effects in nonlinear regression models are best analyzed using predicted probabilities. Figure 7 displays the average effect of church attendance, labor-market participation, and marital status on left self-placement across four decades for both men and women in Italy, West Germany, Denmark, and Great Britain. In the case of gender, Figure 7 displays the average effect across the eight possible combinations of the three other dummy variables for the four different decades (1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2010) and the four countries.

The findings of our analysis of Eurobarometer data can be summarized as follows: First, religiosity has a negative and substantially important effect on left self-placement in Italy, West Germany, and Denmark. The effect of religiosity is weaker in Great Britain, which is consistent with the absence of a strong religious cleavage.

Second, labor-market participation is a weaker predictor of left self-placement than religiosity. Among women, labor-market participation significantly increases the probability of left self-placement in West Germany in the 1980s and 2010, in Italy in the 1980s and 1990s, and in Denmark in the 1990s. In contrast, labor-market participation does not affect the probability of left self-placement in Great Britain. Among men, labor-market participation significantly increases the probability of left self-placement in West Germany in the 1980s, in Italy in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, in Denmark in 2010, and in Great Britain in the 1970s. This analogy between male and female voting behavior has noteworthy implications. Since labor-market participation has similar effects on the probability of left self-placement for men and women, it cannot be ruled out that the effect of labor-market participation on left self-placement is the result of the pro-labor stance of left and center-left parties (expected to affect both genders) rather than their programmatic focus on reconciliation of work and family life and their support for public sector jobs (expected to mostly affect women).

Third, marital status has only a weak effect on the probability of left self-placement. Among women, we only observe a significant positive effect of living alone (divorced, separated, without partner) in Denmark in the 1980s, and a significant *negative* effect in West Germany in 2010. Among men, we observe significant positive effects in West Germany in the 1970s and in Italy in the 1970s, and a significant negative effect in Italy in the 1980s. Overall, marital status has a significant *positive* effect on left self-placement in only three of thirty-two cases. In accordance with our theoretical expectations, marital status has no effect on the probability of left self-placement in Great Britain, which we argue took a "private" route to high female employment in the service sector.[68]

A comparison of Denmark and Great Britain shows this difference between a "public" and "private" route to high female employment in the service sector. While marital status and labor market participation have an overall positive effect on left self-placement among Danish women, no such effects can be observed in the case of British women (see Figure 7). This finding is consistent with our argument that British women for a long time could not expect to benefit from the provision of *public* social services

by a generous welfare state because most new social services in Great Britain are provided through the market.[69] British women's interest in easy labor-market entry therefore might have translated into preferences for political programs that promise less employment protection, lower minimum wages, and higher labor market flexibility[70]—and this was only going to change once the Labour Party developed a credible and visible programmatic commitment to the substantial expansion of child care and improvement of maternal leave.[71] In contrast, Danish women were likely to support left parties because in Denmark the transition to a postindustrial society with high female employment in the service sector took a "public" route. This finding is also consistent with the development of the gender vote gap as displayed in Figure 3. Given the absence of a strong religious cleavage in Great Britain, inter-party competition over the religious voters was not distorted. Hence, only a weak *old* gender vote gap can be observed in Figure 3. In addition, the "private" route to high female employment in the service sector taken by Great Britain for a long time did not create any strong incentives for women to support left parties. This picture only changes after 2000, when we do observe a weak *new* gender vote gap (see Figures 3 and 6). In contrast, the strong religious cleavage in Italy led to a large *old* gender vote gap in Italy, while the "public" route to high female employment taken by Denmark led to a large *new* gender vote gap in Denmark.

Finally, when controlling for religiosity, marital status, and labor-market participation, gender has only a weak effect on left self-placement. Of the 128 logically possible combinations of the four countries, four decades, and eight combinations of the three dummy variables for religiosity, marital status, and labor-market participation we are analyzing, the coefficient of the variable "gender" turns out to be significantly different from zero in only eighteen cases (14.1 percent; in twelve cases, the coefficient is negative; in six cases, the coefficient is positive). Interestingly, it seems as if the regression models for the 1970s fail to fully explain the old gender vote gap (seven significant effects of gender in the 1970s compared to eleven significant effects of gender in the other three periods combined).

