

Nexus between Democratic Governance and the Church

Reuben Olukayode BABATUNDE, PhD¹, Adebayo Ola AFOLARANMI, PhD²
and Professor Donald A. ODELEYE³

^{1, 2, 3}Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria

corresponding author: ¹reubenbabatunde@yahoo.com, +2348038176464

²afolaranmi.adebayo@lcu.edu.ng, +2348055159591

³odeleye.bidemi@lcu.edu.ng, +2348060162719

DOI: 10.56201/ijssmr.v9.no10.2023.pg80.91

Abstract

This article's primary goal is to investigate the Church's relationship to democratic governance. Whether the Church facilitates or hinders the process of democratic conversion and consolidation is the primary inquiry being investigated. The primary conclusion that can be drawn, therefore, is that there is no significant threat from the Church to the continued development of democracy in any nation. Additionally, the more general issue of how church and state interactions should be conducted in a democratic governance is taken into consideration. A primary inference that could be made from this research is that the existence of a powerful religious establishment does not always impede democratic processes. Instead, as long as two requirements are satisfied, collaboration between the state and the church is appropriate, even desired. Firstly, complete religious freedom must be accorded to every individual. Second, the rest of society cannot be forced to adopt the dominant religious institution's definition of the "good life."

Keywords: Democracy, Church, Democratic Governance, Religious Freedom, Society

Introduction

Many countries have embraced democracy and broken free from the shackles of dictatorship in the last thirty years. The church opposed the harsh authoritarian regimes in several of these countries¹, even though it only contributed slightly to the advancement of democracy in some of these states. For example, during Nigeria's annulment of the June 12 election and the General Abacha administration, the Church publicly supported political change and opposed authoritarian regimes.

However, in certain nations, the Church's support for democratization was far more limited and arrived much later. Therefore, one of the main objectives of this inquiry is to analyze what motivates, directs, or influences the Church's commitment to democracy. An examination of the Church's interactions with both elected and autocratic regimes in various nations will be used to

¹ The lower case 'church' refers to religious institutions in general without a particular reference to any specific religion, whereas upper case 'Church' refers solely to the Roman Catholic Church.

assess the Church's, particularly the Catholic Church's, contribution to the democratic transition and consolidation process. To shed light on this, transition is defined as "the process whereby the authoritarian regime is replaced by a new order enjoying democratic legitimacy."²

At the outset of this study, it is important to know which countries – Nigeria, Spain, Chile, and others—have historically and presently made the Church their main place of worship. Consequently, the Church hierarchy can exert considerable social and political pressure, raising the question of how such authority should be distributed in a democratic society. To attempt to understand the Church's role in the process of development and the current status of church-state relations, a brief review of the Catholic Church's historical position in these countries is necessary.

This analysis will show that, although the Catholic Church had historically maintained close ties with the ruling class³, the nature of Church-state interactions shifted throughout the authoritarian era. The Catholic Church began to aggressively resist the dictatorial regimes in power in Brazil, Chile, Poland, and, to a lesser extent, Spain. Consequently, the Catholic Church in these nations began to be seen as a significant social organization that supported democratic transformation.

The position taken by the national Churches towards their respective authoritarian governments was in line with the internal changes which were occurring within the Roman Catholic Church in general during the time period under scrutiny. The key event was the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) which formally following the demise of authoritarian regimes in each of the four countries the Church's social status increased as a result of its role in the democratic change. Yet, despite its support for democratization Church representatives wanted to protect the Church's interests in the aftermath of the transition. The main issues of concern for the hierarchy were especially those dealing with questions of morality, Church's status and education. Determining the extent to which the Church was able to influence the political decisions dealing with these issues in the aftermath of the transition will help to clarify the degree to which these states have entrenched democratic standards. The specific focus will be on the issues of abortion, divorce, constitutional reform, and religious education and the extent to which these matters were politically resolved in spite of Church's opposition. The following analysis will reveal that the degree of success which these new democracies had in countering the Church's political influence varied in each country. The differences between these states are mainly a result of local circumstances and experiences. As a consequence, not all issues addressed in this study sparked equal amount of debate and concern in each state under examination. For instance, in Chile the issue of divorce has been and continues to be a significant source of controversy whereas in Poland divorce did not become a cause of friction between the Church and the post dictatorship governments. Hence, the local context must be taken into consideration while examining Church-

² Joho Anderson, "Catholicism and Democratic Consolidation in Spain and Poland." *West European Politics*. Vol. 26 no I (January 2002),137.

