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Abstract

We use variation in religious doctrine produced by the unexpected Second Vatican Council (1962-65) to investigate the impact of religion on democratization. The Council, which transformed the Catholic Church from defender of the *ancien régime* into a leading apostle of religious freedom, human rights and democracy, represents the most significant example of institutionalized religious change since the Protestant Reformation. We adopt a difference-in-difference approach to estimate the Council's impact on democracy. Furthermore, we provide historical narratives on how the post-conciliar Catholic Church influenced the democratization process in different national contexts. Our research substantiates that the Church played a decisive role in third wave democratization.

1. Introduction

Few areas in social science have received more attention than the "determinants of democracy". We contribute to this literature by using variation in religious doctrine produced by the *unexpected* Second Vatican Council (1962-65) to examine the impact of religion on democratization.

The Council (or simply Vatican II) was a watershed moment in Catholicism, not unlike the Protestant Reformation. According to Gonzáles (2010), Vatican II set in motion a process that could not be stopped, Wilde (2007) asserts that Vatican II represents the most significant example of institutionalized religious change since the Protestant Reformation, Payne (1984) calls it the most sweeping reform in Catholic history since the Counter-Reformation, Faggioli (2015) calls it the most important event for the Catholic Church in the last four centuries, and Williams and Davidson (1996) call it the most important event in the last one hundred years of Catholic history. Vatican II transformed the Roman Catholic Church from a defender of the *ancien régime* into a leading apostle of religious freedom, human rights, and democracy (Fleet and Smith 1997; Huntington 1991; Weigel 1989).[1]

Prior to Vatican II the Church made uncompromising secular demands on its followers. Under the papacy of Pius XII (1939-58), for example, voters were left in no doubt as to the spiritual indecorum of voting against Catholic political parties. It was not until 1967, two years into the post-conciliar era, that a Dutch bishop ventured to say in public that Catholics could vote for a non-Catholic party without risking excommunication. Judt (2010) asserts that this change was a direct result of Vatican II.

In the pre-Vatican II period the Church had been intimately involved with governments around the world.[2] Many countries officially recognized Roman Catholicism as their favored religion (Encyclopedia of Religion 2005d), which provided the Church with inimitable advantages.[3] Vatican II weakened the power of the Church in several of these countries. The Council made clear that only free individuals can discover spiritual truth, and it even accepted that other religions (may) hold some truth.[4] The Council recognized the absolute right of every individual to religious freedom, which in turn meant

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[1] Levine (1981, p. 19) describes the pre-conciliar Catholic Church as a "monolithic pillar of the established order".

[2] The rulers likely gained from this, as the Church gave them political legitimacy. That is, the Church served as a "legitimizing agent" in the terminology of Rubin (2017).

[3] Relations between the Vatican and an individual country are usually governed by concordats, which are accepted as bilateral treaties governed by the rules of international law (Essig 2011; Lewis 2015). While a concordat does not exclude the separation of church and state, it frequently confers significant benefits on the Catholic Church.

[4] The post-conciliar Catholic Church has therefore been forced to adapt to increased competition over souls from other Christian denominations. Barro and McCleary (2016) find that one strategy used especially in Latin America to confront such competition is saint-making.

that the Church gave up its compulsory character and acknowledged the fundamental principle of separation of church and state (Huntington 1991; Wilde 2007).[5] The Church's espousal of the modern human rights discourse allowed it to play a vital role in the democratization of the Catholic world (Casanova 2012; Fleet and Smith 1997; Weigel 1992; Huntington 1991; Mainwaring 1986; Payne 1984).

There is plenty of narrative evidence that the post-conciliar Church played essential roles in various national democratization processes. In Spain the Church played a crucial role in the demise of authoritarianism, not least by helping the country reach a constitutional compromise on church-state relations that would avoid a replay of the Spanish civil war (Linz 1991; Payne 1984; Gunther and Blough 1981); in Brazil the Church vitally empowered civil society through Catholic grassroot organizations, through Church leaders' denunciations of the repression, and through calls for a more democratic order (Mainwaring 1986); in Chile the Church kept its compatriots informed about the extent of human rights violations, and it openly challenged the regime when no one else could (Fleet and Smith 1997); in the Philippines the Church consistently spoke out against human rights violations and the misappropriation of the electoral process, it helped unite the opposition, and it played a leading role in exiling Marcos (Youngblood 1990); and in Poland the Catholic Church was instrumental in overthrowing communism through *inter alia* its vigorous moral and psychological support of the opposition movement (Weigel 1992).

The role of Vatican II has not received much attention in the broader literature on the determinants of democracy.[6] A notable exception is the *qualitative* work of Samuel P. Huntington.[7] In his seminal 1991 book, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Huntington ponders what changes in plausible independent variables most likely in the 1960s and 1970s produced the dependent variable "democratizing regime changes" in the 1970s and 1980s. One of the important changes that Huntington emphasizes is the striking shift in doctrines and activities of the Catholic Church, manifested in the Second Vatican Council, and the subsequent changes in national churches from defenders of the *status quo* to proponents of social, economic, and political reform. However, the *quantitative* literature on the determinants of democracy has hardly paid any attention to Vatican II in particular and only limited systematic attention to religion more generally. Barro (1999), whose estimation sample marginally predates Vatican II, does not mention the Council. He merely notes that

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[5] In the 1860s Pope Pius IX had rejected outright the possible separation of church and state. Moreover, the Roman Pontiff termed progress, liberalism, and modern civilization as "the principal errors of our time" (cited in Fleet and Smith 1997, p. 1).

[6] Diamond (2009), in a book on democracy, does not mention Vatican II at all; he does, however, mention the important influence of the Catholic Church on several occasions.

[7] The qualitative work of Daniel Philpott is another notable exception; see, e.g., Philpott (2004, 2007).

religious affiliation has been stressed as an important determinant of democracy but that the theory of the interplay between religion and democracy is less developed than other aspects of the theory of democracy. Moreover, he places Catholicism and Eastern Orthodox Christianity into one category and then adds various (time-invariant) religion dummies to his specification. Acemoglu *et al.* (2008, footnote 7) note that Huntington (1991) has hypothesized that "religion might have an important effect on economic and political development". However, there is no mention of Vatican II in their paper. Murtin and Wacziarg (2014), who analyze a sample going back to 1870, also do not mention Vatican II. They include country fixed effects, which they note account for "time-invariant factors such as religion and culture" (p. 174). Gleditsch and Ward (2006) do mention Vatican II but only in a few lines in a footnote. Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2005) lump Vatican II under transnational factors but include no measure of Vatican II in their empirical investigation of democratization in Latin America. Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, p. 78), in a work on democratization theory, briefly mention "the change in the attitude of the Catholic Church" as a factor highlighted by Huntington.

The neglect of Vatican II in the extant literature is both unfortunate and surprising. It is unfortunate because the Council offers a unique opportunity to study a potentially important *time-varying* impact of religious doctrine on democratization. And it is surprising because Seymour M. Lipset's enormously influential 1959 paper on modernization and democracy contains an inkling of the potentially important ramifications for democracy of a major reform of Catholicism such as Vatican II. According to Lipset (1959, footnote 40), "democracy requires a universalistic political belief system in the sense that it legitimates different ideologies. And it might be assumed that religious value systems which are more universalistic in the sense of placing less stress on being the only true church will be more compatible with democracy than those which assume that they have the only truth. The latter belief, held much more strongly by the Catholic than by most other Christian churches, makes it difficult for the religious value system to help legitimate a political system which requires, as part of its basic value system, the belief that 'good' is served best through conflict among opposing beliefs."[8]

The present paper is, to our knowledge, the first paper to systematically explore Vatican II's effect on democracy in a panel of countries.[9] Our empirical results show that Vatican II is a strong

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[8] Barro and McCleary (2005) also argue that state religion and political structure may be simultaneously determined.

[9] While no other quantitative study investigates the impact of Vatican II on the level of democracy, evidence presented in Gill (1998) suggests that Vatican II and the Latin American Bishops Conference in 1968 in Medellín (itself importantly inspired by Vatican II) contributed to a more "progressive mindset" within the Latin American Catholic Church. This new mindset translated into "opposition to dictatorial rule" (Gill 1998, p. 104). In a similar vein, Koukal (2017) suggests that Vatican II contributed to Catholics favoring women's enfranchisement in Switzerland. An unrelated but nevertheless interesting effect of Vatican II is found in Berman, Iannaccone, and Ragusa (2018). They argue that the Council is key to understanding the observed decline in fertility in Southern Europe. The Church retreated in the mid-1960s from providing a variety of family-friendly services that had earlier reduced the cost of Catholic childrearing. Nuns were crucial to the

predictor of post-conciliar democracy. This holds with and without confounders, and it holds in different subsamples. For instance, it is not driven by any politico-geographic region. It also holds in fully flexible models, where the treatment variable is interacted with pre-treatment and post-treatment time fixed effects. Moreover, it holds with a continuous and a dichotomous dependent variable as well as a continuous and a dichotomous treatment variable. Finally, we provide supporting historical narratives from different national contexts, which makes evident that the Catholic Church was an important political protagonist that helped steer authoritarian countries safely toward democracy. Overall, our research substantiates that the post-conciliar Catholic Church played a fundamental role in third wave democratization.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides some background on Vatican II and its impact on the Catholic Church's thinking about matters of democracy. Section 3 contains the quantitative analysis. Section 4 traces out pathways from Vatican II to democratization in different national contexts. Section 5 discusses the time delay between Vatican II impulse and democratization response. Section 6 concludes.

2. Vatican II and democracy

When the notions of popular suffrage and the rights of man appeared in earnest in the eighteenth century, the Church perceived them as threats and upheld its longstanding doctrine that secular authorities should promote Church prerogatives and offer "error no rights" (Philpott 2004). This view, which holds that only the truth has a right to exist, forms the basis for the symbiosis between the pre-conciliar Church and the state as it existed in many countries. That is, since the Catholic Church, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, possesses the complete and infallible truth, error has no rights. Where the state is Catholic, the Church must therefore demand that the state prevents non-Christian (preferably non-Catholic) expressions of opinion; where Catholics are in a minority, the Church must demand that the state guarantees the dissemination of Catholic doctrine (Pesch 2014).

Beginning in the 1930s Catholic intellectuals began to offer moral arguments for religious freedom. However, in an institution as hierarchical as the Roman Catholic Church such far-reaching new ideas are stillborn without endorsement from above (Mainwaring 1986). This endorsement came with the completely unexpected Second Vatican Council.

Concretely, on 25 January 1959 the Catholic Church and the world at large were taken by

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provision of those services, and Vatican II led to a dramatic decline in the number of nuns and thus raised the cost of childrearing.

surprise as Pope John XXIII, less than three months after his election, called "a general Council for the Universal Church". The state of bewilderment even extended to the most conspicuous bishops (Wilde 2007). In fact, the Council was the most unlikely of events. First, Pope Pius XII died in the early morning hours of 9 October 1958, and the ensuing Conclave was without favorites (Pesch 2014). Only step by step would the (unexpected) majority vote become unmistakable: Angelo Roncalli, who took the name John XXIII. Any other candidate might not have called a Council. Second, the fact that this Pope called the Council is equally surprising. No public opinion existed in the Church for a Council. In fact, no one considered a Council to be even remotely possible: Councils are only called for extraordinary reasons, and then usually only at intervals that can be counted in centuries. Doctrinal manuals treat the theme of "Council" only as a theoretical possibility (Pesch 2014). Finally, Pope John XXIII died right after the Council's first session; and – according to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, which was authoritative for the Council – the death of a pope during a council means that the council automatically terminates, unless the next pope commands its continuance (Pesch 2014). So, there was a real risk that the Council would in fact be discontinued.[10]

The outcome of the Council was equally surprising. Most observers (bishops included) expected little from the Council, as the preparatory commissions were firmly controlled by the eminently conservative Roman Curia, which did not welcome the Council (Pesch 2014; Greeley 2004). According to Wilde (2004, p. 577), "to appreciate just how remarkable Vatican II was, one must understand that no one expected, could have predicted, or even hoped for what came from the Council." The preparatory commissions would have turned the Council into a rubber stamp for the pre-conciliar ecclesiastical structures had it not been for the sudden and successful opposition of Cardinal Achille Liénart of Lille (Pesch 2014; Wilde 2007; Greeley 2004).

At issue was the selection by vote of members to serve on the various conciliar drafting commissions that would shape the documents on which the bishops would eventually vote. The Curia had produced a list of its preferred candidates in an attempt to slant the vote. Cardinal Liénart requested that voting be postponed for one day, so that a list of names of bishops not on the Curia's list could be circulated. The upshot of Cardinal Liénart's intervention was that the elected commissions

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[10] In fact, there was significant resistance against the Council (Pesch 2014; Wilde 2007; Greeley 2004). After its announcement the Archbishop of Genoa noted: "It will take the Church 50 years to recover from the wrong path of John XXIII"; the Cardinal of New York thought the Pope had been "pressed into it by people who twisted his words"; the Archbishop of Bologna said that Pope John XXIII "is hasty and impulsive" and his "inexperience and his lack of education led him to this step"; and the Archbishop of Milan said that the Pope did not seem "to notice what a hornets' nest he's stirring up" (all cited in Pesch 2014, p. 47). Interestingly, Pope John XXIII probably had no clear vision of where the Council would lead, but in his opening address he accepted that a change in mentalities, ways of thinking, and prejudices would be part of the renewal (Pesch 2014; Anderson 2009).

at Vatican II became far more diverse than they would have been had the Curia-dominated preparatory commission simply been reelected. And not only did the Cardinal's intervention prevent conservatives from gaining control of conciliar commissions, it also instigated a change of heart in many of the less enthused bishops. According to the American Bishop Robert J. Dwyer, this was the moment when "[w]e realized that we were a Council — not a class of schoolchildren that had been called together" (cited in Pesch 2014, p. 85). Consequently, in the confused first few weeks of the Council progressive bishops succeeded in building an organizational structure that would marginalize the role of the Curia in the Council going forward (Pesch 2014; Wilde 2007; Greeley 2004).[11] This also meant that bishops from outside Europe would shape the Council to a greater extent, as the Curia was strictly dominated by conservative European bishops.

Vatican II represented a profound reorientation of the Church (Pesch 2014; Gonzáles 2010; Anderson 2009; Wilde 2007; O'Malley 2006; Philpott 2004; Huntington 1991; Mainwaring 1986). To comprehend the sweeping changes brought about by the Council, one must understand that prior to Vatican II the principal formative post-Reformation influence on the life of the Roman Catholic Church was the Council of Trent (1545-63). The First Vatican Council (1869-70) essentially continued the policies and attitudes set at Trent, which meant that the Church had adopted a comprehensive and dogmatic view of its responsibilities as the moral mainstay of Catholics worldwide (Encyclopedia of Religion 2005a-b). The deliberations of Vatican II completely changed this.

Preeminent in the history of Vatican II is the Declaration of Religious Liberty (*Dignitatis Humanae*).[12] It is widely perceived as unparalleled in Catholic history (Wilde 2007), and it had a decisive impact on the post-conciliar Church's approach to politics (Weigel 1992). The Declaration most clearly states that the foremost system of government is one that permits people to worship as they please. It challenged the view that "error has no rights" (Pesch 2014; O'Collins 2012), and it suggested that while natural law required all states to protect the rights of Catholics where they were a minority, the same obligation was beholden on Catholic states *vis-à-vis* other minorities (Anderson 2009). It taught that "within every human person was a *sanctum sanctorum*, a holy of holies, into which the coercive power of the state could not tread" (Weigel 1992, p. 72). As such, the Declaration was a profound challenge to authoritarianism far and wide (Weigel 1992).

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[11] See Wilde (2007, Ch. 1) for an account of events. Wilde (2004, p. 577) argues that during the Council "progressives built a more extensive, flexible, and creative organization than their conservative counterparts, because of which they were better able to mobilize the majority of voting bishops to support progressive causes."

[12] In total, there are sixteen Vatican II documents: four constitutions, three declarations, and nine decrees. All documents are available online at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm. *Dignitatis Humanae* is one of the three declarations. For a discussion of the legal forms of these different documents, see Pesch (2014, pp. 73-77).

Implicit in the Declaration of Religious Liberty's theory of politics was a commitment to constitutional democracy (Grasso and Hunt 2006). The first half of the Declaration appeals to reason, basically arguing that true faith is discovered through free communication, teaching, expression, dialog and assent. This, in turn, necessitates psychological freedom as well as freedom from coercion. The second half is rooted in revelation, stating that coercion in faith is the antithesis to the way of Christ. This meant *de facto* conceding that the constitutional democratic state, neutral on religious matters, was the form of government most in keeping with Christian values (Anderson 2009; Grasso and Hunt 2006; Weigel 1992; Sigmund 1987). Officially, however, the Vatican maintained that it was not sanctioning a theory of liberal democracy; rather, it was merely forbidding coercive restriction of the pursuit of truth (Philpott 2004). Pope John Paul II famously put it like this: "I am not the evangelizer of democracy; I am the evangelizer of the Gospel. To the Gospel message, of course, belong all the problems of human rights; and, if democracy means human rights, it also belongs to the message of the Church" (cited in Huntington 1991, p. 84). Put differently, democracy is *not* important *per se*; it is important insofar as it ensures religious freedom and human rights, which are the first-order issues. According to John Paul II democracy should not be idolized: it "'is a 'system' and as such is a means to an end. Its 'moral' value is not automatic, but depends on conformity to the moral law to which it, like any other form of human behavior, must be subject" (cited in Kmiec 1996, p. 69).