We can draw two main conclusions on the basis of the above analysis of Eurobarometer data. First, the observed gender vote gap, both the "old" and the "new" one, largely disappears once control variables for religiosity, labor-market participation, and marital status are introduced. Thus, these three factors largely explain the existence of the gender vote gap. Second, among the three factors, religiosity has by far the largest substantive effect. Except in Great Britain where there is no religious cleavage to speak of (see Figure 1) and to a certain extent Denmark (moderately strong religious cleavage but very few religious voters), religiosity is a powerful predictor of left self-placement. In contrast, labor-market participation and marital status are only occasionally significant predictors of left self-placement.

Conclusions

In the preceding analyses we found religiosity to be a powerful *independent* predictor of the political preferences and vote choice, in particular in countries characterized by

a strong religious cleavage. Religiosity proved to be a very strong predictor, in fact much stronger than any of the other socioeconomic variables we tested. Controlling for employment and marital status plus religiosity made gender differences in political preferences largely disappear. The more detailed comparison of our four prototypical cases—Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy—also suggests that the impact of religion on vote choice/political preferences is quite independent from its impact on a country's gendered political economy, *but not independent from its party system*. Where the religious cleavage is strong and where there are many religious voters, women's political dealignment occurs very late, such as in Italy. But once women become socioeconomic swing voters, the onset of full electoral competition over the female vote may even reverse the trend (Germany), and where the left fails to develop a clear programmatic commitment to expansionary family-work policies women have little incentives to turn left, in particular if a liberal welfare state does not offer them many employment prospects (Great Britain). Thus, the political economy explanations of redistributive politics are clearly in need of a party-political complement. Such a complement—in particular if it takes into account the impact of religious voting and parties—could also much better explain the substantial cross-national as well as temporal variation in the manifestation of the new gender vote gap.[72] Claims about women's changed policy preferences translating into a change of their vote would therefore need to account for two contextual factors: the strategic configuration of parties,[73] in particular whether parties of religious defense capture the moral sentiments of a wider electorate, and the character of the welfare state regime.

Our findings speak to a puzzle of the comparative welfare state literature: How was the "women-unfriendly" welfare state of Continental and Southern Europe electorally sustainable? Why did female voters not switch to parties that promised them more "women-friendly" policies? We have pointed to one possible explanation: religious voting. In countries with a strong religious (pro-clerical/anticlerical) cleavage line, we argued, inter-party competition over the religious voters was distorted, since religious voters could not vote for parties that took an often-aggressive anticlerical stance. Taking the (disproportionately female) religious vote for granted, Christian democratic parties did not have to worry about "women-friendly" welfare policies. But now that Christian democratic parties have to adapt their political program to accommodate the socioeconomic preferences of female voters, the realignment of the female vote—as we have shown—might be much more varied and less clear-cut left than previously assumed.

Appendix: Data Description

In this analysis we have used the following data sets:

World Value Survey Four-Wave Integrated Data File

The file can be downloaded from the following website: http://www.wvsevsdb.com/

Bibliographic citation: European and World Values Surveys four-wave integrated data file, 1981-2004, v.20060423, 2006. Surveys designed and executed by the

European Values Study Group and World Values Survey Association. File Producers: ASEP/JDS, Madrid, Spain and Tilburg University, Tilburg, the Netherlands. File Distributors: ASEP/JDS and GESIS, Cologne, Germany.

We use data from wave 1 (early 1980s), wave 2 (early 1990s), and wave 3 (early 2000s) for the following ten countries: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Spain, and the United States.

Operationalization:

Left vote (variable e179): *If there were a national election tomorrow, for which party on this list would you vote?* The dummy variable has been created by distinguishing between respondents with the intention to vote for center-left and left parties and respondents with the intention to vote for any other party. Parties have been classified using the ParlGov party classification scheme.

Gender (x001): Respondents answering female have been coded as one.

Church attendance (f028): *How often do you attend religious services?* The dummy variable has been created by distinguishing between respondents attending religious service once a week or more often and respondents attending religious services less than once a week.

Labor-market participation (x028): *Are you employed now or not?* Respondents are coded as economically active if they are employed (full-time or part-time), self-employed, or unemployed.