³ The case of Poland presents somewhat of an anomaly due to its problematic history. Mainly, for a significant portion of its history Poland was conquered and ruled by foreign powers and as such it would be unjustified to claim that the Church was closely aligned with those elites. Instead, it will become apparent that the Polish national Church was an important supporter for the country's unity and independence.

state relations in the post-transition period. However, despite individual variations comparable trends are found between these countries.

The last point the reader should note is that this paper does not suggest that democracy requires a complete separation between church and state. Rather, as it will be argued in the following section, a certain level of cooperation between the state and religious institutions is acceptable, and even desirable, as long as two basic conditions are met: All citizens must be guaranteed complete freedom of religion and conscience and the dominant church cannot impose its teachings and values on the rest of society. If these two conditions are met, it's possible to determine if the transitioning states are getting closer to consolidating their democracy. But it's important to keep in mind that while these prerequisites are important, they only represent a portion of the advancement of democracy. These conditions should be taken into account in addition to Robert Dahl's eight institutional needs. Dahl outlines the democratic requirements in Table 1.

Table 1: Robert Dahl's Institutional Requirements for Democracy⁴

| | |
|---|--|
| I. Formulate preferences | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom to form and join organizations 2. Freedom of expression 3. Right to vote 4. Right of political leaders to compete for support 5. Alternative sources of information |
| II. Signify preferences | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom to form and join organizations 2. Freedom of expression 3. Right to vote 4. Eligibility for public office 5. Right of political leaders to compete for support 6. Alternative sources of information 7. Free and fair elections |
| III. Have preferences weighted equally in conduct of government | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom to form and join organizations 2. Freedom of expression 3. Right to vote 4. Eligibility for public office 5. Right of political leaders to compete for support Sa. Right of political leaders to compete for votes 6. Alternative sources of information 7. Free and fair elections 8. Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preferences |

I. Church-State Relationship

There have been many discussions on the proper balance between church and state over the ages. The debate on how the church and state should interact has gained significance once more as a

⁴ Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press (1971), 3.

result of recent political shifts in some regions of Europe and Latin America. Almost thirty countries abandoned autocratic regimes in favor of democracy and respect for human rights between 1974 and 1990⁵. In many of these countries, the democracy movement has been characterized as being greatly aided by the Catholic Church in particular.

Samuel Huntington, for instance, suggested that the Catholic Church was one of the key contributing factors to what he identified to be the third wave of democratization. Specifically, Huntington argued that it was the Catholic Church's change in position from that of support or neutrality to that of opposition towards the authoritarian regimes which significantly aided the democratization process⁶. Other authors echoed Huntington's conclusions. Bryan Hehir, for example, in his analysis of the correlation between human rights and the Catholic Church, similarly acknowledged the gradually more progressive approach of the Church towards human rights and democracy⁷. As such, in the last several decades the Catholic Church has shown an increasingly supportive attitude towards modern liberal ideas.

The Catholic Church's new role as a defender of democracy and human rights has significantly increased its prestige; consequently, the Church on a number of occasions has attempted to exalt its influence in the politics of post-authoritarian states. The Church's increased social and political influence in consolidating democracies raised the question of the appropriate conduct of church-state relations in a democratic system.

Since one of the main objectives of this study is to draw conclusions as to whether the church-state relations in the selected countries conform to democratic standards, it is necessary to establish a framework for an appropriate pattern of church-state relations in democratic systems.

The following discussion of various theories of church-state relations illustrates that in a healthy democracy a degree of cooperation between religious institutions and the state is acceptable and even desirable. However, before proceeding any further in this analysis it is important to address the question of compatibility of Catholicism with democracy, because Brazil, Chile, Poland and Spain are predominantly Catholic countries.

Roman Catholicism is one of the oldest and most influential religious systems in the world. The Catholic Church's political power has been best exemplified throughout the Middle Ages. The Papacy, for instance, was the "first political system of feudal Europe to utilize Roman jurisprudence wholesale, with the codification of canon law in the 12th and 13th centuries⁸". To use another example, certain states in history were often heavily dependent on the assistance of

⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 2 No.2 (Spring, 1991), 12.