3. Quantitative evidence

With the new teachings propagating through the Church via the Synod of Bishops,[13] the secular implications of the sea change in official Church thinking were likely immense. According to Philpott (2007), practically every Catholic effort to support and promote democracy gained strength and explicitness once the Vatican had pronounced it officially. Huntington (1991) posits that the striking shift in doctrine and activities of the Catholic Church manifested in the Second Vatican Council played a crucial role in the timing and occurrence of third wave transitions to democracy. John Paul II "seemed to have a way of showing up in full pontifical majesty at critical points in the democratization process: Poland, June 1979, June 1983, and June 1987; Brazil, June-July 1980; the Philippines, February 1981; Argentina, June 1982; Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, March 1983; Korea, May 1984;

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[13] The Synod of Bishops was created after Vatican II with the aim of continuing the work of the Council. Except for ecumenical councils, the Synod of Bishops is the institutionalized voice of the College of Bishops (Reese 1996).

Chile, April 1987; Paraguay, May 1988", notes Huntington (1991, p. 83).[14]

Accordingly, there is ample reason to suspect that Vatican II importantly influenced the democratization processes observed in its aftermath. In this section, we conduct a quantitative analysis to establish whether this proposition can be put on a formal inferential foundation. That is, we focus on the reduced-form relationship between Vatican II and democracy.

Empirical design

Consider the following difference-in-difference type estimating equation:

$$(1) \qquad d_{it} = \gamma\, CATH_i\, I_t^{1965} + x'_{it}\,\beta + \mu_t + \delta_i + u_{it}.$$

In equation (1) d_{it} is democracy in country i at time t; I_t^{1965} is a dummy variable that takes the value 1 as of 1965, zero otherwise; $CATH_i$ is a time-invariant measure of the share of the population that is Catholic in country i; x_{it} is a vector of confounders, to be discussed later; the μ_t's are year fixed effects, which pick up common shocks to democracy; the δ_i's are country fixed effects, as we are interested in the time-series variation (i.e., whether Catholic countries *became* more democratic as the impulse of Vatican II made itself felt), not the cross-sectional variation (i.e., whether Catholic countries *are* more democratic); and u_{it} is an error term.

The key (non-testable) identification assumption in equation (1) is that of *common trends*, which means that the counterfactual average change in democratization for Catholic countries (the treated) in the absence of Vatican II (the treatment) is equal to the observed average change in democratization for non-Catholic countries (the untreated). Put differently, the identification assumption states that γ would be zero absent Vatican II. This assumption rules out the occurrence of other changes around the time of Vatican II that concurrently correlate (conditionally) with countries' share of Catholics and affect democratization. We believe that this assumption is well-founded for the following four reasons.

First, as documented below, Catholic and non-Catholic countries have common *pre*-Vatican II democracy trends. This establishes that there are no such "other changes" occurring in the pre-Vatican II period, which is generally viewed as a necessary condition for the identification assumption to be appealing (Angrist and Pischke 2009).

Second, Vatican II is almost certainly independent of political developments within any given

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[14] After the end of the Cold War Pope John Paul II also carefully preached the virtues of liberal democracy in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*.

country. Recall that the actual proceeding of the Council was the most unlikely of events. It was decided in Rome by a very small group of people and could easily have been discontinued following the death of Pope John XXIII. Once the Council was called, its far-reaching outcome was equally unexpected. Had it not been for the inadvertent intervention by a French cardinal, the Council would almost surely have unfolded according to the preferences of the conservative Roman Curia. Put differently, the outcome of the Council (and thus the Council's impact on democratization) could not have been, and in fact was not, anticipated.

Third, Vatican II was not concerned with democracy *per se;* rather, it was concerned with religious freedom and human rights. As stressed by Pope John Paul II, democracy was only desirable insofar as it was the system of government that best safeguarded human rights and religious freedom. This adds further credibility to the maintained assumption that the Vatican II impulse is exogenous in equation (1).

Finally, we are essentially estimating an *intention-to-treat* (ITT) type effect, as Vatican II merely "assigns" countries into treatment. The take-up-rate (i.e., how the post-conciliar Catholic Church operated during democratization in different national contexts, which we cover in Section 4) is determined by factors within individual countries, for which reason it (unlike the ITT effect) is likely to be endogenous.

Nevertheless, we cannot completely rule out that there are other changes going on around the time of Vatican II, which simultaneously correlate with countries' share of Catholics and affect democratization.[15] This suggests that we add confounders. The question is which potential confounders should be included in x_{it}? There are basically two approaches to democratization that offer tangible confounders to be included in x_{it} (see Teorell 2010).

The *structural approach to democratization* (i.e., modernization theory) holds that countries having undergone societal modernization are more likely to be democratic.[16] The literature has identified many structural determinants, which include state involvement in the economy, income inequality, economic crises, natural resource abundance, country size, religious composition, societal fractionalization, colonial heritage, social capital, and mass political culture (Teorell 2010). The bulk of the variation in

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[15] Relevant changes could be changes in the policies of external actors, such as the United States, the USSR, or the European Community (see Huntington 1991). We deal with these issues below.

[16] This is not necessarily picking up a secularization effect. Using retrospective questions from surveys, Franck and Iannaccone (2014) find no support for traditional theories of secularization. There is secularization, but—according to their findings—it is unrelated to income, education, industrialization, urbanization, and even to the rise of the welfare state. In a historic panel of Prussian counties, Becker and Woessmann (2013) also do not find any association between income and church attendance when using within-county variation. That is, counties with larger increases in income did not observe larger decreases in church attendance.

these structural indicators is cross-sectional, for which reason it is partially or fully picked up by country dummies (the δ_i's). Moreover, many structural indicators are best considered as proximate determinants of democracy; they are themselves governed by a limited set of fundamental (or deep) determinants, many of which are time-invariant geography and biogeography variables (see, e.g., Spolaore and Wacziarg 2013). Again, this means that the variation is largely cross-sectional and thus picked up by country dummies.

Using formal models, the *economic approach to democratization* focuses on the preferences of the entire population and seeks to explain political outcomes in terms of structural preconditions and material resources. Assuming, for instance, that people care only about income, and hence evaluate their preferences for democracy or dictatorship in terms of this variable, the median voter will prefer a high degree of income redistribution under democracy if he is poor. In contrast, under (right wing) dictatorship the rich (not the median) voter will determine economic policies, and thus there will be no redistribution. The poor will therefore prefer democracy, while the rich opt for dictatorship. The fundamental variables that will disturb this prediction are income inequality and asset mobility: with low income inequality and/or high asset mobility the cost of democracy to the rich is low (Teorell 2010).[17]

Data

Dependent variable

In important new work, Teorell *et al.* (2016) have compiled, documented, and convincingly validated a new index of polyarchy, *V-Dem polyarchy index*, which goes back to 1900 and includes 173 countries. We will use the V-Dem polyarchy index, which is described in detail in Section S1 of the Supplementary Appendix, as our principal measure of democracy in this paper; i.e., we use it to measure d_{it} in equation (1). However, we also report results when we use a modified version of the polity variable, which facilitates the use of the polity regime measure in time-series analyses. This variable is included in the V-Dem dataset.[18]

Independent variables

To construct a variable that measures how "Catholic" a country is, we use the share of the population that is Roman Catholic. This variable is taken from the *World Religion Dataset*, which is documented in

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[17] There are other approaches, but they offer little in terms of tangible confounders to be included in x_{it} (Teorell 2010).
[18] Available at: https://www.v-dem.net/en/.

Maoz and Henderson (2013).[19] We calculate the average share over the entire post-war period; it therefore becomes time invariant, as befits $CATH_i$ in equation (1). This should reduce any endogeneity problems, due to, for instance measurement error. Importantly, we will also show results using the Catholic share in 1965 (i.e., initially) as well as binary indicators; for example, $1[CATH_i \geq x]$, where $1[\,]$ is the indicator function and x equals 50 or 75 percent. Results are robust to these different measures of how "Catholic" a country is.

To control for the modernization channel, as per the structural approach to democratization, we control for real GDP per capita (log). The simple logic is that Catholic countries became richer, which in turn has pushed them toward democracy (Lipset 1959).[20]

As per the economic approach to democratization, we add two variables: inequality (Gini) and trade openness. Inequality (also identified as relevant in the structural approach) proxies the level of discontent in the population. Rising inequality makes revolution more attractive (Robinson 2006).[21] To be able to get sufficient observations to implement our difference-in-difference strategy, we employ educational inequality instead of income inequality. Trade openness serves as a proxy for the ease with which capital can be exported out of the country (asset mobility). Moreover, a case can be made that trade integration *per se* could affect democratization (López-Córdova and Meissner 2008). See Section S1 of the Supplementary Appendix for further details on control variables.

Main results

Consider first Figure 1, which plots the evolution of democracy in countries with a Catholic majority (treated countries) and countries without such a majority (untreated countries). The uppermost panel measures democracy using the V-Dem polyarchy index, whereas the bottommost panel relies on the polity score. The first thing to note upon eyeballing the figure is that it provides strong visual evidence that prior to 1965 the identification assumption of common democracy trends in treated and non-treated countries is satisfied.[22] At the same time, there is clear indication of a trend break in the

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[19] The dataset can be downloaded from http://www.thearda.com.

[20] Squicciarini (2017) presents evidence that the intensity of Catholicism had negative effects on economic development in 19th century France, whereas Becker and Woessmann (2009) find that Protestantism led to higher prosperity in 19th century Prussia.

[21] The theoretical work in Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) emphasizes inequality and its effect on the threat of revolution as an important factor in democratization. For quantitative work on this, see, e.g., Przeworski (2009) or Aidt and Franck (2015).

[22] In Figure S6 of the Supplementary Appendix, we document that the trend break remains visually clear in the sample of non-Latin American countries.

evolution of democracy in treated countries in the late 1970s.[23] In the remainder of this section we will use statistical techniques to explore whether this trend break represents the causal impact of the Vatican II impulse on democracy.

[Figure 1]

The fact that pre-Vatican II democracy trends appear to be very similar across treated and untreated countries suggests that the simple difference-in-difference estimation setup may in fact be appropriate for purposes of identification. Consider therefore some baseline regressions where we omit the vector of confounders, $\boldsymbol{x}_{it}$, from equation (1). In columns 1-3 of Table 1 we report results when the V-Dem polyarchy index is used to measure democracy and in columns 4-6 the dependent variable is the polity score. The length of panels differs across columns: 1900-2015 (full length), 1950-2015, and 1950-2000 in, respectively, columns 1 & 4, 2 & 5, and 3 & 6.[24] Inspection of the table reveals that the coefficient on Vatican II is estimated with high precision in all columns, as the ratio of slope estimate to standard error (i.e., the *t*-value) is always above two. Moreover, with respect to economic significance the standardized coefficients reported in *italics* show that – regardless of which democracy measure we employ – a one standard deviation increase in the share of Catholics explains about 0.1 standard deviation increase in democracy.

[Table 1]

In Table 2 we report the results from estimating equation (1) with (the log of) real GDP per capita included in $\boldsymbol{x}_{it}$, as per the structural approach to democracy.[25] To eliminate any simultaneity concerns, we lag GDP per capita five years. Beyond the inclusion of GDP per capita, Table 2 is analogous to Table 1. The first thing to note is that the inclusion of GDP per capita affects neither the statistical nor the economic significance of Vatican II. Moreover, in accordance with the results of Acemoglu et al. (2008), there is no relationship between income and democracy – as measured by the polity score – in the fixed effects setting. In some samples, however, there is a relationship between the

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[23] Figures S1, S2, S4, and S5 of the Supplementary Appendix basically provide the same information as that in Figure 1, but they do so in a more formal way. Based on flexible estimations the former figures rigorously validate the assumption of common pre-intervention trends.

[24] Polity ends in 2013.

[25] Covariate balance tests are reported in Table S17 of the Supplementary Appendix.

two variables when we use the V-Dem polyarchy index; cf. columns 1 and 3.[26]

[Table 2]

Table 3 (Table 4) replicates Table 2 with the only difference that inequality (trade openness) is substituted for GDP per capita. Inspection reveals that this changes nothing of substance. In fact, the only surprising finding is that trade openness (which proxies asset mobility) is generally a significant negative predictor of democracy. As per the economic approach to democratization, we would have expected to see a positive impact.

[Tables 3 and 4]

In Table 5 we add all controls simultaneously. Again, this has no implication whatsoever for the estimated impact of Vatican II, which is estimated with high precision in all columns. Turning again to the question of economic significance, the standardized coefficients in column 1 associated with, respectively, Vatican II, GDP per capita, inequality, and trade are $0.149, 0.242, -0.048$, and -0.043, which shows that the effect of Vatican II is nontrivial.[27]

[Table 5]

As noted in the Introduction, Huntington (1991) pondered the question of which changes in independent variables in the 1960s and 1970s produced regime changes in the 1970s and 1980s. This suggests that there is a time lag of at least ten years before the Vatican II impulse made its influence felt.[28] It may therefore be of some interest to study the time-varying impact of Vatican II. Consequently, in Table 6 we allow the impact of Vatican II to differ across decades by means of dummies for the periods 1965-69, 1970-79, 1980-89, 1990-99, 2000-09, and 2010-15. Columns 1-5 of the table pertain to polyarchy, whereas columns 6-10 pertain to the polity score. Inspection of Table 6 reveals that the Vatican II impulse first becomes visible in the 1980s; in the 1960s and 1970s it is nil, statistically speaking. As of the 1980s it is visible in all specifications save for column 3, where it first

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[26] Boix (2011) and Barro (2015) provide evidence that GDP per capita predicts democracy.

[27] We provide another economic significance gauge in connection with Tables S4 and S4 of the Supplementary Appendix.

[28] We deal with this delay in Section 5.

becomes visible in the 1990s.[29] In Table S14 of the Supplementary Appendix we report results from the estimation of a fully flexible model (i.e., with pre- and post-treatment trends) and Figures S1 and S2 of the Supplementary Appendix provide plots.[30]

[Table 6]

The fact that Vatican II becomes visible in the late 1970s (cf. Figure 1) and 1980s (cf. Table 6 and Supplementary Appendix Table S14) means that we are not just picking up an end-of-the-Cold-War effect.[31] While such an effect should in all probability affect Catholic and non-Catholic countries in the same way, and thus be fully picked up by time fixed effects in our estimations, the fact that Vatican II is visible in the 1980s allows us to rule out this potentially confounding effect quite conclusively.[32]

Further robustness issues

We have carried out a very long list of additional robustness tests, which we believe arise naturally in the present context. These include exclusion of politico-geographic regions one at a time; use of a dichotomous *substantial* Catholic majority variable; inclusion of a lagged dependent variable; use of a dichotomous measure of democracy; placebo type tests using share of Protestants; estimation on a strongly balanced panel; using initial (i.e., 1965) values of Catholic share and control variables; controlling for traditional local democracy, urbanization, religious diversity, participation in the Bandung conference, papal visits, threat of revolution, and education; adding region by year fixed effects; collapsing the data to decadal frequency; using a fully flexible specification with pre- and post-intervention trends; successive five-year shortenings of the length of the panel; restricting the sample to former colonies; restricting the sample to countries that only gained independence after 1965; and adding a variable that measures the independence status of a country. The results, which are reported in the nineteen tables and eight figures of the Supplementary Appendix, Section S2, strongly support our main finding: Vatican II is a robust predictor of the evolution of post-conciliar democracy in Catholic countries.

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[29] In Tables S15 and S16 of the Supplementary Appendix, we shorten the sample as an alternative to interacting Vatican II with time fixed effects.

[30] In Figures S4 and S5 of the Supplementary Appendix, we show that the fully flexible model with yearly interactions demonstrates a similar pattern with significance starting around 1983-1984.

[31] The Cold War ended somewhere in between the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, which is a decade after Vatican II became visible in the data.

[32] At the same time, the narrative provided in Section 4 demonstrates that the democratizing impulse of Vatican II was in full force in the 1980s.

4. Supporting narrative evidence

Haggard and Kaufmann (2012), among others, argue that the reduced-form nature of cross-national panel analyses poses a challenge for causal investigation, as such designs invariably omit the mediating causal processes and focus directly on the relationship between some antecedent condition (in our case Vatican II) and the outcome variable (in our case democracy). A causal analysis should not only establish whether some antecedent conditions are linked statistically to the outcome, but also whether they do so through the postulated causal mechanisms (Haggard and Kaufmann 2012; Weller and Barnes 2014; Goertz 2017). In the present case, we want to know not only whether Vatican II is linked to democracy but also whether it is linked in ways that are causally consistent with the doctrinal changes that Vatican II brought about.[33] Consequently, this section provides supporting narrative evidence, showing that the Catholic Church played crucial roles in several third wave transitions along causal pathways congruent with Vatican II. Three countries from three different continents are brought to bear: Spain, Brazil, and the Philippines.[34]

Spain

Payne (1984, p. 194) writes that "Franco's most informed biographer observed that of all the reverses suffered by Franco during his long career, by far the most serious was not inflicted by domestic foes or hostile foreign powers but by the Roman Catholic Church through the reforms of Vatican II." Payne writes further that in "no Catholic country did the dramatic new doctrines of Vatican II have such a marked effect as in Spain" (p. 195).[35] Importantly, it was not the Franco regime that changed; it was the Church. Linz (1991, p. 169) sums it up nicely: "In Europe conflicts between the Church and the state

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[33] As we discuss below, our estimates can be interpreted as *intention-to-treat* effects. Therefore, the within-case causal process observations also serve to illustrate so-called *take-up* in national contexts.

[34] Spain was picked because it was one of the first countries to democratize during the third wave. Moreover, being a major cultural influence on Latin America, its example may have had repercussions beyond its own borders. Brazil was chosen because it is the largest Catholic country in the world. The Philippines was chosen because it is Asian and the third largest Catholic country. We could obviously have chosen other countries. For example, we could have brought in Poland, as the Catholic Church in Poland became an explicit advocate of human rights and democracy after Vatican II (Weigel 1992; Philpott 2004). Also, the case of Chile in many ways resembles that of Brazil (Fleet and Smith 1997). In a few Latin American countries, however, Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2005) note that the response of the Church differed from the Chilean and Brazilian cases. In Argentina and Guatemala, the Church supported authoritarian rule in the 1970s and early 1980s, but even those churches have not attempted to undermine democracy since its inception. As we noted above, this does not pose a threat to our empirical design, as we estimate intention-to-treat effects.