Divorced, separated, or without partner (x007): *Are you currently ... (3) divorced, (4) separated, or (6) single/never married?* This dummy variable distinguishes between respondents who are divorced, separated, or without partner and the remaining respondents (excluding the missing observations).

Age (x003): The age of the respondent at the time of the survey. Respondents below the age of 18 have been excluded from the survey. We incorporate age in the form of dummy variables into the regression model. The six dummy variables capture respondents aged 18 to 24, aged 25 to 34, aged 35 to 44, aged 45 to 54, aged 55 to 64, and aged 65 or older (variable x003r). We use the group aged 25 to 34 as reference category.

Education (x025): The variables "low education" and "high education" (reference category "middle education") have been coded using the following survey question: *What is the highest educational level that you have attained?* We use the recoded education variable provided by the survey (x025r), which distinguishes between "low education," "middle education," and "high education." We use "middle education" as reference category.

Income (x047): The income variable is provided by the survey and distinguishes among ten steps.

Union membership (a067): *Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say, which, if any, do you belong to?* This dummy variable has been coded as one if respondents indicated that they belong to a labor union.

Unemployed (x028): This dummy variable distinguishes between unemployed respondents and the remaining respondents (excluding missing observations).

The Mannheim Eurobarometer trendfile 1970-2002. Data Set Edition 2.00. 2003: Eurobarometer 59.1; 2004: Eurobarometer 61; 2005: Eurobarometer 63.1, Eurobarometer 63.4, Eurobarometer 64.3; 2006: Eurobarometer 65.1, Eurobarometer 65.2; 2007: Eurobarometer 67.2; 2008: Eurobarometer 69.2; 2009: Eurobarometer 71.1; 2010: Eurobarometer 73.1, Eurobarometer 73.4.

All these files can be downloaded from the following website: http://www.gesis.org

EB63.1, EB63.4, EB64.3, and EB65.2 contain a variable capturing church attendance, but no variable capturing income or the socioeconomic status. Therefore, for the multivariate analysis only the Trend File and EB73.1 have been used (in the latter case using socioeconomic status as a proxy for income).

We use data for the following four countries: Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, and West Germany.

Operationalization Eurobarometer trendfile:

Left self-placement (variable lrs): *In political matters people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale?* The variable runs from 1 to 10. We have recoded this variable into a dummy variable capturing whether the respondent has placed him- or herself in the interval 1 to 3 (left) or not.

Gender (sex): Respondents answering female have been coded as one.

Church attendance (churchat): *Do you go to religious services several times a week, once a week, a few times a the year, or never?* The dummy variable has been created by distinguishing between respondents attending religious services once a week or more often and respondents attending religious services less than once a week.

Labor market participation (occup): *What is your occupation?* This dummy variable captures whether the respondent is in dependent employment (1) or not (0) (excluding missing observations).

Divorced, separated, or without partner (married): *Are you single, married, living as married, divorced, separated, or widowed?* This dummy variable distinguishes between respondents who are single, divorced, or separated and the remaining respondents (excluding the missing observations).

Age (age): *Could you tell me your date of birth please?* We have subsequently recoded this variable into six categories: respondents younger than 25, respondents aged 25 to 34, respondents aged 35 to 44, respondents aged 45 to 54, respondents aged 55 to 64, and respondents aged 65 or older.

Income (income): This variable is provided by the survey and distinguishes between 13 categories. High values indicate high earnings.

Education (educ): *How old were you when you finished your full-time education?* Respondents still studying have been dropped from the data set.

Operationalization EB73.1:

Left self-placement (variable D1): *In political matters people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale?* The variable runs from 1

to 10. We have recoded this variable into a dummy variable capturing whether the respondent has placed him-or herself in the interval 1 to 3 (left) or not.

Gender (D10): Respondents answering female have been coded as one.

Church attendance (QB34): *Apart from weddings or funerals, about how often do you attend religious services?* This variable distinguishes between eight different levels of religiosity. The dummy variable for church attendance has been created by distinguishing between respondents attending religious services once a week or more often and respondents attending religious services less than once a week.