⁶ *Ibid*, 13.

⁷ Bryan Hehir, "Religious Activism for Human Rights: A Christian Case Study." *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective*. Ed. J. Witte and J.D. van der Vyver. The Hague: Maninus Nijhoff Publishers (1996), 97-119.

⁸ Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. London: NLB (1974), 28.

the clerical bureaucracy of the Church⁹. Even though the Church's political influence was significantly diminished by later liberal revolutions, its influence persisted in many nations. However, some academics have highlighted the Catholic Church's strict, hierarchical structure and deemed it irreconcilable with its tenets in light of the emergence of contemporary concepts of freedom and democracy. The strict beliefs of the Catholic Church and its long-standing tight ties to the state were viewed as anti-democratic, as Seymour Martin Lipset explains¹⁰. The Catholic Church had tight ties to conservative politics, particularly prior to World War II¹¹. Even During the Spanish Civil War, the Church actively backed fascists; this is one of the most frequently reported examples of the phenomenon¹². As a result, the early discussions of the requirements and conditions for democracy frequently came to the conclusion that countries belonging to the Catholic Church were poor candidates for democracy.

II. Theoretical Perspective

A review of some of the early teachings of the Catholic Church, to a large extent, reinforced this religious incompatibility theory. For instance, the 1832 encyclical of Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vas*, took a strong position against freedom of conscience and opinion¹³. Likewise, the 1864 *Syllabus of Errors* promulgated by Pope Pius IX argued against religious freedom¹⁴. These documents illustrated that certain traditional Catholic beliefs were at odds with modern liberal thought. Instead, Protestantism has been suggested to be a better match for democracy because of its emphasis on individualism and its clearer separation between church and state¹⁵.

In recent years, however, the theories of Catholicism's incompatibility with democracy have been largely discredited. The participation of many Catholic countries in the recent wave of democratization, including our four case studies, has significantly weakened the argument that the Catholic religion is in conflict with democracy. In light of these developments, scholars stressed the changes that have occurred within Catholic social thought since the 1960s as an explanation for this phenomenon.

⁹ Ibid., 47.

¹⁰ Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited." *American Sociological Review*. Vol. 59 (February, 1994),6.

¹¹ Seymour Martin Lipset, Kyoung-Ryng Seong and John Charles Torres, "A Comparative Analysis of the Social Requisites of Democracy." *International Social Science Journal*. Vol. 45 (May 1993), 169.

¹² Philip Gleason, "Pluralism, Democracy and Catholicism in the Era of World War II." *The Review of Politics*. Vol. 49 (Spring 1987), 209.

¹³ Paul E. Sigmund, "The Catholic Tradition and Modern Democracy." *The Review of Politics*. Vol. 49 no 4 (Fall 1987), 536.

¹⁴ Ibid, 536-7.8

¹⁵ David Beetham, *Democracy and Human Rights*. Polity Press (1999), SI.

The Second Vatican Council of 1965 brought about the most significant modifications to Catholic doctrine. The Catholic Church's firm commitment to democracy and human rights and freedoms was proclaimed at the Second Vatican Council.

The first notable document of the Council was the Declaration on Religious Freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*. Within this document the Church expressed its support for one of the fundamental democratic rights - freedom of religion and conscience. The declaration stated that not only did every individual have the right to freedom of religion and conscience but the "government is to see to it that equality of citizens before the law, which is itself an element of the common good, is never violated, whether openly or covertly, for religious reasons"¹⁶ Hence, the document took a contrasting view to the earlier Church writings such as the *Mirari Vos* and the Syllabus of Errors and instead illustrated a more progressive and democratic approach of the Church towards religious freedom.

Dignitatis Humanae, the Council's Declaration on Religious Freedom, was its first significant declaration. The Church affirmed its support for the freedom of religion and conscience, one of the core democratic rights, in this document. Every person has the right to freedom of religion and conscience, but the government also has a responsibility to ensure that "equality of citizens before the law, which is itself an element of the common good, is never violated, whether openly or covertly, for religious reasons," according to the declaration¹⁶ 16. As a result, the text presented a different perspective from prior Church writings like the Syllabus of Errors and the *Mirari Vos*, demonstrating the Church's more progressive and democratic stance on religious freedom.