[35] To many in Spain, John XXIII's 1963 encyclical *Pacem in terries*, which espoused freedom of speech and association as well as freedom of political choice in government representation, was directed as much against the Franco regime as against the Communist system of government.

generally have been a result of policies of the state, liberal or left anticlericalism, efforts of secularization, and 'state paganism.' In the late Franco regime, there was no change in the position of the state initiating conflict but a profound change within the church."

In 1968, when the first post-conciliar Church appointments took place, the Franco regime could no longer force the selection of conservatives; it could only veto the most liberal candidates. Moreover, new liberal appointments took place each successive year. When an aged cardinal died in 1968 the Vatican even ruled out a conservative and instead selected a more liberal candidate, who had written three books in support of Vatican II.[36] In 1971, following the Joint Assembly (*Asamblea Conjunta*) of prelates and other representatives, the Spanish Church officially began to advocate the separation of church and state, recommend that prelates give up all state posts, and speak out in favor of full civil rights and a political system of representation.[37]

The early 1970s saw significant Church activism. The Church offered support as well as sanctuary to many of the Franco regime's opponents, several of whom had never had ties with the Church. Opponents of the regime were allowed to write for religious publications and hold their meetings in convents; funerals of victims of the regime were allowed to become political events; and the Church intervened on behalf of those being tried or sentenced by the regime for insurrection (Linz 1991). In 1972 the Bishop of Bilbao even led an official ceremony of excommunication against the policemen who had beaten up an activist priest, and in 1973 the Church circulated a document (*La Iglesia y la Communidad Política*), which championed democratic pluralism.

Following the death of Franco in 1975, the world would experience one of the most successful democratization processes in modern history.[38] Under the guidance of King Juan Carlos, the Spanish government and institutions were fundamentally transformed; and by December 27, 1978, King Juan Carlos signed into law the new Spanish Constitution (Gunther and Blough 1981). To understand why the transition was so successful, one must look to the issue of church-state relations.

Concretely, the origins of the Spanish civil war can be seen in the 1931 Constitution of the Second Republic; a document that was aggressively anticlerical (Linz 1991; Payne 1984; Gunther and Blough 1981),[39] and which was imposed on the country by a leftist parliamentary majority (Payne

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[36] The Vatican's candidate had prudently avoided public controversy with the regime.

[37] According to Huntington (1991), this meeting was the key breaking point in church-state relations.

[38] The first parliamentary elections were held in June 1977.

[39] Article 3 of the Second Constitution declared: "The Spanish state has no official religion." Article 26 terminated the Church's privileged legal status. Article 27 secularized cemeteries and public religious activities without prior government consent. Article 48 attacked the Church's education system. According to a Catholic priest, the Constitution was an invitation to civil war (Gunther and Blough 1981).

1984). This served to poison the political atmosphere of the early 1930s, and the issue of church-state relations was the most central and divisive issue in constitutional debates (Gunther and Blough 1981). Not so for the 1978 Constitution, where a compromise was reached. The fact that the political and social evolution of the Church itself had changed meant that compromise came easier (Linz 1991; Payne 1984; Gunther and Blough 1981). Within the Episcopal Conference of the Catholic Church more than 85 percent of the bishops favored the Constitution (Payne 1984). The official position of the Church, which was entirely in the spirit of Vatican II, was set by Cardinal Tarancón, president of the Episcopal Conference and effective head of the Spanish Church: "Officially the Church cannot impose a specific stand in the political realm. It can only demand of the faithful who participate in politics that they act according to their own consciences, illuminated by faith, but not for motives of faith, but rather for reasons of good government" (cited in Gunther and Blough 1981, p. 379). Under the leadership of Cardinal Tarancón the Church tactfully mediated between opposing groups, which guaranteed that needless conflict was avoided and helped ensure that the tragic experience of the Second Republic would not be repeated (Gunther and Blough 1981; Payne 1984).[40] The Church was cautious to maintain scrupulous neutrality, refusing, for example, to explicitly endorse the two leading Christian Democratic groups.[41] Gunther and Blough (1981) conclude that the moderation of the Church's traditional position over the two preceding decades facilitated a compromise resolution.

Brazil
Brazil experienced a military coup on March 31, 1964, while Vatican II was still in progress. In his fascinating study of the role of the Catholic Church in Brazilian politics during the period 1916-85, Mainwaring (1986) shows that the Brazilian Church initially welcomed (at least partly) what had taken place in the country. The National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) issued a statement on June 2, 1964, which gave thanks for the coup: "The armed forces arrived in time and prevented the implementation of a Bolshevik regime in our country" (cited in Mainwaring 1986, p. 80).[42] On May 6, 1973, however, 23 bishops signed the two most radical episcopal documents ever issued at the time, both of which denounced the military for systematic violations of human rights and extensive social marginalization. The documents asserted that the regime's actions defied all major principles of the

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[40] Cardinal Tarancón put it like this: "We are convinced that the greatest service that we can render to the Church and the Spanish people is precisely this: to manifest clearly and publicly that we want to remain outside all the vicissitudes of the struggle for power; and to recognize the liberty of Christians to confront temporal problems of their own accord, according to the dictates of their own consciences" (cited in Gunther and Blough 1981, p. 381).

[41] The Church did, however, issue warnings against a vote on the newly legalized Spanish Communist Party (Payne 1984).

[42] Yet this document also warned against the use of arbitrary methods to extirpate communism (Klaiber 1998).

Church's social doctrine and its emphasis on human dignity.

An important part of this dramatic reversal of Church thinking was encouraged by Rome, and thus "in good part due to Vatican II's influence" (Philpott 2007, p. 511), as well by as the 1968 Medellín meeting of the Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM), itself inspired by Vatican II.[43] Or in the words of José Maria Pires, an archbishop and a prominent church leader, "Vatican II was the motor of this change" (cited in Mainwaring 1986, p. 44).

In the decade leading up to the reintroduction of democracy (March 1985) the Brazilian Church assumed importance in international Catholicism and became the most progressive Church in the world.[44] During this period a new understanding of the mission of the Church was also reached. The Church now accepted secularization and renounced ecclesial efforts to control society. The CNBB issued an important document in 1976 (*Pastoral Communication to the People of God*), which marked a new and more incisive phase of criticism of authoritarianism. From then on, the Church insisted on the importance of including everyone in the sharing of benefits of developments, and it was highly critical of inequality and marginalization of peasants and small-scale farmers. Bishops repeatedly stressed democracy, human rights, and participation as ideals that a fair political system must realize. In short, the Church's vision of the good society would require a deep reorganization of the current political order. It was also during this period that the Church emerged as the single most important voice of protest in Brazil (Klaiber 1998).

Tensions between the Church and the state reached a high point during 1974-1978, as elements within the military came to regard the Church as one of the nation's main enemies. Priests were at the receiving end of regime brutality, some were even murdered. The Church was the only civil society institution that had enough autonomy from the state to empower the popular classes (i.e., peasants, landowners with very small subsistence holdings, urban working class, and marginalized urban squatters). It did so via Christian base communities, which were composed of small neighborhood groups of around 20 people (Mainwaring 1984). Through the tutelage of local priests, base communities developed forms of grass-roots democracy; people discussed local problems, with all individuals getting a chance to speak. Base communities gave the popular classes an experience with

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[43] The Medellín gathering of CELAM was the watershed of the Latin American Church. It began as an attempt, enthused by Vatican II, to grasp the Church's role in a changing Latin America, yet it ended reaching conclusions that went well beyond those of Vatican II (Mainwaring 1986). The gathering also gave impetus to liberation theology, which was a new way of doing theology (Encyclopedia of Religion 2005c). The novelty of liberation theology lay in the usage of social sciences (frequently Marxist analytical methods) as tools to analyze the reality out of which theological reflections arise. Much of the leadership of the movement is composed of laypersons, and the Catholic hierarchy – e.g., Cardinal Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) – has frequently issued documents against it and distanced itself from it (González 2010).

[44] As documented at various junctures in Mainwaring (1986), the Church had a broad view of democracy; it focused not just on political freedom but also on the distributional issues (with a particular focus on the poorest).

political organization, and it provided them with a sense of self-confidence and dignity. The political self-confidence of many popular leaders dawned in such base communities (Mainwaring 1984).

After 1978, when the country saw some political liberalization, church-state relations gradually improved.[45] However, while extolling advances in the human rights situation in Brazil, the Church emphasized the importance of a more open, participatory, and egalitarian political system. In a 1981 document (*Christian Reflection on the Political Situation*) the CNBB proclaimed that democracy must include the masses in the political process. The Church thus played a most important role in the transition to democracy by empowering civil society; it did so through grass-roots Catholic organizations, through bishops' denunciations of the regime, and through calls for a more democratic order (Mainwaring 1986; Klaiber 1998).

The Philippines

Following independence in 1946 the Philippines set up a presidential system of government, which was viewed by many as a democratic beacon in the Third World (Youngblood 1990). However, after Ferdinand Marcos's election in 1965 the Philippine democracy was slowly dismantled and turned into an autocracy, which lasted until Marcos was ousted in 1986. The Catholic Church in the Philippines played a key role in bringing the Marcos regime to an end.

In 1972, in a climate of political turmoil, Marcos declared a martial law during which he suspended the constitution, imposed a curfew, shut down several media outlets, and ordered the military to arrest thousands of people (Zich 1986; Youngblood 1990). Marcos justified the martial law as necessary for the security and political stability of the nation; his opponents instead accused him of planning a "garrison state", with the singular aim of staying in power (Zich 1986, p. 120). In any case, the regime's policies caused a change in budgetary priorities away from social services and toward the military. In 1977, for example, 23 percent of the national budget was directed toward the military, up from 15 percent in 1970 (Youngblood 1990).

The reaction of the Church to increasing inequality and rising militarization was uneven at first but became strenuous after 1972. The regime responded with repression of clergy and laypeople, who assisted poor farmers, minority tribesmen, and urban squatters. Such repression was part of a broader pattern of military action against the Church. Not only were individuals of the Church harassed and detained, but the military also staged major assaults against Church institutions. Between 1972 and

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[45] While liberalization eased tensions between the Church and the state at the national level, in the rural areas the Church allied itself with the peasantry; and where the latter continued to be a victim of ongoing repression, grave conflict prevailed (Mainwaring 1986).

1984, there were at least 19 major military raids (and numerous minor raids) against the Philippine Catholic Church. As of the summer of 1974 the most powerful members of the Catholic clergy began to speak out sharply against the repression. In a 1977 pastoral letter bishops criticized the regime's harassment and intimidation of priests and laypeople (Youngblood 1990).

Bishops increasingly saw the regime's economic policies as unfair. In November 1975 Marcos issued a presidential decree (PD 823), which banned all strikes and prohibited individuals and organizations from providing various types of assistance to workers. More than two thousand clergymen cosigned a letter from Cardinal Jaime Sin objecting to the decree. PD 823 was a watershed moment, as it led members of the Catholic hierarchy to start questioning the government's economic policies (Youngblood 1990).[46] In the following years individual bishops as well as the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) persistently called for the elimination of repressive degrees, reestablishment of freedom of the press and the right to dissent, the holding of free and fair elections, and the purge of political corruption, but to no avail (Youngblood 1987, 1990).

Bishops also persistently criticized Marcos's misappropriation of the electoral process. In 1975 a bishop (speaking for a long list of clergymen) said that the regime had to allow free discussion and establish an independent body for the counting of votes. Failure to do so would, according to the bishop, leave the Church with no other option than to "openly declare our intention to abstain from participating in another referendum" (cited in Youngblood 1990, p. 192). This constituted the opening blitz in what would become an ongoing church-state clash over the regime's manipulation of referenda and elections. In 1976, just prior to a referendum, 14 Catholic bishops branded martial law as "a regime of coercion and fear, of institutionalized deception and manipulation," and with respect to the referendum they expressed their reluctance to participate in another "vicious farce […] that further degrades and debases us and our people" (cited in Youngblood 1990, p. 192).

After the National Assembly election in 1978 Cardinal Jaime Sin requested that citizens who had witnessed fraud speak up and file charges. The Cardinal also proposed that Marcos should declare his intention not to run for election again, an act which Huntington (1991) identifies as the *breaking point* in church-state relations in the Philippines. In 1981 Cardinal Sin suggested that the upcoming presidential election be deferred until "the credibility of the government is restored" (cited in Youngblood 1990, p. 196). In 1983 bishops issued a pastoral letter, which accused the regime of repression, corruption, and economic mismanagement. The bishops also noted that tensions would not abate without fundamental democratic reforms. A 1984 pastoral letter underscored the need for an honest and impartial electoral

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[46] The 1983 assassination of Benigno Aquino, upon his return of a three-year political exile in the United States, was another watershed moment, as the Church lost all remaining faith in Marcos.

process, which must be based on open exchange of ideas without fear of reprisals. In the same year Cardinal Sin called for Marcos to comply with the opposition's demands for electoral reform, while at the same time accusing the regime of repression against opponents. In 1986, after it became clear that Marcos would hold on to power regardless of the result of a presidential election, the Catholic hierarchy accused the regime of "a criminal use of power to thwart the sovereign will of the people", it stated that "a government that assumes or retains power through fraudulent means has no moral basis", and it recommended a "non-violent struggle for justice" (cited in Youngblood 1990, p. 200). Following the revolt of two members of government, Cardinal Sin famously urged Filipinos to join in a demonstration of solidarity, and within days Marcos was forced into exile.[47]

According to Youngblood (1990, p. 202), the "conditions for the collision between the Philippine churches and the regime were rooted both in the changes in the Roman Catholic church brought about by Vatican II and the subsequent encyclicals, which stressed that efforts to eradicate injustice and economic inequality were an integral part of preaching the gospel". The Philippine Catholic Church had increased its efforts to promote social justice in the 1950s. However, prior to Vatican II any such efforts were uncoordinated, somewhat contradictory, and mostly focused on charity. Vatican II changed that, and it had a profound impact on the Philippine Catholic Church (Youngblood 1990). The Church made an early attempt to "respond to the social action challenges set forth in *Gaudium et Spes*" (Youngblood 1990, p. 76). There were meetings, new magazines were founded, and a Secretariat for Social Action was established. Moreover, at a 1972 meeting in the Philippines the Federation of Asian Bishop's Conferences (FABC) decided to "continue the work of Vatican II" (Youngblood 1990, p. 68). The FABC set up an office in Manila, which was entrusted with the task of coordinating FABC's social work. As Marcos's policies enriched his cronies and widened the gap between rich and poor, a clash between the Church and the state was all but inevitable.

5. The Vatican II impulse-response delay

Vatican II provided a clear doctrinal foundation for opposing political repression; and, at the same time, it deprived dictatorial regimes of any kind of legitimacy that they might have claimed from pre-

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[47] Huntington (1991, p. 84) identifies the political involvement of Cardinal Jaime Sin as the "most extreme" by a Church leader during the third wave. Cardinal Sin refused to participate in official inquiry into the Aquino assassination, because the investigation would be "rigged by Marcos" (cited in Youngblood 1987, p. 1241); he negotiated the arrangements that led to a united (Aquino-Laurel) opposition ticket in the 1986 presidential election; and he circulated a letter to 2,000 parishes instructing Catholics to vote for "persons who embody the gospel values of humility, truth, honesty, respect for human rights and life" (cited in Huntington 1991, p. 84). This would leave no one in doubt about Cardinal Sin's preferred candidate.

conciliar Catholicism. Moreover, the Council asserted that Church leaders had the obligation to pass moral judgment on the political order when basic human rights issues so required. The narratives above confirm that the Church swiftly took up the baton and got involved in the struggle for human rights and democracy. In Brazil, for example, the CNBB's 1976 document, *Pastoral Communication to the People of God*, marked the start of an incisive anti-authoritarianism on part of the entire Church;[48] and in the Philippines the Church unambiguously took up the baton in 1972. Yet, it took about a decade and a decade and a half from that point on in, respectively, Brazil and the Philippines before democracy emerged. In the statistical analysis of Section 3 we also established that the effect of Vatican II on democratization in earnest sets in with a delay of about one and a half to two decades. It goes without saying that there will be a certain delay between the internalization of Vatican II by national churches and the time at which its imprint on political dynamics becomes visible.

To think systematically about this delay between Vatican II (*impulse*) and actual democratization (*response*), we propose to combine findings from sociology, which suggest that Vatican II gave rise to a more individualistic culture in Catholic countries, with the insights of Gorodnichenko and Roland (2015), which suggest that there is higher demand for democracy in individualistic cultures vis-à-vis collectivist dittos.[49] With the combination of these separate pieces of insight, which is laid out in detail in Section S3 of the Supplementary Appendix, we can rationalize a plausible mechanism through which Vatican II after a delay of one to two decades begins to importantly stimulate demand for democracy by increasing the degree of individualism in society.

6. Concluding remarks

In this paper, we have used variation in religious doctrine produced by the Second Vatican Council to examine the impact of religion on democracy. First, employing a difference-in-difference estimation strategy, we find that Vatican II is an economically and statistically significant predictor of the evolution of post-conciliar democracy. The identification assumption required for a difference-in-difference strategy also appears to be satisfied. Concretely, pre-conciliar democratization trends in Catholic majority and Catholic minority countries are comparable. At the same time, Vatican II was an unexpected event; the Council is, in other words, best thought of as exogenous to developments in any

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[48] It took three to five years before important posts within the post-conciliar Brazilian Church began to be filled by more progressive bishops (Klaiber 1998), and it took critical mass before the Church saw a new orientation.
[49] Many other authors note that individualism appears to be important for democracy to take root (e.g., Pye 1985; Huntington 1991).

given Catholic country. Second, there is an abundance of narrative evidence documenting that the post-conciliar Catholic Church was instrumental in steering formerly authoritarian regimes safe and sound toward democracy in ways congruent with the teachings of Vatican II. Taken together, this means that our estimates can reasonably be given a causal interpretation.