Labor-market participation (D15AR): *What is your occupation?* This dummy variable captures whether the respondent is in dependent employment (1) or not (0) (excluding missing observations).

Divorced, separated, or without partner (D7B): *Could you give me the letter which corresponds best to your current situation?* This dummy variable distinguishes between respondents who are divorced, separated, or single and the remaining respondents (excluding the missing observations).

Age (D11R2): *How old are you?* We have subsequently recoded this variable into six categories: respondents younger than 25, respondents aged 25 to 34, respondents aged 35 to 44, respondents aged 45 to 54, respondents aged 55 to 64, and respondents aged 65 or older.

Socioeconomic level (D61): *On the following scale, step "1" corresponds to "the lowest level in the society," step "10" corresponds to "the highest level in the society." Could you tell me on which step you would place yourself?* EB73.1 (2010) does not contain a variable "income." However, an analysis of Eurobarometer trendfile data shows that income is a very powerful predictor of socioeconomic level. We therefore use this variable as proxy variable for income.

Education (VD8): *How old were you when you stopped your full-time education?* Respondents still studying have been dropped from the data set.

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31. One less-often-discussed implication would be that we may then observe not only gender differences in vote choices, but also in turnout. In fact, studies on electoral turnout have found persistent, if small differences between the sexes, for example, André Blais, *To Vote or Not to Vote: The Merits and Limits of Rational Choice Theory* (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000); Mark N. Franklin, *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), but these studies usually do not discuss causes and consequences. Our argument stresses that religious voters are confronted with "cross-pressures": on a socioeconomic dimension they would like to vote for left parties, but on a second dimension they cannot, because left parties are aggressively anticlerical. Cross-pressure has been

identified as a major determinant of abstention.

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36. This is not necessarily the case, but rather dependent on whether the transition to a postindustrial society with high female employment in the service sector takes a "private" or a "public" route, i.e., whether much of the new social services are provided by the welfare state, as in Scandinavia, or through the market, as in the Anglo-Saxon countries; Iversen and Wren, "Equality, Employment, and Budgetary Restraint"; Fritz W Scharpf, "Employment and the Welfare State: A Continental Dilemma," *MPIfG Working Paper* 97/7 (1997).
37. Iversen and Rosenbluth, *Women, Work, and Politics*, 113.
38. Lena Edlund and Rohindi Pande, "Why Have Women Become Left-Wing? The Political Gender Gap and the Decline in Marriage," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 117, no. 3 (2002): 917-61.
39. Suzanne Berger, "Religious Transformations and the Future of Politics," in C.S. Maier, ed., *Changing Boundaries of the Political: Essays on the Evolving Balance between the State and Society, Public and Private in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 107-49; Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization*. This is the main difference between Europe and the United States, where religion has no clear political coding, i.e., where the left is not intensely anticlerical (cf. Martin 1978). As a consequence, a new gender vote gap could emerge in the United States despite a much less pronounced secularization trend.
40. Piero Ignazi and E. Spencer Wellhofer, "Votes and Votive Candles: Modernization, Secularization, Vatican II, and the Decline of Religious Voting in Italy: 1953 -1992," *Comparative Political Studies* 46, no. 1 (2013): 31-62.
41. Piergiorgio Corbetta and Nicoletta Cavazza, "From the Parish to the Polling Booth: Evolution and Interpretation of the Political Gender Gap in Italy, 1968-2006," *Electoral Studies* 27, no. 2 (2008): 272-84.
42. Available evidence suggests that the new gender vote gap is to a large extent the result of declining religiosity in the electorate (see Figure 2)—in particular among women—and *not* the result of a disappearing religious cleavage. An analysis of Comparative Manifesto Project data on "traditional morality" (per603 'pro' and per604 'con') indicates that the religious cleavage remains prominent in both Germany and Italy (see Figures A1 to A4 in the online Appendix [pas.sagepub.com]). In Germany, it rather increases with the advent of the ex-communists in the party system after 1990. The Comparative Manifesto Project data also document that there is virtually no anticlericalism in Great Britain and Denmark (both historically and today) and underlines the distinctiveness of the Italian party system with its strong anticlerical left. Our findings are corroborated by findings about the persistent salience of morality issues in European politics; cf. Isabelle Engeli, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, and Lars Thorup Larsen, eds., *Morality Politics in Western Europe: Parties, Agendas and Policy Choices* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012).
43. Kees van Kersbergen and Philip Manow, eds., *Religion, Class Coalitions and the Welfare State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
44. Norris and Ingelhart, *Sacred and Secular*.
45. Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