Gaudium et Spes, often known as the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, was the second equally significant document issued by the Second Vatican Council. While this agreement did defend other liberties including the freedom of speech, association, and opinion, it also reaffirmed the significance of religious freedom. The Pastoral Constitution specifically advocated for "those who think or act differently than we do in social, political, and even religious matters¹⁷" to be treated with more respect and tolerance.

Furthermore, the statement commended the governments that have "national procedures which allows the largest possible number of citizens to participate in public affairs with genuine freedom"

¹⁶ 16 *Dignitatis Humanae*. Declaration on Religious Freedom by Pope Paul VI, 1965.

http://www.vatican.va/archivelhist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vatii_decl_19651207_dignitatis-h~ae_en.html.

¹⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 1965.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vatii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

and denounced authoritarian forms of government. The foundational text that demonstrated the Catholic Church's support for democracy was¹⁸ *Gaudium et Spes*¹⁹. As a result, the Second Vatican Council's teachings obligated the Catholic Church to uphold some essential human rights, which form the basis of contemporary democracy.

Though many academics view the Second Vatican Council as the turning point in Catholic doctrine from anti-democratic to more progressive social teachings, it is nevertheless possible to argue that some early Church writings support democratic norms and human rights. *Rerum Novarum*, written by Pope Leo XIII, was one of the earliest progressive writings published by the Catholic Church and was first published in 1891. Given the era, the encyclical openly endorsed worker protection from exploitation, which was a radical move²⁰.

Moreover, the Papal document argued that "public administration must duly and solicitously provide for the welfare and the comfort of the working classes."²¹ Thus, *Rerum Novarum* was the first step taken by the Church towards protection of human rights. Another important action taken by the Vatican which illustrated the Church's evolving attitudes was the 1944 Christmas radio address by Pope Pius XII. In the broadcast the Pope indirectly supported democracy by acknowledging that a democratic form of governance was a system that most closely conformed to the Catholic teachings²². The two events were important examples of the Church's changing perception of the modern world.

However, the most significant Papal document prior to the Second Vatican Council which showed the Church's ability to modernize its teachings was the 1963 encyclical of Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*. The encyclical was an illustration of the Church's shift towards a stronger endorsement of human rights and democracy. *Pacem in Terris* identified a number of individual rights that should be universally protected. For instance, these rights included, but were not limited to,

the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services. In consequence, he [an individual] has the right to be looked after in the event of ill health; disability stemming from his work; widowhood; old age; enforced

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Paul Sigmund, "The Catholic Tradition and Modern Democracy." *The Review of Politics*. Vol. 49 no 4 (Fall 1987), 545.

²⁰ Bryan Hehir, "Religious Activism for Human Rights: A Christian Case Study." *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Religious Perspective*. Ed. J. Witte and J. van der Vyver. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers (1996), 100-1.

²¹ *Rerum Novarum*. Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labour, 1891. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hCI-xiii_enc_15051891_rerumnovarum_en.htm!

²² Paolo Pombeni, "The Ideology of Christian Democracy." *Journal of Political Ideologies*. Vol. 5 no 3 (2000), 297.

unemployment; or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood²³.

In addition, *Pacem in Terris* argued in support of political rights such as freedom of speech, publication and association as well as the right to be able to speak against coercive governments²⁴. The text acknowledged that some forms of government were better than others even while it did not support any particular political system. For instance, the paper said that citizens should have the freedom to freely engage in government and that the government should have a certain structure, such as "a threefold division of public office properly corresponding to the three main functions of public authority"²⁵. Therefore, these instances show that the Church further contested the notion that democracy was unlikely to thrive in Catholic countries by advancing human rights and democracy in a number of its papers and declarations prior to the Second Vatican Council.

Few, if any, academics today would argue that Catholicism stands in the way of democracy. Rather, many would contend that a religion's compatibility with democracy is determined by its practices rather than by particular theological doctrines". Any form of belief, whether sacred or secular, is incompatible with democracy if it claims that the ultimate truth for society lies in some superior and esoteric knowledge that is beyond question by the uninitiated, and to which political authority must be subject,²⁶" David Beetham, for example, proposed. Therefore, as long as the prevailing religious organizations do not hold to absolutism, any religion may coexist with democracy. The idea that the religious incompatibility thesis could be effectively refuted in the case of Catholicism is reinforced by recent teachings from the Church, which emphasize that the Church "respects the legitimate autonomy of the democratic order and is not entitled to express preferences for this or that institutional or constitutional solution"²⁷."