Huntington (1991) argues that were it not for Vatican II fewer third wave transitions to democracy would have occurred and many that did occur would have occurred later. We believe this to be a fair reading of the evidence; it is certainly one that is fully consistent with our results.

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Table 1: Baseline specification

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
		Polyarchy			Polity	
CATH x I^{1965}	0.101***	0.108***	0.079**	3.139***	3.298***	3.031***
	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(1.104)	(1.219)	(1.140)
	0.098	*0.120*	*0.088*	*0.129*	*0.145*	*0.130*
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	16,102	9,802	7,544	11,224	8,261	6,333
R-squared	0.536	0.41	0.307	0.259	0.288	0.206
Number of countries	168	168	168	162	162	160

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Standardized coefficients are reported in *italics* .

Summary: The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) with the vector of confounders, *x* , excluded. Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II is a significant predictor of the evolution of post-conciliar democracy. As the identification assumption of common pre-conciliar democracy trends appears to be satisfied (cf. Figure 1), it is not unreasonable to presume that the estimated effects can be given a causal interpretation.

Table 2: Adding GDP per capita to baseline specification

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
CATH x I^{1965}	0.116***	0.123***	0.106***	3.486***	3.077**	2.930**
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(1.128)	(1.232)	(1.168)
log(GDPCAP$_{t-5}$)	0.052**	0.036	0.073**	0.657	-0.341	0.780
	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.028)	(0.734)	(0.805)	(0.848)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	9,118	7,509	5,793	8,859	7,340	5,673
R-squared	0.466	0.379	0.306	0.288	0.305	0.235
Number of countries	157	157	156	155	155	154

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. GDP per capita is lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues.

Summary: The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) with real GDP per capita (log) included in the vector of confounders, *x* . Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution of post-Conciliar democracy. As the identification assumption of common pre-Conciliar democracy trends appears to be satisfied (cf. Figure 1), and as the results are unchanged after controlling for "the modernization hypothesis", the presumption that the estimated effects can be given a causal interpretation is strengthened.

Table 3: Adding inequality to baseline specification

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
CATH x I^{1965}	0.079**	0.103**	0.072*	3.659***	4.146***	3.457***
	(0.040)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(1.114)	(1.244)	(1.177)
INEQUALITY$_{t-5}$	-0.001	-0.000	0.000	-0.036*	-0.047	-0.022
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.021)	(0.030)	(0.032)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	10,613	7,810	5,974	8,778	6,992	5,381
R-squared	0.504	0.388	0.290	0.264	0.281	0.204
Number of countries	135	135	135	132	132	132

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Inequality is lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues.

Summary: The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) with inequality included in the vector of confounders, x. Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the of evolution post-Conciliar democracy. As the identification assumption of common pre-Conciliar democracy trends appears to be satisfied (cf. Figure 1), and as the results are unchanged after controlling for "threat of revolution", the presumption that the estimated effects can be given a causal interpretation is strengthened.

Table 4: Adding trade to baseline specification

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
CATH x I^{1965}	0.127***	0.118***	0.094**	2.761**	2.994**	2.567**
	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.041)	(1.082)	(1.239)	(1.168)
TRADE$_{t-5}$	-0.036	-0.052	-0.098***	-2.382**	-2.258**	-3.092**
	(0.028)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(1.041)	(1.110)	(1.424)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	8,303	6,868	5,322	8,220	6,784	5,277
R-squared	0.469	0.394	0.311	0.313	0.326	0.253
Number of countries	145	145	145	144	144	144

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Trade openness is lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues.

Summary: The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) with trade openness included in the vector of confounders, *x*. Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution of post-Conciliar democracy. As the identification assumption of common pre-Conciliar democracy trends appears to be satisfied (cf. Figure 1), and as the results are unchanged after controlling for "asset mobility", the presumption that the estimated effects can be given a causal interpretation is strengthened.

Table 5: Adding full set of confounders to baseline specification

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
CATH x I^{1965}	0.129***	0.141***	0.117***	2.914***	3.747***	3.258***
	(0.040)	(0.043)	(0.041)	(1.068)	(1.271)	(1.216)
	0.149	*0.165*	*0.136*	*0.132*	*0.175*	*0.149*
$\log(GDPCAP_{t\text{-}5})$	0.068**	0.045	0.099***	0.777	-0.009	1.459
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.038)	(0.840)	(0.968)	(1.030)
	0.242	*0.167*	*0.353*	*0.107*	*-0.001*	*0.201*
$INEQUALITY_{t\text{-}5}$	-0.001	-0.000	0.000	-0.059**	-0.053	-0.034
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.027)	(0.035)	(0.037)
	-0.048	*-0.027*	*0.027*	*-0.200*	*-0.178*	*-0.114*
$TRADE_{t\text{-}5}$	-0.046	-0.064	-0.135**	-1.962	-1.952	-3.268*
	(0.040)	(0.045)	-0.055	(1.238)	(1.315)	(1.757)
	-0.043	*-0.061*	*-0.090*	*-0.071*	*-0.073*	*-0.085*
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	7,419	6,211	4,863	7,366	6,153	4,828
R-squared	0.476	0.390	0.327	0.310	0.318	0.251
Number of countries	127	127	127	127	127	127

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses ( ), are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Real GDP per capita, inequality and trade openness are all lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues. Standardized coefficients are reported in *italics* .

Summary: The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) with real GDP per capita (log), inequality and trade openness included in the vector of confounders, ***x*** . Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution of post-Conciliar democracy. As the identification assumption of common pre-Conciliar democracy trends appears to be satisfied (cf. Figure 1), and as the results are unchanged after controlling simultaneously for "the modernization hypothesis", "threat of revolution" and "asset mobility", the presumption that the estimated effects can be given a causal interpretation is significantly strengthened.

Table 6: Flexible specification with and without confounders

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dependent variable:					Polyarchy					Polity
CATH x I^{1965}	-0.039	-0.013	-0.061	-0.003	-0.014	0.515	0.959	0.768	0.166	-0.111
	(0.038)	(0.042)	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.034)	(1.297)	(1.257)	(1.156)	(1.256)	(1.113)
CATH x I^{1970}	-0.040	-0.025	-0.065	-0.007	-0.017	-0.284	0.255	-0.076	-0.258	-0.657
	(0.043)	(0.049)	(0.048)	(0.050)	(0.046)	(1.327)	(1.344)	(1.288)	(1.340)	(1.257)
CATH x I^{1980}	0.103*	0.140**	0.092	0.155**	0.146**	4.167***	4.685***	4.615***	4.025***	3.749***
	(0.053)	(0.060)	(0.061)	(0.062)	(0.060)	(1.460)	(1.446)	(1.465)	(1.430)	(1.421)
CATH x I^{1990}	0.178***	0.214***	0.172***	0.222***	0.232***	5.047***	5.480***	5.820***	4.651***	5.053***
	(0.047)	(0.052)	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(1.390)	(1.464)	(1.446)	(1.403)	(1.399)
CATH x I^{2000}	0.192***	0.190***	0.164***	0.195***	0.215***	4.743***	4.782***	5.516***	3.937***	4.850***
	(0.043)	(0.051)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.051)	(1.437)	(1.500)	(1.492)	(1.434)	(1.443)
CATH x I^{2010}	0.178***	0.175***	0.153***	0.177***	0.202***	3.620**	3.798**	4.612***	2.880*	4.135***
	(0.042)	(0.051)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.053)	(1.526)	(1.544)	(1.592)	(1.476)	(1.552)
log(GDPCAP$_{t-5}$)		0.053**			0.072**		0.692			0.880
		(0.025)			(0.030)		(0.729)			(0.823)
INEQUALITY$_{t-5}$			-0.001*		-0.001			-0.045**		-0.072***
			(0.001)		(0.001)			(0.020)		(0.025)
TRADE$_{t-5}$				-0.039	-0.044				-2.408**	-1.895
				(0.031)	(0.044)				(1.122)	(1.365)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	16,102	9,118	10,613	8,303	7,419	11,224	8,859	8,778	8,220	7,366
R-squared	0.550	0.488	0.523	0.490	0.504	0.273	0.304	0.284	0.327	0.332
Number of countries	168	157	135	145	127	162	155	132	144	

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Real GDP per capita, inequality and trade openness are all lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues.

Summary: The table reports estimates when the impact of Vatican II is allowed to differ across decades. Concretely, we interact dummies for the periods 1965-69, 1970-79, 1980-89, 1990-99, 2000-09, and 2010-15 with the average post-Conciliar share of Catholics. Two things should be noted upon inspection of the table. First, the Vatican II impulse first becomes visible in the 1980s; in the 1960s and 1970s it is nil, statistically speaking. This is (broadly speaking) the delay from impulse to response that Huntington (1991) expected. Second, the time-varying impact of Vatican II tends to follow an inverted-U shape, which reaches its maximum in the 1990s. These findings are consistent with the presence of both a direct effect of Vatican II (Vatican II --> democracy) and an indirect effect (Vatican II --> diffusion/snowballing/demonstration effect --> democracy).

8. Figures

Figure 1: Catholicism and the evolution of democracy
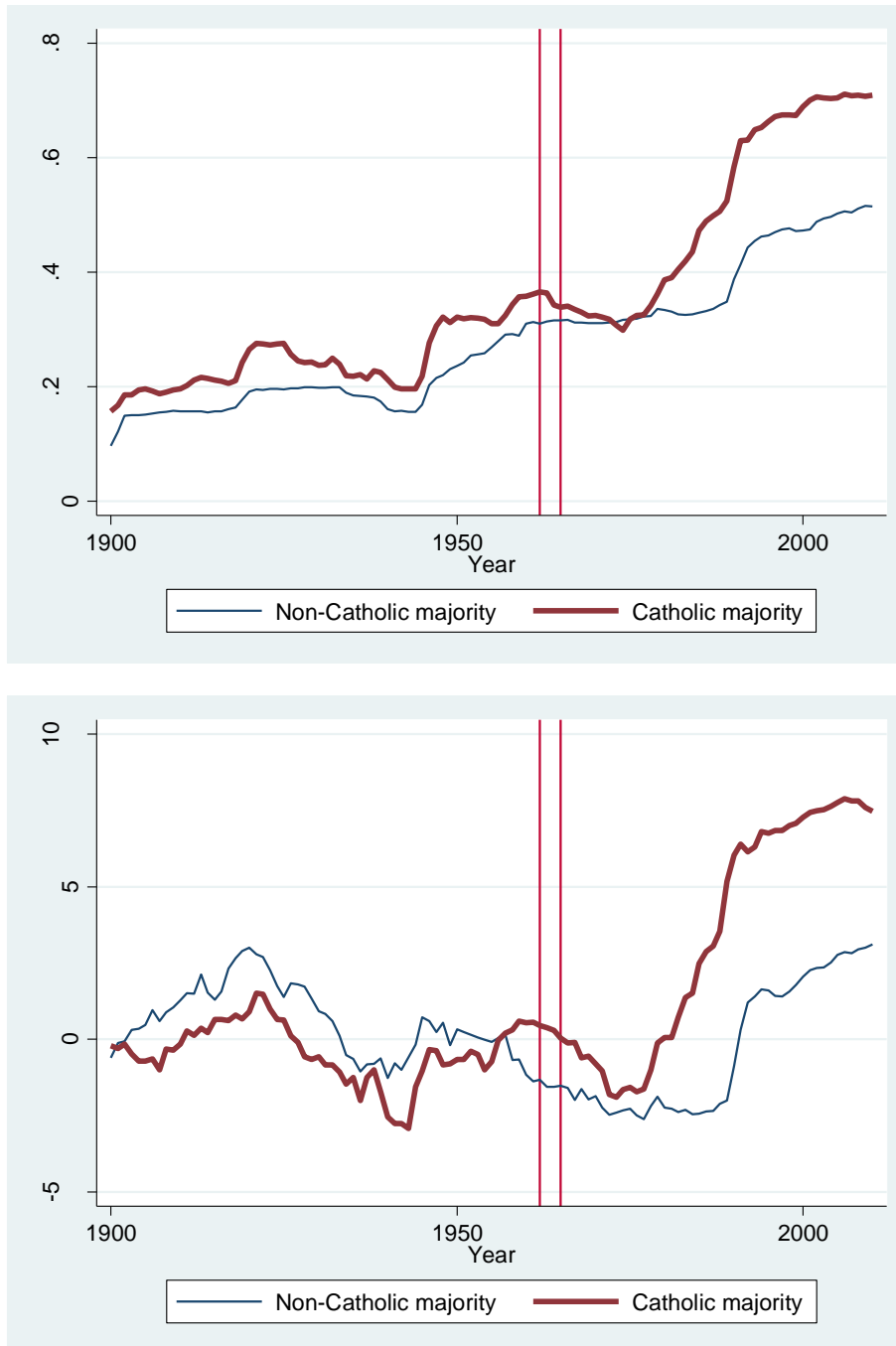
Notes: Democracy is measured using the V-Dem polyarchy index (topmost panel) and the revised combined polity score (bottommost panel). Bold line (thin line) represents countries with a Catholic (non-Catholic) majority. A Catholic majority is defined as a share of Catholics larger than 50 percent of the population. Vertical lines are placed at 1962 and 1965 to mark the Vatican II period. The panel used in the figure is unbalanced. As shown in Figure S3 of the Supplementary Appendix, strongly balancing the panel provides a very similar figure.

Summary: The figure shows that prior to 1965 the identification assumption of common trends in treated (Catholic majority) countries and untreated (non-Catholic majority) countries appears to be satisfied, irrespective of which of the two the democracy indices is used. Moreover, the figure depicts a clear trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic majority countries in the late 1970s.

Supplementary appendix

Intended for online publication

S1. Variables and data sources

Dependent variable: V-Dem polyarchy index

According to Dahl (1971, p. 2), democracy is "a political system one of the characteristics of which is the quality of being completely or almost completely responsive to all its citizens". The exact term "democracy" applies to the ideal system, whereas the term "polyarchies" refers to countries living up to the empirical requirements of the ideal system of democracy. These are (a) elected officials; (b) free, fair, and frequent elections; (c) associational autonomy; (d) inclusive citizenship; and (e) freedom of expression.

Teorell *et al.* (2016) have compiled, documented, and convincingly validated a new index of polyarchy, *V-Dem polyarchy index*, which goes back to 1900 and includes 173 countries.[1] The index is based on 350 detailed questions with well-defined measurement scales; it captures all of the components (a) through to (e) above with multiple indicators (save for one component); the bulk of the used indicators stems from data collected by country experts, typically academics from each country in question.[2] The V-Dem polyarchy index is equal to (MPI + API)/2, where MPI (Multiplicative Polyarchy Index) is the joint product of five underlying indices (elected officials, clean elections, freedom of organization, suffrage, and freedom of expression) and API (Additive Polyarchy Index) is a weighted sum of these five underlying indices.[3]

Teorell *et al.* validate the polyarchy index in two principal ways. First, they compare the ratings of different country experts for the same indicators, countries, and years. They find no evidence to suggest noticeable disagreements among country experts; and when there is occasional disagreement, it is related to indicators further back in time, to lack of media information, and to intermediate values of the indicators they are assessing. Moreover, based on a post-survey questionnaire that country experts were asked to fill out, they have information on the following list of coder characteristics: gender, age, whether the coder has a PhD degree, whether the coder is a government employee, country of birth, country of residence, Western origin, free-market support, and the coder's understanding of democracy. It is generally the case that coder characteristics are *unrelated* to how country experts rate electoral democracy indicators. Second, they compare coder-level ratings as well as the aggregated index to other measures of electoral democracy from alternative datasets. The pairwise correlations between the V-Dem polyarchy index and other extant measures of democracy are above 0.85. Coder characteristics,

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[1] Available at: https://www.v-dem.net/en/.

[2] The aim was to have five experts per (collected) indicator per country, meaning that more than 2,600 experts were recruited based on their credentials.

[3] The V-Dem polyarchy index ranges from 0.008 in Guinea-Bissau in 1929-33 to 0.958 in France in 2012. The mean is 0.323, the median is 0.209, and the standard deviation is 0.282.

however, sometimes predict differences between the V-Dem polyarchy index and alternative measures such as Polity and Freedom House. When larger shares of coders are born in the countries they code, V-Dem tends to rate countries as less democratic than both Polity and Freedom House. Moreover, as larger shares of coders hold alternative conceptions of democracy, V-Dem tend to rank countries as less democratic than the polity score. However, the practical effects are very small. Overall, the evidence suggests that discrepancies between the V-Dem polyarchy index and Polity and Freedom House are not due to coder characteristics.[4]

Confounders: Income, inequality and trade

Real GDP per capita is constructed as log(*e_GDP_Per_Cap_Haber_Men_2*) in the V-Dem dataset.

Trade openness is (export + import)/GDP; in terms of V-Dem's nomenclature, it is (*e_cow_exports* + *e_cow_imports*)/(*e_migdppc* × *e_population*/1000000).

The measure of income inequality in the V-Dem dataset (*e_peginiwi*) is challenged in terms of the number of observations. For example, in 1950 there are only observations for three Catholic majority countries (i.e., Catholic share > 50 percent), namely Guatemala, Italy, and Mexico. For educational inequality (*e_peedgini*) the corresponding number is 32. The correlation between the two inequality measures is 0.23 (*p*-value < 0.0000). A linear regression of *e_peginiwi* on *e_peedgini* and a constant gives a (cluster robust) *t*-value of 3.48 (number of observations is 5,427); with time fixed effects included, the *t*-value increases marginally to 3.59. Overall, this tells us that educational inequality is statistically informative about income inequality.