46. Morgan, "Path Shifting of the Welfare State."
47. The church attendance question has been asked only rarely in Eurobarometers conducted after 1998, the vote intention question has unfortunately not been continued past 2000, and the household income question has been dropped in post-2002 surveys (see below).
48. The EB surveys contain data for five more countries from the 1970s onward. Belgium, France, and the Netherlands are all characterized by a comparatively strong religious cleavage and moderately high levels of religiosity. These three countries are therefore comparable to Italy and West Germany. Indeed, the analysis of Belgian, Dutch, and French data leads to identical conclusions (results are available upon request). We did not use data for Luxembourg (low number of observations) and Ireland (the religious cleavage is intermingled with issues of national identity and independence).
49. Ignazi and Wellhofer, "Votes and Votive Candles."
50. Corbetta and Cavazza, "From the Parish to the Polling Booth."
51. Inglehart and Norris, "The Developmental Theory of the Gender Gap," Table 1, 443.
52. Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization.*
53. Iversen and Wren, "Equality, Employment, and Budgetary Restraint: The Trilemma of the Service Economy"; Scharpf, "Employment and the Welfare State"; Wren, *The Political Economy of the Service Transition.*
54. Rueda, "Insider-Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies."
55. Michael Laver and W. Ben Hunt, *Policy and Party Competition* (London: Routledge, 1992).
56. Michael Minkenberg, "Religion and Public Policy: Institutional, Cultural, and Political Impact on the Shaping of Abortion Policies in Western Democracies," *Comparative Political Studies* 35, no. 2 (2002): 221-47, 237.
57. Max Haller and Franz Höllinger, "Female Employment and the Change of Gender Roles: The Conflictual Relationship between Participation and Attitudes in International Comparison," *International Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1994): 87-112.
58. The last Eurobarometer survey containing data on vote intention, church attendance, and control variables is from 1994.
59. Using the other two available waves would force us to use different countries in the analysis of the different periods.
60. Holger Döring and Philip Manow, "Parliament and Government Composition Database (Parlgov): An Infrastructure for Empirical Information on Parties, Elections and Governments," 2012.
61. De La O and Rodden, "Does Religion Distract the Poor?"
62. Chunrong Ai and Edward C. Norton, "Interaction Terms in Logit and Probit Models," *Economic Letters* 80, no. 1 (2003): 123-29.
63. We have refrained from estimating multi-level models due to the low number of cases on the macro level. However, available evidence suggests that the effect of church attendance on the intention to vote for left or center-left parties is stronger in countries characterized by a prominent religious cleavage. As Table A6 in the online Appendix shows [pas.sagepub.com], the coefficient of the independent variable "church attendance" is significantly different from zero in seventeen out of eighteen cases (six countries and three waves) in countries characterized by a prominent religious cleavage. In contrast, in the remaining four countries, the coefficient of the independent variable "church attendance" is significantly different from zero in only four out of twelve cases (four countries and three waves).
64. The three dummy variables can be combined in eight possible ways (2^3) and are estimated for three different waves of the World Value Survey. Hence, there are twenty-four possible cases.

65. EB 73.1 does not contain data on income. Hence, we use the self-reported socioeconomic level to proxy for income. An analysis of Eurobarometer trendfile data shows that income is a very powerful predictor of socioeconomic level.
66. Morgan, "Path Shifting of the Welfare State," 93-95.
67. Ibid, 95-99.
68. Iversen and Wren, "Equality, Employment, and Budgetary Restraint."
69. Ibid; Scharpf, "Employment and the Welfare State"; Wren, *The Political Economy of the Service Transition.*
70. Rueda, "Insider-Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies."
71. Morgan, "Path Shifting of the Welfare State."
72. Giger, "Towards a Modern Gender Gap in Europe?"
73. Kitschelt, "Partisan Competition and Welfare State Retrenchment."

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