Accordingly, having determined that our case studies were not disadvantaged because of their predominantly Catholic identification, the remainder of this section will focus on the conduct of church-state relations in democratic states. More specifically, the debate will attempt to determine the extent to which religious institutions should be separated from the state in a democratic system.

²³ *Pacem in Terris*. Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty; 1963. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/jobn_xxiii/encyclicals/documents/hfjxxiii_enc_11041963/lacem_en.html.

²⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁶ David Beetham, *Democracy and Human Rights*. Polity Press (1999), 81. See also: Samuel Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 2 no 2 (Spring 1991),22-30.

²⁷ *Centesimus Annus*. Encyclical of Pope John n, 1991. [http://www.vatican.va/engdocs/ENG0214/~P7.HTM#\\$2L](http://www.vatican.va/engdocs/ENG0214/~P7.HTM#$2L).

In the following discussion different theories on church-state relations will be presented in an effort to establish a basic framework against which democratic progress in the newly democratic states could be assessed.

There is a wide range of perspectives on how the church and state should interact. Some theories support a theocratic system of government, while others argue for a total separation of the state and religious institutions. Nonetheless, a number of academics have contended recently that democracy and theocracy were not entirely compatible. Within the present discourse, the term secularism denotes an absolute division between religious establishments and the government, whereas theocracy can be characterized as a "combination of political and religious authority under religious supervision"²⁸. Theorists like Alfred Stepan and Cole Durham contend that preserving democracy and maximizing religious liberty may require some level of state-church cooperation.

Alfred Stepan contends that because religious organizations play a significant role in civil society, their influence cannot be fully divorced from the public domain. Stepan proposed the '**Twin Tolerations**' theory, which suggests that collaboration between the state and the church would be necessary. Thus, Stepan proposes that "minimum limits on freedom of action... have to be developed in some way for religious leaders and political institutions"²⁹, as well as for religious individuals and organizations." The 'dual toleration' idea supports complete religious liberty but states that "religious institutions should not have constitutionally privileged prerogatives which allow them authoritatively to mandate public policy to democratically elected government"³⁰. Thus, the idea that secularism is required in a democratic government is contested by Stepan's argument on religious liberty. Conversely, Stepan contends that "secularism and the separation of church and state can be closely associated with nondemocratic forms, but they have no intrinsic affinity with democracy"³¹.

Cole Durham's analysis of church-state relations reinforces a number of Stepan's conclusions. Durham argues that both secularism and theocracy are problematic because "in both situations, the state adopts a sharply defined attitude towards one or more religions, leaving little room for dissenting views"³². Durham refers to the example of Stalinist constitutions to demonstrate the problem of secularism. As illustrated by history, the strict secularism imposed by the communist

²⁸ Alfred Stepan, "The World's Religious Systems and Democracy: Crafting the "Twin Tolerations." *Arguing Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2001),224-225.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 213.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 217.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 223.

³² Cole Durham. "Perspectives on Religious Liberty: A Comparative Framework." *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Legal Perspective*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers (1996),18.

system reduced rather than enhanced religious freedom³³. Therefore, Durham suggests that an '*accommodationist*' model provides the most democratic basis for church-state relations. Specifically, the '*accommodationist*' model promotes separation between religious institutions and the state but simultaneously it recognizes the "importance of religion as part of national or local culture, accommodating religious symbols in public settings, allowing tax, dietary, holiday, Sabbath, and other kinds of exemptions, and so forth"³⁴. Hence, both authors argue against strict separation between church and state.

In spite of the fact that Stepan and Durham made compelling cases for collaboration between religious organizations and the state, other writers continue to uphold secularism's superiority. John Swomely, for example, claims that "the state can only be impartial and guarantee equally the liberty of all religious organizations when it is secular"³⁵. But the non-religious model adopted in the United States is an anomaly rather than a rule."

Peter Danchin rightly points out that the American notion of religious freedom diverges from that of international laws on human rights. Various international documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, identify freedom of conscience and religion to be a fundamental human right; however, as argued by Danchin, these laws do not invoke the necessity of separation between religion and the state³⁶. A review of church-state policies in many established democracies reveals that most states do not adhere to the principle of secularism. Instead, one could make the argument that the notion of religious neutrality was far from the norm in many democratic states, especially in Europe³⁷.