S2. Robustness

In what follows, we report our checks on the robustness issues mentioned in Section 3 of the main text:

Excluding regions

Our identification strategy requires that (conditionally) there are no other changes occurring around the time of Vatican II that concurrently correlate with countries' share of Catholics and affect democratization. Relevant changes, as per Huntington (1991), are changes in the policies of external

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[4] At an aggregate level, V-Dem adds a few twists to our understanding of the evolution of democracy. First, the index suggests that democracy's first wave of the early 19th century was far less pronounced than commonly thought. Second, V-Dem suggests that the second wave was far more gradual and in fact stretched into the 1960s, as opposed to ending immediately after the Second World War. Thirdly, V-Dem is a more conservative electoral democracy index than Polity.

players such as the United States, the USSR, or the European Community. It appears reasonable that any changes in United States policy would influence its backyard (i.e., Latin America) comparatively more; it also appears reasonable that any changes in the policies of the USSR (and, post-1991, Russia) would influence its front yard (i.e., Eastern Europe) comparatively more; and it appears reasonable that any changes in the policies of the European Community would influence Europe comparatively more. Indeed, Huntington (1991) argues that Brussels provided incentives for democratization of Southern and Eastern Europe, Moscow removed the foremost barriers to democratization in Eastern Europe, and Washington pushed for democratization in parts of Latin America and Asia. An obvious way to deal with the issue of changing policies of external actors is therefore to exclude regions one at a time.

Consequently, we will investigate the robustness of our results to the exclusion of different politico-geographic regions from the Quality of Government Standard Dataset.[5] These regions are based on geographical proximity as well as features that add to regional understanding as identified by democratization researchers. If results are robust to the sequential exclusion of regions, it is improbable that changes other than Vatican II threaten internal validity.

Inspection of Table S1 reveals that results are fully robust to the exclusion of regions one-by-one when polyarchy is used. When we use the polity score, statistical significance disappears in only one instance, which is when the Latin American countries are excluded (cf. column 2 of Table S2). In the said case, it is mostly a question of less precision.[6] Moreover, when we alternatively employ a Catholic dummy variable equal to one if there is a Catholic majority, and zero otherwise (i.e., set $CATH_i = 1[\text{Catholic share in country } i \geq 50 \ percent]$), we obtain that results are robust to the exclusion of all regions, even when we use the polity score (cf. Table S3). Finally, and as mentioned in the main text, Figure S6 demonstrates that the trend break remains visually clear in the non-Latin American sample of countries when either of the two democracy measures is used. However, consistent with column 2 of Table S3, it is somewhat noisier when the polity score is used to measure democracy.[7] Overall, this leads us to conclude that "other changes" are unlikely to constitute a threat to internal validity.

As an alternative way of investigating whether our results are driven by unobservable time-varying effects at the level of political regions, we report estimates in which we control for political region by year fixed effects. Estimating in this fashion we find similar effects, implying that our results are not

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[5] These regions are included in the V-Dem dataset as *e_regionpol*. The different regions are Eastern Europe and Central Asia (including Mongolia); Latin America (including Cuba and the Dominican Republic); Middle East and North Africa (including Israel and Turkey); Sub-Saharan Africa, Western Europe and North America (including Cyprus, Australia and New Zealand); East Asia, South-East Asia; South Asia; the Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand), and the Caribbean (including Belize, Haiti, Guyana and Suriname).

[6] The *p*-value is 0.161 (*t*-value is 1.409 = 2.289/1.624).

[7] Latin America is a Catholic majority region, which saw many countries democratize during the third wave, so it is perhaps not surprising that it will impact our findings.

driven by changes in, for example., regional democracy levels caused by other factors than the Second Vatican Council (cf., columns 4 and 5 of Table S13). This reinforces our conclusion that "other changes" do not constitute a threat to internal validity.[8]

Substantial Catholic majority

Consider next constructing a new Vatican II variable, which takes the value one if the share of Catholics in a country is larger than or equal to 75 percent, and zero otherwise. Even though this binary variable is coarser than the continuous variable, $CATH_i$, used so far, it should not have any bearing on our findings. This coarser variable has the advantage that it reduces any measurement error issues. Tables S4 and S5 confirm prior expectations: nothing changes.

Tables S4 and S5 provide us with another simple way to address economic significance; that is, we simply evaluate the expression $\hat{\gamma}/\bar{d}$. Here $\hat{\gamma}$ is the estimated coefficient associated with the Vatican II dummy and $\bar{d}$ is post-1965 average post-conciliar democracy. The expression provides a rough estimate of how much of post-conciliar democratization can be attributed to the Vatican II impulse. If we use $\hat{\gamma} = 0.1$, we find the number to be almost one quarter (using the V-Dem polyarchy index). We will not push this too far, but just note that the estimated effect is also nontrivial according to this metric.

Regression-to-mean effects

In Tables S6 and S7 we estimate an autoregressive model where the country fixed effects are excluded, as they are likely correlated with the autoregressive term.[9] The autoregressive term in turn captures persistence in democracy and mean-reverting dynamics (i.e., the tendency of the democracy score to return to some equilibrium value). Table S6 excludes the vector of confounders, x_{it}, whereas Table S7 includes it.

Turning first to Table S6, we see that Vatican II is always statistically significant at a one percent size level. Moreover, the estimated coefficients associated with the autoregressive terms are close to one, which (not surprisingly) reveals that democracy is a highly persistent variable. When we include the three confounders, GDP per capita, inequality, and trade openness, as done in Table S7, we see that Vatican II remains statistically significant. Consequently, coding the Vatican II variable as an indicator and estimating an autoregressive model do not change any of the qualitative conclusions reported so far.

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[8] We have also estimated models in which we exclude Muslim majority countries and find that results are not driven by the inclusion of these countries.

[9] Both Barro (1999) and Acemoglu et al. (2008) entertain models with autoregressive terms.

Vatican II appears to be a strong predictor of the evolution of democracy in Catholic countries.

The Boix et al. (2013) dichotomous democracy measure

So far, we have relied on a continuous measure of democracy. In this subsection, we instead employ the Boix *et al.* (2013) dichotomous democracy measure based on contestation and participation. Countries coded as democratic have political leaders that are chosen through free and fair elections and a minimal level of suffrage.[10]

Table S8 reports results from estimation of equation (1). Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II is always significant at 10 percent irrespective of whether confounders are included or not.

It may also be of some interest to construct a figure using the dichotomous variable. This is done in Figure S7 below. The figure shows that prior to 1965 the identification assumption of common trends in Catholic majority (treated) and non-Catholic majority (non-treated) countries appears more problematic when we use the Boix *et al.* (2013) democracy measure. Nevertheless, the figure does depict a clear trend break in the evolution of democracy in Catholic majority countries in the late 1970s.

Placebo check

In Table S9 we perform a placebo type test, where we replace $CATH$ in equation (1) with the share of Protestants. The timing of Vatican II should have no effect on the evolution of democracy in Protestant countries, which is also what we find.

Strongly balanced panels

In Table S10 we estimate equation (1) on strongly balanced panels. For the V-Dem polyarchy variable we can balance the panel over the entire period and still retain sufficient countries in the sample to make inference meaningful (i.e., have $N \gg T$); not so for polity, where we have to balance the panel four decades later in order to retain just about enough countries (i.e., have $N \approx T$).[11] Figure S3 provides graphs. Inspection of Table S10 and Figure S3 shows that the democratizing impulse of Vatican II is also found in strongly balanced panels.

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[10] This measure is included in the V-Dem dataset as *e_boix_regime*.

[11] If we balance polity over the full sample, we only have 29 countries in the sample. Yet we still find that Vatican II is significant at the one percent level using clustered standard errors (cf. column 5 of Table S10). However, it is more appropriate to use FGLS with AR(1) errors, as done in column 6 of Table S6. Here, we also obtain significance albeit the point estimate is much smaller.

Initial values of Catholic share and additional control variables

A potential worry is that the Catholic share and some of our confounder variables are endogenous, for which reason we have run specifications in which the average catholic share is replaced with the 1965 value of the Catholic share. As seen in Table S11, this produces results very similar to our baseline estimates in Table 1. We also add 1965 values times a dummy equal to 1 after 1965 for GDP per capita, trade, and inequality. Looking across the table, we find that the estimated coefficients are similar to our baseline.

In Table S12, we expand the set of control variables. In the first five columns, we show results for the polyarchy measure; in the next five columns, we show results for the polity index. First, it is possible that we are capturing societies with long histories of democracy and we control for ancient democracy using the measure of Giuliano and Nunn (2013). This has little effect on our main result, see column 1. Second, we add the urbanization rate in column 2, which also has little effect. Third, we control for initial religious diversity, which again has little impact on results (see column 3). Fourth, we add a control for whether a country was a participant in the 1955 Bandung conference, which brought together many newly independent countries. On their agenda was to promote "fundamental human rights" (Reference Guide the Museum of Asian-African Conference 1992, p. 18). The coefficient is negative and significant at the 5 percent level when we use the polyarchy measure in column 4. In column 5, we code a variable which is 1 in the year of the first papal visit of pope John Paul II to capture any direct influence the pope might have had on democratization.[12] We find that the effect is positive and significant, but the effect of the catholic share is still positive and significant. Results are similar when we use the polity index, but most variables are insignificant except the papal visit variable.

The threat of revolution

It may be that our results are driven by underlying increases in the threat of revolution. While there is no ideal way of measuring this particular threat, Przeworski (2009) proposes to use the sum of strikes, riots, and demonstrations as a proxy. Adding this measure – using data from the Cross-National Time Series Archive available from 1919 for a subset of the countries – we find that the threat of revolution has little effect on our results (cf. columns 1 and 2 of Table S13). Also, we do not find any relationship between

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[12] The source is:
http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/documentazione/documents/santopadre_biografie/giovanni_paolo_ii_biografia_pontificato_en.html

the Catholic share after 1965 and the threat of revolution (cf. column 3 of Table S13). Consequently, the observed changes are not driven by social protests, though these are likely to have played some role in the transition, as suggested by some of the cases studies in Section 4 of the paper.

Collapsing to decadal data

Democracy is often slow moving and a potentially concern with using an annual frequency is that we may fail to capture longer run changes. To deal with this we collapse the data to decadal averages. As seen in columns 6 and 7 of Table S13, this has no bearing on our results.

Fully flexible model and panel shortening

In Table S14 we estimate a fully flexible model, which is what provides the input to Figures S1 and S2. The table shows that the identification assumption of common pre-intervention trends is also borne out when we estimate a fully flexible model. The trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic countries only becomes visible in the 1980s.

In Tables S15 and S16 we shorten the length of the panel successively. Concretely, the table successively shortens the length of the panel by five years. This provides an alternative way, as compared to Table S14, to explore when the democracy response from the impulse of Vatican II becomes visible. When the cut-off year is 1995 or earlier, we cannot statistically detect the democracy response of the Vatican II impulse. This squares well with the results from Table S14 and Figures S1-S2 and S4-S5 that Vatican II only became visible in the 1980s.

Adding education

In Table S18 we add education to equation (1) alongside GDP per capita, inequality, and trade openness. The variable we use is education quality of the general population above 15 years of age. in the V-Dem dataset. In terms of V-Dem's nomenclature, it is *e_peaveduc*. Inspection of Table S18 shows that adding education has no bearing on our results.

National independence and end-of-colonialism

In Table S19 we investigate to which extent the end of colonialism is observationally equivalent to Vatican II. We look at two subsamples: one for ex-colonies (subsample 1) and one for colonies that gained independence in 1965 or later (subsample 2). In the table below, columns 1 and 3 relate to

subsample 1, whereas columns 2 and 4 refer to subsample 2. In both subsamples, we find that we can control for independence and still observe an effect of Vatican II. If we combine the specification in columns 1 and 3 (not reported), we get a positive and *insignificant* coefficient on independence interacted with the catholic share.

S3. The Vatican II impulse-response delay

To think systematically about the delay between Vatican II (*impulse*) and actual democratization (*response*), we combine findings from sociology, which suggest that Vatican II gave rise to a more individualistic culture in Catholic countries, with Gorodnichenko and Roland (2015), which suggest that there is higher demand for democracy in individualistic cultures vis-à-vis collectivist dittos.[13]

With respect to the first link (Vatican II ➔ individualistic culture), Williams and Davidson (1996) provide focus-group based evidence that Vatican II led to a generational shift in faith among Catholics in the United States.[14] Prior to Vatican II there was an institutionalized conception of faith, in which Catholics saw the Church as an essential mediating force in his or her relationship with God. Catholic laity, which holds an institutionalized conception of faith, accepts the authority of the Church on all matters of religion, whether they concur or not. This is evident in interviews of members of the pre-Vatican II generation (i.e., those born prior to 1941). Vatican II Catholics (i.e., those born between 1941 and 1960) tend to describe their faith as less institutionally based than the pre-Vatican II generation, but many do share the institutionalized conception of faith. However, the post-Vatican II generation (i.e., those born after 1960) is different, as it holds an individualized conception of faith. Members of the post-Vatican II generation emphasize an individual understanding of faith and a direct (almost friendly) relationship with God. This generation also describes a religious upbringing that differs greatly from both the pre-Vatican II and the Vatican II generations. Williams and Davidson (1996) therefore conclude that the generational shift is not just an age effect; rather, it is to a significant extent a cohort effect caused by Vatican II.

The theoretical framework that Williams and Davidson (1996) invoke to put their findings into perspective is that of "formative years" (Mannheim 1970; Walrath 1987). According to this theory, there is a critical phase (i.e., the formative years) in any individual's personal development where experiences –

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[13] Many other authors note that individualism appears to be important for democracy to take root (e.g., Pye 1985; Huntington 1991).

[14] Greeley (2004) provides quantitative evidence to support Williams and Davidson (1996). Related, Guiso *et al.* (2003) – using World Values Surveys – find that being raised as a Catholic after Vatican II caused a change in cultural values. For instance, post-conciliar Catholics are more trusting of other people and less intolerant.

and, importantly, the perceptions acquired from these experiences – will exert a decisive and lingering influence on the person. Individual members of a given cohort usually have similar experiences during their formative years, for which reason the theory proposes that they emerge from their formative years with comparable values and world views. Researchers are at variance on the exact time frame for the formative years, but the most likely period is between ages 13 to 22. This means that as of 1980, when the democratization response of the Vatican II impulse is slowly setting in, most Catholics below the age of 35, say, would have had their formative years shaped in an individualistic direction by the Council.

With respect to the second link (individualistic culture → demand for democracy), Gorodnichenko and Roland (2015)[15] propose that an individualistic culture stimulates demand for democracy, as individual freedom is essential for self-achievement. At the same time, democracy protects the rights of the individual. Conversely, a collectivist culture tends to focus on the necessity of a benevolent ruler to create stability between different groups in society. Consequently, emphasis is on hierarchy and order; individual freedom, on the other hand, endangers stability (see also Pye 1985). Because of these cultural differences, when there is a "window of opportunity for collective action" in an individualistic society there will always be revolt against autocracy, which will lead to democracy. In contrast, in a collectivist society revolts against good autocrats are rare, for which reason individualist societies will (in the long run) end up with a democratic regime, whereas collectivist societies will end up either with democracy or with a high quality autocracy.

If we combine these separate pieces of insight (or links) we can rationalize a plausible mechanism through which Vatican II after a delay of one to two decades begins to importantly stimulate demand for democracy by increasing the degree of individualism in society.

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[15] They set up a two-class model, which shares many similarities with Acemoglu and Robinson (2006). The two groups are the elites and the poor, and inequality has the same effect in the two models. One of the main differences is that culture is added to play a role. For details, see Gorodnichenko and Roland (2015, p. 11). In related work, Besley and Persson (2016) endogenizes culture. They show that democratization depends on a sufficiently large fraction of the population holding democratic values. Vatican II arguably increased this fraction.

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Table S1: Exclusion of regions, polyarchy

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dependent variable:					Polyarchy					
CATH x I^{1965}	0.097***	0.142***	0.080**	0.099***	0.079**	0.102***	0.097***	0.099***	0.103***	0.107***
	(0.036)	(0.045)	(0.036)	(0.038)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Excluded region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	14,421	13,807	14,394	11,056	13,522	15,487	14,904	15,161	15,505	15,365
R-squared	0.540	0.538	0.547	0.499	0.543	0.535	0.540	0.537	0.532	0.530
Number of countries	137	149	152	121	146	163	158	160	164	162

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. The different regions are (1) Eastern Europe and Central Asia (post-Communist; including Mongolia), (2) Latin America (including Cuba and the Dominican Republic), (3) Middle East and North Africa (including Israel and Turkey), (4) Sub-Saharan Africa, (5) Western Europe and North America (including Cyprus, Australia and New Zealand), (6) East Asia, (7) South-East Asia, (8) South Asia, (9) the Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand), and (10) the Caribbean (including Belize, Haiti, Guyana and Suriname).

Summary: The table report results from estimations of equation (1) when the vector of confounders, *x*, is excluded. Columns exclude regions one-by-one. Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution post-Conciliar democracy, irrespective of which region is excluded. Our identification strategy hinges on the assumption that (conditionally) there are no other changes occurring around the time of Vatican II, which concurrently correlate with countries' (average) share of Catholics and affect democratization. Potentially relevant changes are changes in the policies of external actors, such as the US, the USSR and/or the European Community. It appears reasonable that any changes in US policy would influence Latin America comparatively more; it also appears reasonable that any changes in the policies of the USSR (and, post-1991, Russia) would influence Eastern Europe comparatively more; and it appears reasonable that any changes in the policies of the European Community would influence Europe comparatively more. Consequently, the fact that results are robust to the sequential exclusion of regions makes it improbable that the said changes threaten internal validity.

Table S2: Exclusion of regions, polity

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dependent variable:					Polity					
CATH x I^{1965}	3.629***	2.289	2.814**	3.037***	2.886**	3.330***	3.291***	3.098***	3.139***	3.324***
	(1.156)	(1.624)	(1.114)	(1.144)	(1.319)	(1.125)	(1.069)	(1.162)	(1.104)	(1.099)
Excluded region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	9,796	9,090	10,103	8,876	8,993	10,806	10,651	10,673	11,106	10,922
R-squared	0.231	0.232	0.275	0.244	0.297	0.259	0.272	0.264	0.266	0.263
Number of countries	131	143	146	117	141	157	152	155	159	157

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. The different regions are (1) Eastern Europe and Central Asia (post-Communist; including Mongolia), (2) Latin America (including Cuba and the Dominican Republic), (3) Middle East and North Africa (including Israel and Turkey), (4) Sub-Saharan Africa, (5) Western Europe and North America (including Cyprus, Australia and New Zealand), (6) East Asia, (7) South-East Asia, (8) South Asia, (9) the Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand), and (10) the Caribbean (including Belize, Haiti, Guyana and Suriname).

Summary: The table report results from estimations of equation (1) when the vector of confounders, x, is excluded. Columns exclude regions one-by-one. Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution post-Conciliar democracy, except when Latin America is excluded (cf. column 2). See also summary assoctated with Table 7. As shown in Supplementary Appendix Table S3, the insignificance in column 2 is a consequence of using the continous measure CATH as opposed to the binary indicator 1[CATH>=50%]. When this binary indicator is used significance obtains in all columns, irrespective of which region is excluded.

Table S3: Exclusion of regions, polity, and dichotomous Catholic majority variable

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dependent variable:					Polity					
$1_{[CATH>=50\%]} \times I^{1965}$	2.833***	2.254*	2.316**	2.432**	2.393**	2.685***	2.692***	2.517***	2.571***	2.763***
	(0.967)	(1.291)	(0.900)	(0.933)	(1.109)	(0.909)	(0.886)	(0.928)	(0.901)	(0.900)
Excluded region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	9,796	9,090	10,103	8,876	8,993	10,806	10,651	10,673	11,106	10,922
R-squared	0.230	0.234	0.276	0.244	0.297	0.259	0.272	0.264	0.267	0.264
Number of cowcode	131	143	146	117	141	157	152	155	159	157

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. The different regions are (1) Eastern Europe and Central Asia (post-Communist; including Mongolia), (2) Latin America (including Cuba and the Dominican Republic), (3) Middle East and North Africa (including Israel and Turkey), (4) Sub-Saharan Africa, (5) Western Europe and North America (including Cyprus, Australia and New Zealand), (6) East Asia, (7) South-East Asia, (8) South Asia, (9) the Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand), and (10) the Caribbean (including Belize, Haiti, Guyana and Suriname).

Summary: The table report results from estimations of equation (1) when the vector of confounders, ***x***, is excluded and when CATH is replaced by 1[CATH>=50%]. Columns exclude regions one-by-one. Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution post-Conciliar democracy, irrespective of which region is excluded. Our identification strategy hinges on the assumption that (conditionally) there are no other changes occurring around the time of Vatican II, which concurrently correlate with countries' share of Catholics and affect democratization. Potentially relevant changes, as per Huntington (1991), are changes in the policies of external actors, such as the US, the USSR and/or the European Community. It appears reasonable that any changes in US policy would influence Latin America comparatively more; it also appears reasonable that any changes in the policies of the USSR (and, post-1991, Russia) would influence Eastern Europe comparatively more; and it appears reasonable that any changes in the policies of the European Community would influence Europe comparatively more. Consequently, the fact that results are robust to the sequential exclusion of regions makes it improbable that the said changes threaten internal validity.

Table S4: Significant Catholic majority

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
$1_{[CATH>=75\%]}$ x I^{1965}	0.095***	0.096***	0.071**	3.237***	3.147***	2.916***
	(0.026)	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.867)	(1.007)	(0.951)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	16,102	9,802	7,544	11,224	8,261	6,333
R-squared	0.539	0.411	0.308	0.266	0.291	0.210
Number of cowcode	168	168	168	162	162	160

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Summary: This table is identical to Table 1 with the exception that 1[CATH>=75%] has been substituted for CATH. See summary of Table 1.

Table S5: Significant Catholic majority and confounders

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
$1_{[CATH>=75\%]}$ x I^{1965}	0.122***	0.123***	0.102***	2.681***	3.184***	2.730***
	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.877)	(1.039)	(0.998)
$\log(GDPCAP_{t-5})$	0.064**	0.041	0.095**	0.663	-0.121	1.320
	(0.030)	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.820)	(0.949)	(1.000)
$INEQUALITY_{t-5}$	-0.000	-0.000	0.001	-0.052*	-0.045	-0.026
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.027)	(0.036)	(0.037)
$TRADE_{t-5}$	-0.045	-0.064	-0.133**	-1.939	-1.946	-3.228*
	(0.039)	(0.044)	(0.054)	(1.236)	(1.303)	(1.734)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	7,419	6,211	4,863	7,366	6,153	4,828
R-squared	0.481	0.392	0.329	0.314	0.320	0.252
Number of countries	127	127	127	127	127	127

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$.

Summary: This table is identical to Table 5 with the exception that 1[CATH>=75%] has been substituted for CATH. See summary of Table 5.

Table S6: Significant Catholic majority and lagged dependent variable

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
$1_{[CATH>=75\%]}$ x I^{1965}	0.005***	0.006***	0.007***	0.224***	0.234***	0.295***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.044)
Polyarchy$_{t-1}$	0.987***	0.984***	0.986***			
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)			
Polity$_{t-1}$				0.969***	0.967***	0.964***
				(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Country fixed effects	No	No	No	No	No	No
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
R-squared	0.978	0.975	0.973	0.949	0.951	0.943
Observations	15,901	9,760	7,505	11,019	8,162	6,242
Number of countries	168	168	168	162	162	160

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Summary: This table is identical to Table 1 with two exceptions: First, 1[CATH>=75%] has been substituted for CATH; and, second, a lagged dependent variable has been substituted for the country fixed effects. See summary of Table 1.

Table S7: Significant Catholic majority, lagged dependent variable, and confounders

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity	
$1_{[CATH>=75\%]}$ x I^{1965}	0.005***	0.005***	0.006***	0.138***	0.142***	0.138***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.045)
Polyarchy$_{t-1}$	0.977***	0.977***	0.976***			
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.004)			
Polity$_{t-1}$				0.953***	0.952***	0.947***
				(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)
log(GDPCAP$_{t-5}$)	0.001	0.002	0.002**	0.030	0.029	0.066
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.041)
INEQUALITY$_{t-5}$	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.007***	-0.007***	-0.008***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
TRADE$_{t-5}$	0.000	-0.000	-0.005	-0.026	-0.033	-0.306**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.081)	(0.083)	(0.147)
Country fixed effects	No	No	No	No	No	No
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
R-squared	0.974	0.977	0.975	0.948	0.950	0.946
Observations	7,417	6,210	4,863	7,351	6,146	4,823
Number of countries	127	127	127	127	127	127

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Summary: This table is identical to Table 5 with two exceptions: First, 1[CATH>=75%] has been substituted for CATH; and, second, a lagged dependent variable has been substituted for the country fixed effects. See summary of Table 5.

Table S8: Dichotomous democracy measure

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Dependent variable:			Dichotomous democracy measure		
CATH x I^{1965}	0.250***	0.209**	0.217**	0.177*	0.176*
	(0.081)	(0.091)	(0.086)	(0.095)	(0.090)
log(GDPCAP$_{t-5}$)		0.109**			0.144**
		(0.050)			(0.058)
INEQUALITY$_{t-5}$			-0.003*		-0.004*
			(0.002)		(0.002)
TRADE$_{t-5}$				-0.250***	-0.247***
				(0.071)	(0.083)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	10,188	8,096	8,018	7,569	6,838
R-squared	0.198	0.179	0.196	0.203	0.210
Number of countries	159	152	132	143	127

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Summary: The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) when the dependent variable is a dichotomous measure of democracy. Columns 1 to 5 of the table should be compared to respectively column 1 of each of the Tables 1 to 5. Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution post-Conciliar democracy.

Table S9: Protestant placebo test

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy			Polity			Polyarchy			Polity	
PROT x I^{1965}	0.083*	0.019	0.059	-0.595	-1.971**	-0.483	0.006	0.002	0.023	-1.864	-0.467	-0.141
	(0.045)	(0.051)	(0.048)	(1.215)	(0.934)	(0.776)	(0.050)	(0.048)	(0.042)	(1.358)	(1.055)	(0.809)
$\log(GDPCAP_{t-5})$							0.022	0.014	0.062**	-0.154	-0.414	1.058
							(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.031)	(0.950)	(1.026)	(0.932)
$INEQUALITY_{t-5}$							-0.001	-0.000	0.001	-0.026	-0.033	-0.000
							(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.029)	(0.035)	(0.035)
$TRADE_{t-5}$							-0.018	-0.028	-0.063	-0.909	-0.942	-1.328
							(0.041)	(0.047)	(0.041)	(1.361)	(1.430)	(1.465)
CATH > 50% excluded	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	12,003	7,411	5,692	7,731	6,131	4,677	4,776	4,285	3,300	4,733	4,228	3,266
R-squared	0.532	0.379	0.285	0.218	0.248	0.164	0.449	0.345	0.292	0.278	0.267	0.202
Number of countries	128	128	128	124	124	123	94	94	94	94	94	94

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Real GDP per capita, inequality and trade openness are all lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues.

Summary: Columns 1 to 6 (7 to 12) of the table corresponds to Table 1 (Table 5) with two exceptions. First, CATH is replaced by PROT, which is the share of Protestants. Second, all countries with CATH > 50% are excluded. This amounts to a placebo test. Inspection of the table reveals the timing of Vatican II does not generally predict the evolution of post-Conciliar democracy in Protestant countries.

Table S10: Estimation on strongly balanced panels

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Polyarchy		Polity			
CATH x I^{1965}	0.114***	0.079**	3.045**	2.509**	5.067***	0.243***
	(0.042)	(0.037)	(0.027)	(0.041)	(0.001)	(0.000)
Sample	1901-2010	1951-2000	1941-2010	1951-2000	1901-2010	1901-2010
Estimator	FE	FE	FE	FE	FE	FGLS
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	8,800	6,600	3,430	3,550	3,190	3,190
R-squared	0.268	0.099	0.181	0.106	0.127	
Number of countries	80	132	49	71	29	29

Notes: Standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level in columns 1-5. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. Columns 1-5 are estimated using fixed effects, whereas column 6 is based on feasible generalized least squares (FGLS) with flexible correlation across countries and panel-specific AR(1) errors within countries.

Summary: The table reports results from estimation of equation (1) with the vector of confounders, *x*, excluded on strongly balanced panels.

Table S11: Fixed effects estimation using initial values

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
			Polyarchy					Polity		
$CATH_{1965}$ x I^{1965}	0.093**	0.093***	0.096***	0.077**	0.075*	3.055***	3.075***	3.095***	3.017***	2.790**
	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.038)	(0.039)	(1.092)	(1.061)	(1.141)	(1.143)	(1.207)
$Log(GDPCAP_{1965})$ x I^{1965}		0.005			-0.005		-0.006			-0.427
		(0.009)			(0.014)		(0.411)			(0.665)
$TRADE_{1965}$ x I^{1965}			0.079		-0.313			1.610		-15.818
			(0.319)		(0.389)			(13.716)		(15.206)
$INEQUALIY_{1965}$ x I^{1965}				-0.001*	-0.001				-0.015	-0.032
				(0.000)	(0.001)				(0.016)	(0.023)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	12,491	11,921	11,853	11,488	11,082	9,548	9,399	9,340	8,863	8,708
R-squared	0.536	0.540	0.542	0.534	0.541	0.258	0.264	0.265	0.254	0.266
Number of countries	118	112	111	108	104	116	112	111	107	104

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$.

Summary: The table replaces the Catholic share by its 1965 value and the control variables by their 1965 values. Inspection of the table reveals that this has no implications for our findings. Vatican II remains a significant predictor of democracy.

Table S12: Adding additional confounders

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
				Polyarchy					Polity	
$\text{CATH}_{1965} \times I^{1965}$	0.082**	0.098**	0.107***	0.072**	0.080**	2.962**	3.213***	2.769**	2.411*	2.399**
	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(1.168)	(1.134)	(1.155)	(1.216)	(1.155)
$\text{Log(GDPCAP}_{1965}) \times I^{1965}$	-0.006	0.022	0.023	0.012	0.024	-0.453	0.358	0.331	0.237	0.309
	(0.014)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.660)	(0.876)	(0.895)	(0.862)	(0.893)
$\text{TRADE}_{1965} \times I^{1965}$	-0.309	-0.339	-0.380	-0.486	-0.301	-16.467	-16.718	-15.546	-16.272	-13.203
	(0.392)	(0.405)	(0.431)	(0.418)	(0.413)	(15.676)	(16.335)	(17.447)	(17.789)	(17.397)
$\text{INEQUALIY}_{1965} \times I^{1965}$	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001*	-0.001	-0.028	-0.037	-0.042	-0.039	-0.039
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.023)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.028)	(0.025)
$\text{TRADITIONAL DEMOCRACY} \times I^{1965}$	0.023	0.042	0.047	0.059	0.043	0.541	0.834	0.740	0.864	0.568
	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.036)	(1.180)	(1.142)	(1.167)	(1.130)	(1.174)
$\text{URBAN}_{1965} \times I^{1965}$		-0.002*	-0.002*	-0.002*	-0.002*		-0.052	-0.053	-0.053	-0.052
		(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)		(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)
$\text{RELDIV}_{1965} \times I^{1965}$			-0.035	-0.003	-0.021			1.740	1.982	1.641
			(0.057)	(0.061)	(0.055)			(2.069)	(2.193)	(2.046)
$\text{BANDUNG CONFERENCE}_{1955} \times I^{1965}$				-0.083***					-0.761	
				(0.031)					(1.316)	
PAPAL VISIT					0.078***					1.417**
					(0.024)					(0.703)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	11,082	10,966	10,966	10,966	10,966	8,708	8,644	8,644	8,644	8,644
R-squared	0.542	0.543	0.544	0.550	0.552	0.266	0.265	0.266	0.267	0.271
Number of countries	104	103	103	103	103	104	103	103	103	103

Notes : All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Summary : The table adds traditional local democracy, urbanization, religious diversity, 1955 Bandung conference participation dummy, and papal visit by John Paul II. None of these additional controls have any noteworthy bearing on the size and significance of Vatican II.

Table S13: Threat of revolution, region by year fixed effects, and decadal observations

VARIABLES	(1) Polyarchy	(2) Polity	(3) Threat	(4) Polyarchy	(5) Polity	(6) Polyarchy	(7) Polity
CATH x I^{1965}	0.147***	2.893***	-0.214	0.119**	3.017**		
	(0.038)	(1.065)	(0.327)	(0.046)	(1.498)		
CATH x I^{1960s}						0.099***	3.301***
						(0.033)	(1.155)
Threat	-0.000	0.058**					
	(0.001)	(0.024)					
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	9,341	9,008	9,374	16,102	11,224	1,745	1,286
R-squared	0.404	0.275	0.024	0.635	0.416	0.604	0.314
Number of countries	168	161	168	168	162	168	162

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Summary: The table adds the threat of revolution as a control in columns 1 and 2, column 3 explore the relationship between Catholic share and threat of revolution, columns 4 and 5 include region by year fixed effects, whereas columns 6 and 7 collapse the data to decadal observations.

Table S14: Fully flexible specification

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
			Polyarchy					Polity		
CATH x I^{1900}	0.023	0.139*	0.090	0.106	0.322***	2.772	2.940	5.816**	3.527	9.238***
	(0.040)	(0.073)	(0.065)	(0.082)	(0.065)	(2.101)	(2.977)	(2.605)	(3.030)	(3.475)
CATH x I^{1910}	0.037	0.112	0.096	0.072	0.200**	1.471	2.756	4.744**	2.698	6.935**
	(0.040)	(0.079)	(0.062)	(0.075)	(0.093)	(1.999)	(2.682)	(2.143)	(2.570)	(2.710)
CATH x I^{1920}	0.030	-0.021	0.041	-0.088	-0.031	0.644	-1.578	1.303	-0.780	1.811
	(0.036)	(0.071)	(0.048)	(0.062)	(0.059)	(1.882)	(2.449)	(2.061)	(2.240)	(2.287)
CATH x I^{1930}	-0.005	-0.025	0.010	-0.058	-0.013	1.109	0.402	1.798	0.913	1.726
	(0.040)	(0.072)	(0.053)	(0.068)	(0.065)	(1.686)	(2.224)	(1.896)	(2.154)	(2.003)
CATH x I^{1940}	0.009	0.071	0.023	0.072	0.116	-0.634	-0.826	-0.778	-0.025	1.365
	(0.031)	(0.059)	(0.042)	(0.068)	(0.071)	(1.004)	(1.484)	(1.258)	(1.478)	(1.417)
CATH x I^{1960}	-0.006	0.028	-0.017	0.027	0.037	1.619*	1.513*	1.990**	1.113	1.362
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.919)	(0.863)	(0.996)	(0.863)	(0.897)
CATH x I^{1970}	-0.025	0.003	-0.040	0.005	0.026	0.594	0.704	1.158	0.487	0.925
	(0.042)	(0.047)	(0.050)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(1.377)	(1.384)	(1.482)	(1.416)	(1.476)
CATH x I^{1980}	0.117**	0.168***	0.118*	0.167**	0.189***	5.044***	5.132***	5.862***	4.770***	5.350***
	(0.057)	(0.064)	(0.065)	(0.067)	(0.066)	(1.651)	(1.649)	(1.733)	(1.673)	(1.723)
CATH x I^{1990}	0.193***	0.242***	0.197***	0.235***	0.275***	5.925***	5.930***	7.090***	5.396***	6.679***
	(0.053)	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(1.694)	(1.682)	(1.748)	(1.675)	(1.669)
CATH x I^{2000}	0.207***	0.218***	0.189***	0.208***	0.259***	5.622***	5.231***	6.814***	4.684***	6.505***
	(0.052)	(0.056)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.057)	(1.775)	(1.753)	(1.812)	(1.767)	(1.726)
CATH x I^{2010}	0.192***	0.203***	0.179***	0.189***	0.246***	4.498**	4.247**	5.924***	3.627**	5.804***
	(0.052)	(0.056)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(1.856)	(1.806)	(1.879)	(1.823)	(1.796)
log(GDPCAP$_{t-5}$)		0.055**			0.075**		0.715			0.882
		(0.025)			(0.030)		(0.733)			
INEQUALITY$_{t-5}$			-0.001		-0.001			-0.051***		-0.080***
			(0.001)		(0.001)			(0.019)		(0.024)
TRADE$_{t-5}$				-0.039	-0.046				-2.423**	-1.882
				(0.031)	(0.045)				(1.125)	(1.360)
Constant	0.141***	-0.320*	0.191***	0.101*	-0.483**	-3.301**	-8.491	-1.179	-4.422**	-8.191
	(0.016)	(0.175)	(0.062)	(0.057)	(0.216)	(1.313)	(5.431)	(2.282)	(1.970)	(6.297)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	16,102	9,118	10,613	8,303	7,419	11,224	8,859	8,778	8,220	7,366
R-squared	0.551	0.491	0.525	0.494	0.511	0.275	0.307	0.291	0.330	0.341
Number of countries	168	157	135	145	127	162	155	132	144	127

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Real GDP per capita, inequality and trade openness are all lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues. See note under Figure S1 for additional information.