A number of prominent Western European countries with firmly entrenched democratic forms of government provide some type of recognition to their dominant religious institutions. One of the most obvious examples of this phenomenon could be found in the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom, which is often considered to be one of the pillars of democracy, has an established church. The Church of England continues to play an active role in the British public sphere. For

³³ Ibid., 19.

³⁴ Ibid., 21.

³⁵ John Swomley, *Religious Liberty and the Secular State*. Buffalo: Prometheus Books (1987), 13-14.

³⁶ Peter Danchin, "Religion, Religious Minorities and Human Rights." In *Protecting Human Rights of Religious Minorities in Eastern Europe*. Ed. Peter Danchin and Elizabeth Cole. New York: Columbia University Press (2002), II.

³⁷ " John Madeley, "European Liberal Democracy and the Principle of State Religious Neutrality." *West European Politics*. Vol. 26 no I (January 2003), 18.

instance, twenty-five seats in the House of Lords were reserved for the Church bishops³⁸. Similarly, in Germany the state has also made certain accommodations for the country's main religious institutions.

Specifically, the German government collects religious taxes as well as substantially subsidizes its Catholic and Protestant Churches³⁹. Even France, which claims a strict separation between church and state, indirectly supports religious activities. For example, the French state provides funding for teachers' salaries in Catholic schools as well as it supports church personnel in hospitals, prisons and the army⁴⁰. But the Netherlands provided the most unexpected illustration of the role that religion continues to play in public life. Even though the Netherlands is among the most progressive countries in the world, the Dutch government nonetheless provides significant financial support for denominational schools and other church-related initiatives⁴¹. These instances show that, in practice, a sizable portion of democratic nations do not ban religious organizations from society.

It is evident from the robust religious landscape in many democratic nations that the secularism principle need not be embraced by recently established democracies. Rather, the data from Western Europe shows that there are a variety of shapes that church-state interactions might take in democracies. However, consolidating democracies must ensure that every individual has complete freedom of mind and religion in order to uphold democratic principles. Furthermore, the majority religion is unable to force its ideal of the "good life" on the general populace. To fully embrace democracy, newly democratizing states must fulfill these two needs in addition to Dahl's list of fundamental structural prerequisites.

III. Conclusion

An analysis of Church-state ties indicates that the Church has contributed significantly to the advancement of democracy in various nations. The representatives of the Church took part in actions that called into question the authority of the authoritarian governments in their various countries. In the aftermath of the political shift, the Church's social stature expanded significantly due to its support for democracy. Because of this, the church hierarchy made an effort to influence public decisions in the years after democracy was established, particularly those pertaining to

³⁸ Michael Minkenberg, "The Policy Impact of Church-State Relations: Family Policy and Abortion in Britain, France and Germany." *West European Politics*. Vol. 26 no I (January 2003), 203.

³⁹ Alfred Stepan, "The World's Religious Systems and Democracy: Crafting the "Twin Tolerations." *Arguing Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (200 I), 220.

⁴⁰ Michael Minkenberg, "The Policy Impact of Church-State Relations: Family Policy and Abortion in Britain, France and Germany." *West European Politics*. Vol. 26 no I (January 2003), 204.

⁴¹ Frank Lechner, "Secularization in the Netherlands?" *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion*. Vol. 35 no 3 (1996), 258.

morals. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of the Church in influencing governmental policy differed throughout nations.

Every state allows religious education lessons to be taught in public schools. The Catholic Church dominates religious instruction in every nation, although parents have the choice to reject the curriculum if it conflicts with their personal convictions. These emerging democracies are not exceptional in this regard; many well-established democracies subsidize religious education and allow religious instruction in public schools.

A primary inference that can be made from this research is that the degree to which the Church influenced the political process during the democratic era varied depending on the national environment. Notwithstanding the Roman Catholic Church's strict international organization, the Church's actions are significantly influenced by the conditions in each individual country.

However thus far, the Church-state relations, although at times problematic, appear to be moving in the right direction. The Church attempted and to some extent was successful in imposing its vision of the 'good life' in these countries, yet the fact that the Church's political influence was challenged by democratic forces is a good indication that these states are moving in the right direction.