Summary: The table shows that the identification assumption of common pre-intervention trends is also borne out when we estimate a fully flexible model. The trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic countries only becomes visible in the 1980s.

Table S15: Fixed effects estimation

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dependent variable:					Polyarchy					
CATH x I^{1965}	0.101***	0.095***	0.086**	0.071*	0.052	0.023	-0.009	-0.037	-0.046	-0.040
	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.038)
Cut-off year	Full sample	2010	2005	2000	1995	1990	1985	1980	1975	1970
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	16,102	15,493	14,669	13,844	13,025	12,215	11,475	10,745	10,017	9,285
R-squared	0.536	0.515	0.480	0.434	0.372	0.294	0.266	0.259	0.259	0.257
Number of countries	168	168	168	168	167	163	153	153	153	152

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Summary: The table reports results from estimation of equation (1) with the vector of confounders, *x*, excluded. The table successively shortens the length of the panel by five years. This provides an alternative way - as compared to Table 6 - to explore when the democracy response from the impulse of Vatican II becomes visible. When the cut-off year is 1995 or earlier, we cannot statistically detect the democracy response of the Vatican II impulse.

Table S16: Fixed effects estimation

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dependent variable:					Polity					
CATH x I^{1965}	3.139***	3.174***	3.119***	2.952***	2.673**	2.289*	1.458	0.709	0.551	0.997
	(1.104)	(1.100)	(1.112)	(1.119)	(1.148)	(1.208)	(1.245)	(1.245)	(1.256)	(1.264)
Cut-off year	Full sample	2010	2005	2000	1995	1990	1985	1980	1975	1970
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	11,224	10,839	10,062	9,296	8,529	7,766	7,088	6,413	5,736	5,086
R-squared	0.259	0.244	0.210	0.167	0.114	0.046	0.034	0.037	0.040	0.038
Number of countries	162	162	161	160	159	142	141	141	139	130

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses, are clustered at the country level. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$.

Summary: The table reports results from estimation of equation (1) with the vector of confounders, *x*, excluded. The table successively shortens the length of the panel by five years. This provides an alternative way - as compared to Table 6 - to explore when the democracy response from the impulse of Vatican II becomes visible. When the cut-off year is 1985 or ealier, we cannot statistically detect the democracy response of the Vatican II impulse. This shows that response can be detected earlier when we use the polity score as the dependent variable as compared to polyarchy (cf. Table S1).

Table S17: Balance tests

Variable	Non-Catholic majority		Catholic majority			
	Observations	Mean	Observations	Mean	Difference	H0: Difference = 0, p-value
	Dependent variables					
Polyarchy$_{1965}$	109	0.3160	35	0.3391	-0.0231	0.6631
Polity$_{1965}$	87	-1.5172	31	0.0323	-1.5495	0.3056
	Covariates					
log(GDPCAP$_{1965}$)	86	7.7780	32	8.3443	-0.5662***	0.0008
INEQUALITY$_{1965}$	87	57.8898	33	40.9353	16.9545***	0.0006
TRADE$_{1965}$	82	0.0586	31	0.0468	0.0118	0.1063

Notes: Test (t-test with unequal variance) of balance across non-Catholic and Catholic majority countries.

Table S18: Adding education to full set of confounders

Dependent variable:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
		Polyarchy			Polity	
CATH x I[1965]	0.126***	0.140***	0.117***	2.714**	3.694***	3.229***
	(0.040)	(0.043)	(0.041)	(1.072)	(1.245)	(1.193)
log(GDPCAP$_{t-5}$)	0.071**	0.048	0.100**	0.961	0.384	1.857*
	(0.031)	(0.035)	(0.040)	(0.850)	(1.007)	(1.069)
INEQUALITY$_{t-5}$	-0.001	-0.000	0.000	-0.067**	-0.072*	-0.049
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.028)	(0.036)	(0.038)
TRADE$_{t-5}$	-0.045	-0.063	-0.135**	-1.884	-1.724	-3.022*
	(0.039)	(0.044)	(0.055)	(1.226)	(1.253)	(1.665)
EDUCATION$_{t-5}$	-0.005	-0.004	-0.001	-0.316	-0.615*	-0.563
	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.325)	(0.337)	(0.363)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time period	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000	Full	Post 1950	1950-2000
Observations	7,419	6,211	4,863	7,366	6,153	4,828
R-squared	0.476	0.390	0.327	0.312	0.323	0.255
Number of countries	127	127	127	127	127	127

<u>Notes:</u> All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses ( ), are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Real GDP per capita, inequality and trade openness are all lagged five years to avoid any simultaneity issues. Standardized coefficients are reported in *italics* .

<u>Summary:</u> The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) with real GDP per capita (log), inequality, trade openness and education (+15) included in the vector of confounders, *x* . Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution of post-Conciliar democracy. As the identification assumption of common pre-Conciliar democracy trends appears to be satisfied (cf. Figure 1), and as the results are unchanged after controlling simultaneously for "the modernization hypothesis", "threat of revolution" and "asset mobility", the presumption that the estimated effects can be given a causal interpretation is significantly strengthened.

Table S19: Independence and end-of-colonialism

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dependent variable:		Polyarchy		
CATH x I^{1965}	0.131***	0.137*		
	(0.035)	(0.075)		
Independent$_t$	0.107***	0.166***	0.048**	0.107**
	(0.020)	(0.046)	(0.024)	(0.047)
CATH x Independent$_t$			0.140*	0.230**
			(0.072)	(0.104)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	12,977	3,590	12,977	3,590
R-squared	0.560	0.585	0.553	0.598
Number of countries	140	48	140	48
Sample	1	2	1	2

Notes: All standard errors, which are reported in parentheses ( ), are clustered at the country level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. The independent variables is from http://www.paulhensel.org/icowcol.html. Sample 1 is for ex-colonies; sample 2 is for colonies that gained independence in 1965 or later. Standardized coefficients are reported in *italics* .

Summary: The table reports results from the estimation of equation (1) with an independence variable (columns 1 and 2) and its interaction with CATH (columns 2 and 4) included in the vector of confounders, ***x*** . Inspection of the table reveals that Vatican II remains a significant predictor of the evolution of post-Conciliar democracy.

Supplementary appendix figures

**Figure S1:** Results from estimation of flexible model with decade by Catholic share interactions
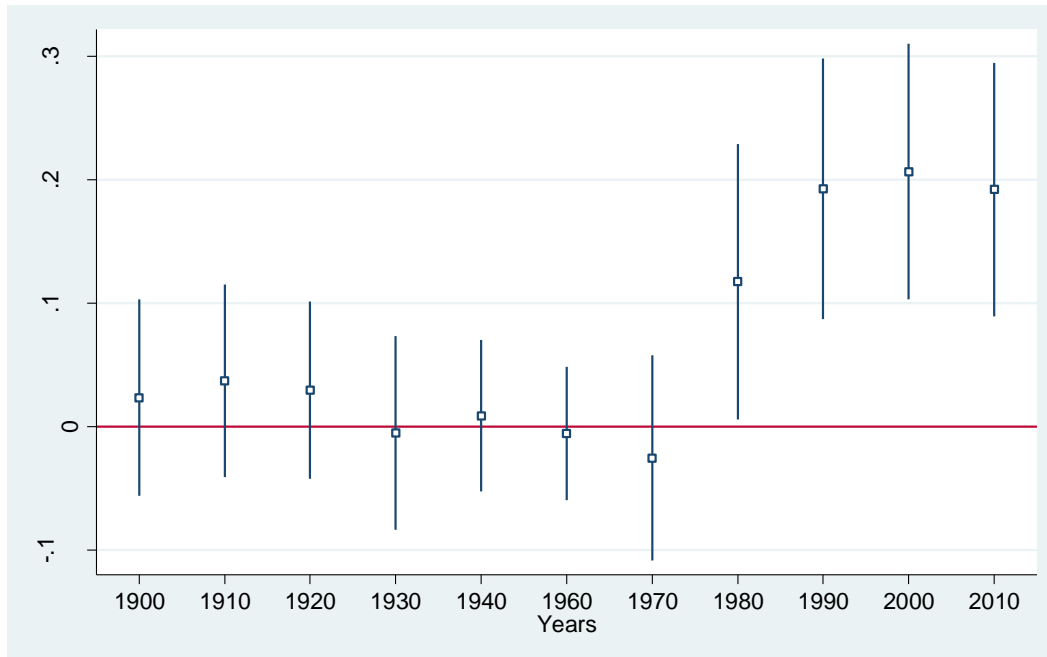

Notes: The figure reports estimates of the following flexible model:

$$d_{it} = \sum_{\substack{j=1900 \\ j \neq 1950}}^{2010} \gamma_j \, CATH_i \, I_t^j + \boldsymbol{x'}_{it} \, \beta + \mu_t + \delta_i + u_{it},$$

where the 1950s is the omitted decade. Democracy, d, is measured using the V-Dem polyarchy index. The used estimates are those associated with column 1 of Table S1 in the Supplementary Appendix. The vertical lines are 95 percent confidence intervals.

Summary: The figure shows that the identification assumption of common pre-intervention trends is also borne out when we estimate a fully flexible model. The trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic countries becomes visible as of the 1980s.

Figure S2: Results from estimation of flexible model with decade by Catholic share interactions
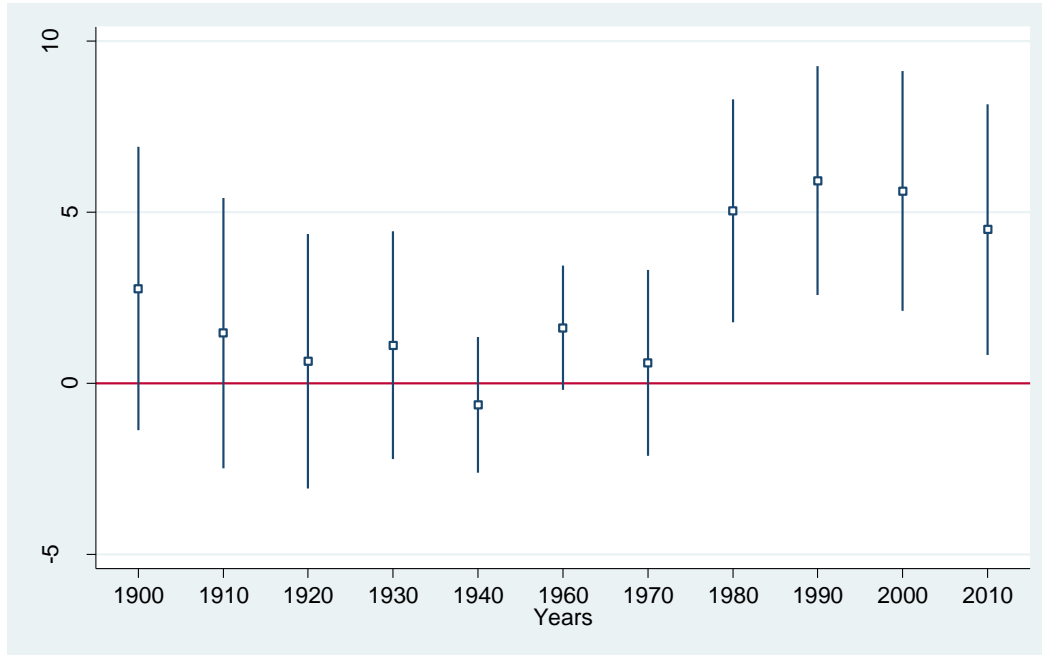
Notes: The figure reports estimates of the following flexible model:

$$d_{it} = \sum_{\substack{j=1900 \\ j \neq 1950}}^{2010} \gamma_j \, CATH_i \, I_t^j + \mathbf{x'}_{it} \, \beta + \mu_t + \delta_i + u_{it},$$

where the 1950s is the omitted decade. Democracy, d, is measured using the polity score. The used estimates are those associated with column 6 of Table S1 in the Supplementary Appendix. The vertical lines are 95 percent confidence intervals.

Summary: The figure shows that the identification assumption of common pre-intervention trends is also borne out when we estimate a fully flexible model. The trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic countries becomes visible as of the 1980s.

Figure S3: Catholicism and the evolution of democracy in the strongly balanced panel
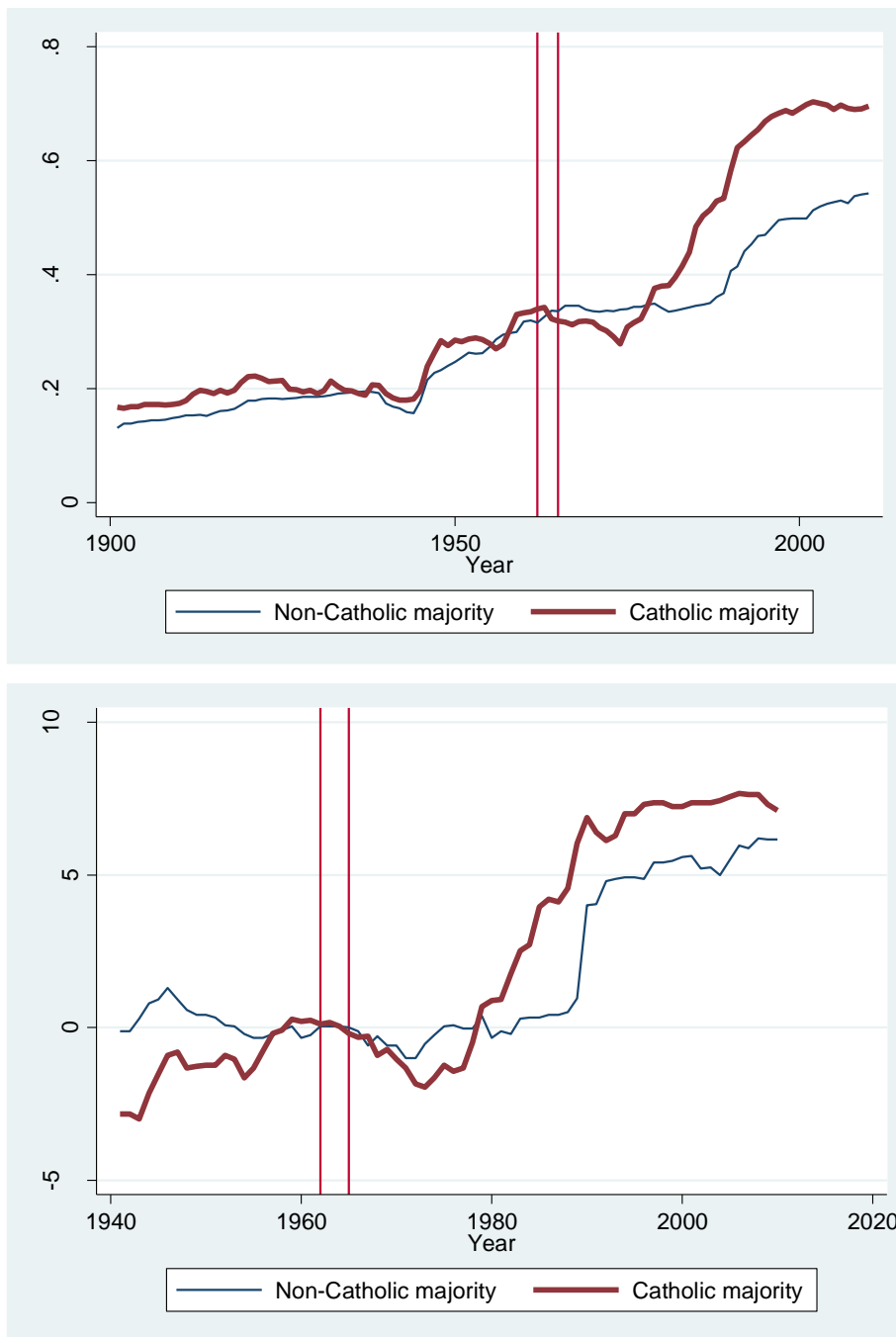
Notes: Democracy is measured using the V-Dem polyarchy index (topmost panel) and the revised combined polity score (bottommost panel). Bold line (thin line) represents countries with a Catholic (non-Catholic) majority. Catholic majority is defined as a share of Catholics larger than 50 percent of the population. Vertical lines are placed at 1962 and 1965 to mark the Vatican II period. The topmost (bottommost) panel is based the strongly balanced, 1901-2010 (1941-2010), which has 24 (25) Catholic majority countries and 54 (24) non-Catholic majority countries.

Summary: The figure shows that prior to 1965 the identification assumption of common trends in treated (Catholic majority) countries and untreated (non-Catholic majority) countries appears to be satisfied, irrespective of which of the two the democracy indices is used. Moreover, the figure depicts a clear trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic majority countries in the late 1970s.

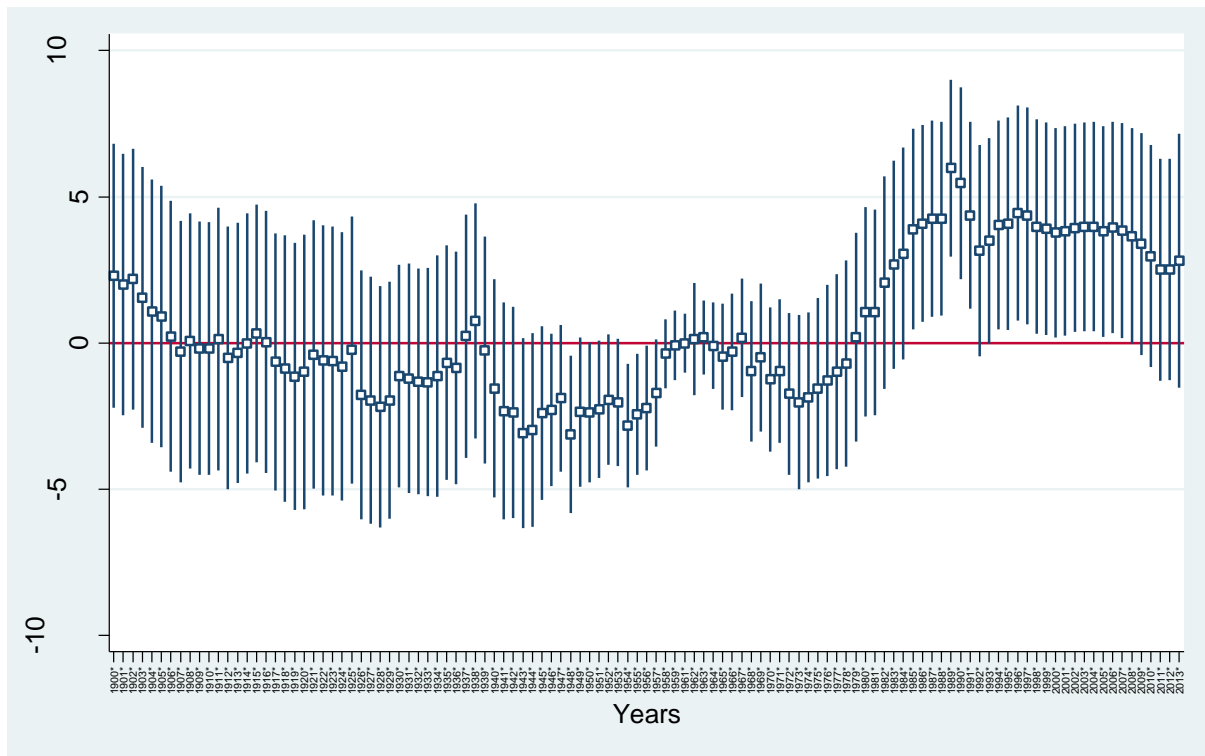**Figure S4:** Results from estimation of flexible model with year by Catholic share interactions
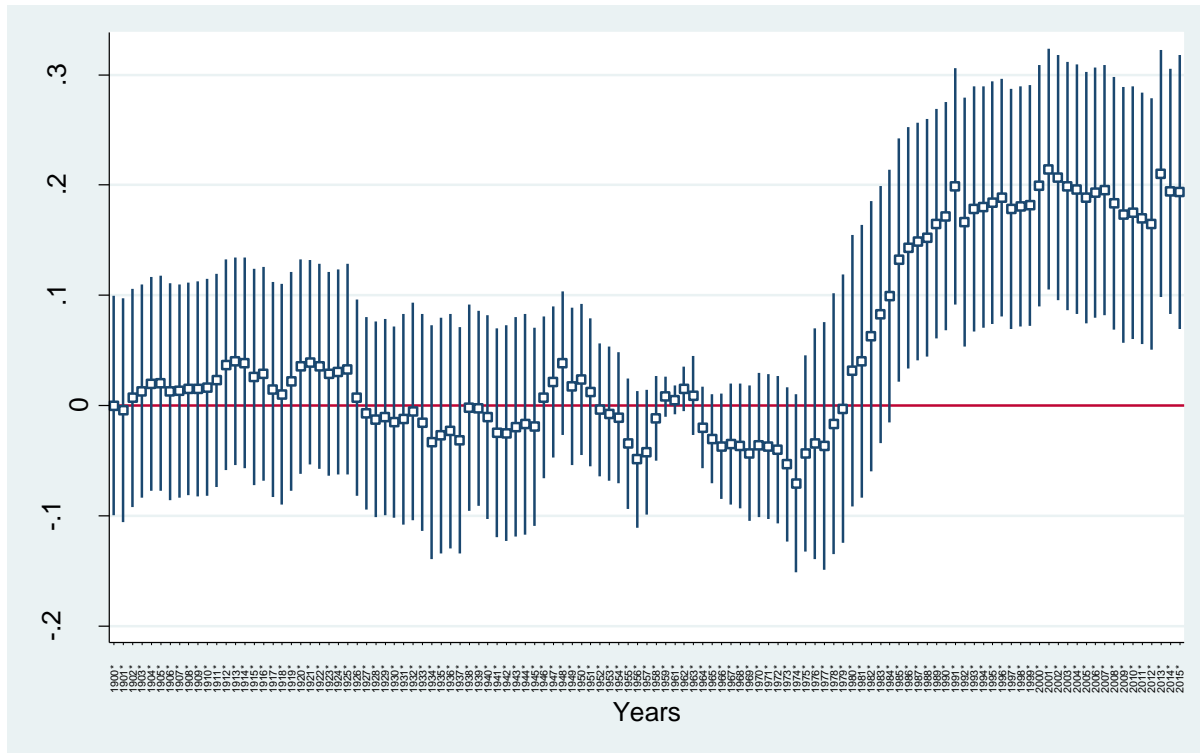
Notes: The figure reports estimates of the following fully flexible model:

$$d_{it} = \sum_{\substack{j=1900 \\ j \neq 1960}}^{2015} \gamma_j \, CATH_i \, I_t^j + \boldsymbol{x}'_{it} \, \beta + \mu_t + \delta_i + u_{it},$$

where 1960 is the omitted year. Democracy, d, is measured using the V-Dem polyarchy index. The vertical lines are 95 percen confidence intervals.

Summary: The figure shows that the identification assumption of common pre-intervention trends is also borne out when we estimate a fully flexible model with yearly interactions. The trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic countries becomes visible as of the early 1980s.

Figure S5: Results from estimation of flexible model with year by Catholic share interactions


Notes: The figure reports estimates of the following fully flexible model:

$$d_{it} = \sum_{\substack{j=1900 \\ j \neq 1960}}^{2013} \gamma_j \, CATH_i \, I_t^{j} + \mathbf{x'}_{it}\, \beta + \mu_t + \delta_i + u_{it},$$

where 1960 is the omitted year. Democracy, d, is measured using the polity score. The vertical lines are 95 percent confidence intervals.

Summary: The figure shows that the identification assumption of common pre-intervention trends is also borne out when we estimate a fully flexible model with yearly interactions. The trend break in the evolution in democracy in Catholic countries becomes visible as of the early 1980s.

Figure S6: Catholicism and democracy in non-Latin American countries
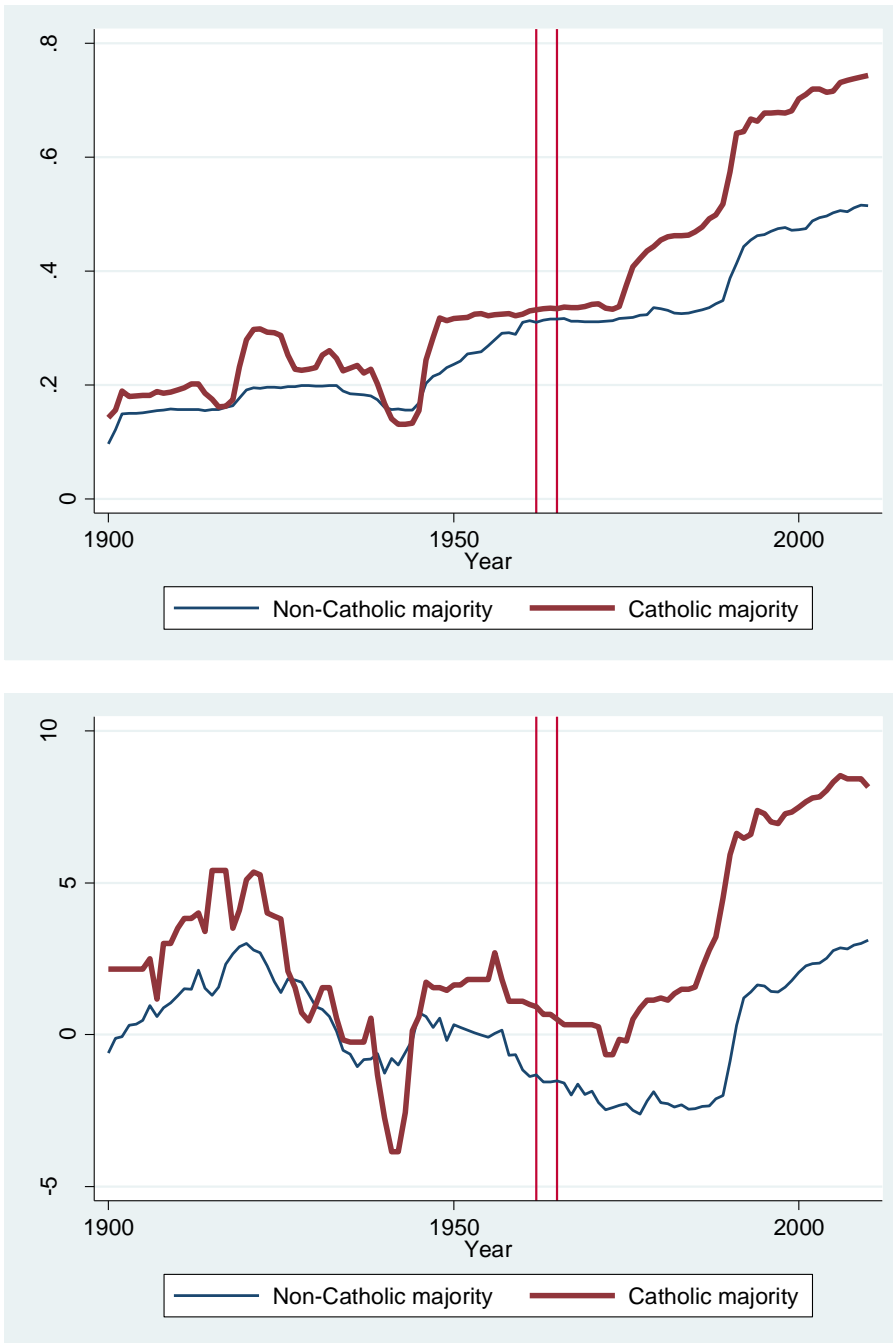
Notes: In the figure, Latin American countries are excluded. Democracy is measured using the V-Dem polyarchy index (topmost panel) and the revised combined polity score (bottommost panel). Bold line (thin line) represents countries with a Catholic (non-Catholic) majority. A Catholic majority is defined as a share of Catholics larger than 50 percent of the population. Vertical lines are placed at 1962 and 1965 to mark the Vatican II period.

Summary: The figure shows that it is not the Latin American countries that drive our results. The trend break in Catholic majority countries is still visually clear in both the topmost and the bottommost panels, albeit less so than in the full sample.
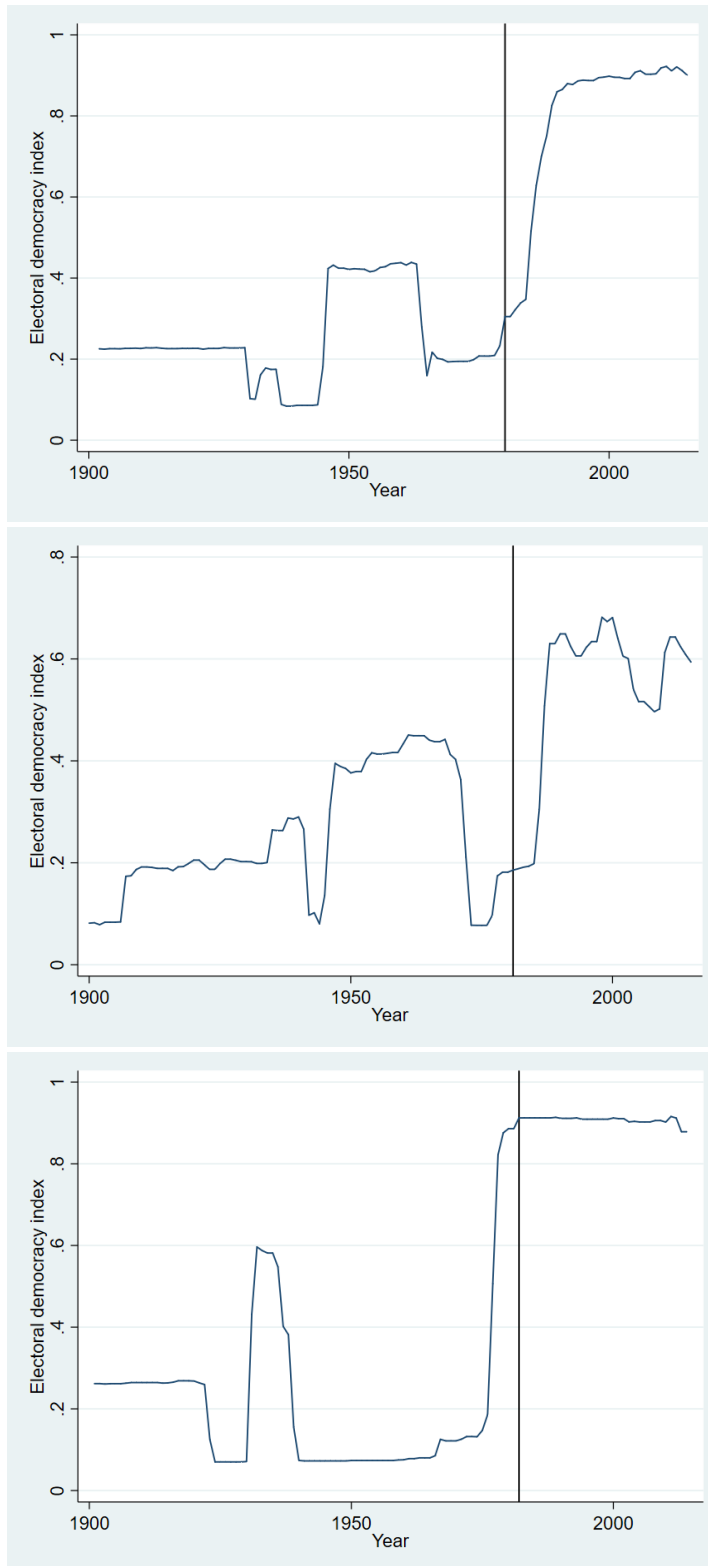
Figure S7: Catholicism and the Boix *et al.* (2013) dichotomous democracy measure
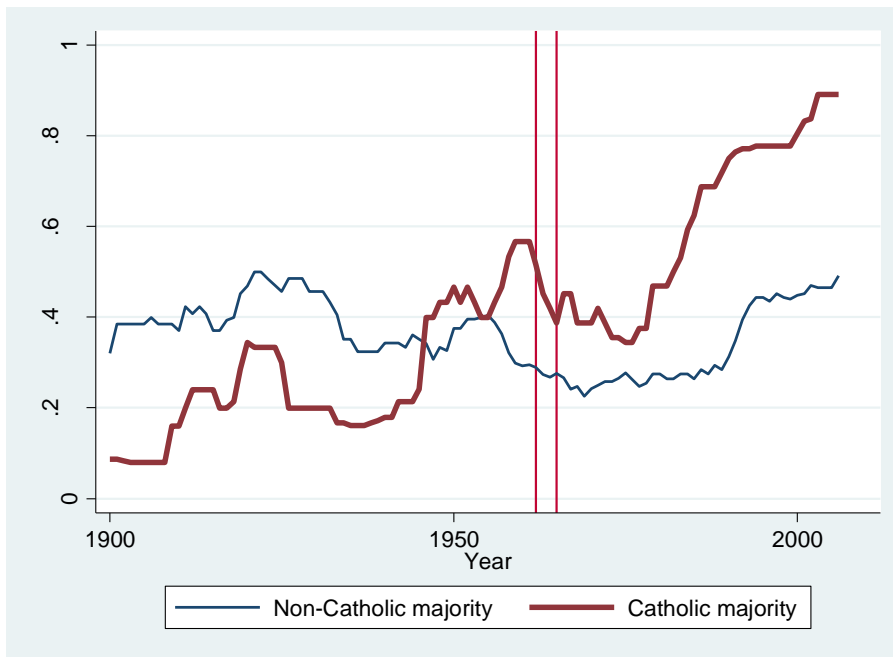
Notes: Democracy is measured using the Boix *et al.* (2013) dichotomous democracy measure (*e_boix_regime*). Bold line (thin line) represents countries with a Catholic (non-Catholic) majority. A Catholic majority is defined as a share of Catholics larger than 50 percent of the population. Vertical lines are placed at 1962 and 1965 to mark the Vatican II period.

Summary: The figure shows that a clear break in the democracy trend in Catholic majority countries in the late 1970s is also present when we use the Boix *et al.* democracy measure.

Figure S8: Papal visits and democracy