# Cultura politica si dezvoltare economica in Taiwan

I.Informatii generale

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## Descrierea cursului

Tranzitiile catre democratie din a doua jumatate a secolului XX au condus la crearea numarului cel mai mare de sisteme democratice in timpul cel mai scurt. Cu toate acestea, fiecare tara s-a inscris pe o anumita traiectorie, si a ajuns la un rezultat mai mult sau mai putin democratic. In Taiwan, acest profess a dus la construirea unei societati libere si echitabile, care pune pret atat pe libertatea individuala cat si pe coeziune sociala. In consecinta, studierea procesului de tranzitie catre democratie in Taiwan poate servi drept model pentru state care intampina dificultati in procesul de transformare democratica, acceptand totodata ca specificitatile istorice, sociale, culturale si politice influenteaza transormarile fiecarui regim politic in moduri singulare. Tranzitia catre democratie din Taiwan nu poate fi inteleasa fara a intelege statutul sau in political internationala, si, mai ales indelungatul conflict "rece" cu Republica Populara Chineza.

Acest curs familiarizeaza studentii cu procesul de transformare democratica din Taiwan. Astfel studentii vor dobandi cunostinte despre istoria ultimului secol in Taiwan, despre regimul autoritar si modul cum acesta a deschis calea democratizarii, despre reforma institutiilor dar si a valorilor politice din Taiwan, despre politica externa a Taiwanului si statutul sau pe scena international. Accentul va cadea pe intelegerea situatiei singulare in care se afla Taiwanul, un stat de facto suveran, dar a carui suveranitate este contestata de Republica Populara Chineza, fapt care atrage dupa sine dificultatea recunoasterii internationale a celor mai multe state.

<u>Lecturi</u>: la biblioteca FSPAC exista o sectiune destinata studiilor Taiwaneze, iar departamentul de Stiinte Politice este abonat la revista Taiwan Journal of Democracy. O lista bibligrafica este prezentata mai jos, cuprinzand lucrari de referinta pentru studentii interesati de tematica. Restul suportului de curs reprezinta un articol publicat in Studia Politica, si care discuta democratizarea din Taiwan.

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#### **Evaluare**

La sfarsitul cursului studentii vor scrie o lucrare in care vor compara cultura politica din Taiwan cu cea din alt stat care a efectuat recent tranzitia spre democrartie. Datele de sondaj pe baza carora se va face lucrarea pot fi accesate in mod gratuity de pe site-ul World Values Survey (<a href="http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp">http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp</a>). Lucrarea va avea 3-5 pagini (la un rand jumate, si font TNR 12) si va cuprinde o ipoteza, o scurta sectiune de revizuire a literaturii de specialitate, si analiza datelor de sondaj accesibile la adresa de web de mai sus.

# Democracy and Religion in Taiwan. The Testing of a Model.

# Bogdan Radu

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#### Abstract

In this paper I am analyzing the relationship between religion and democracy in Taiwan, by putting it in comparative perspective. Previous findings indicate that in the new democracies o Central and Eastern Europe, religious participation has an effect on the formation of democratic political culture at the individual level. However, this effect is not contingent upon denomination, but rather every national historical, political, cultural and social context determines whether church going is a worthwhile activity for the development of a civic citizenry. By combining quantitative and qualitative data, I assess the applicability of this model on the non-Christian case that is Taiwan. My results suggest that church going in Taiwan is conducive to gathering civic skills, and different denominations are found to collaborate in order to deepen democratic development.

According to the English version of the *Pravda* newspaper, the Russian Orthodox Church is the largest importer of spirits and cigarettes countrywide. Due to its tax-free status, granted by successive post-Soviet governments, the Orthodox Church became a lucrative "corporation", facilitating the sale of "non-Orthodox" goods. The same newspaper appreciates that the future may also bring a monopoly over wine imports. Across the ocean, American political scientists research the significant potential of churches in creating democratic behavior and civic skills. They report that Christian congregations in the United States are veritable creators of democratic attitudes and civic skills. In Taiwan, one can book an intensive Buddhist meditation session in the heart of Taipei, for those professionals that, due to their hectic schedule, do not manage to escape the vibrant city.

Evidently, religion, and its institutionalized form - the church, are facing challenger everywhere, and they seem to meet them with flexibility.

In this paper, I analyze the relationship between religion and democracy in Taiwan, and compare the results with data from the new democracies, in Central and Eastern Europe. More specifically, I evaluate whether churches as organized forms of religion represent an arena for democratization, in terms of learning civic skills. The more general question I am trying to answer is the following: Does going to church make one a better democratic citizen?

I do not attempt to offer a final account of the relationship between religion and democracy, but merely some evidence in support of a contextual understanding of the ways in which churches contribute to democratic consolidation. Samuel Huntington in his Clash of Civilization stated that democracy will spread as far as Western Christianity, so I test his hypothesis in parts of the world that he would have not presumed fit for democracy. In so doing, I also suggest that positivist quantitative data seems to explain best the relationship between religion and democracy when complimented with qualitative data, and more contextual approaches.

On the one hand, Central and Eastern Europe has been under scholars' lenses for more than a decade now, but the focus tends to fall on either of two preferred sub regions: Central Europe (comprising Poland, the Czech and Slovak republics, Hungary and Slovenia) or Russia and its former republics. Cross-sub-regional studies are harder to come by, and Romania, Bulgaria and Albania are under-represented (Tucker, 2002).

On the other hand, East Asia has also been part of the analysis on democratic transitions, albeit as a separate region, characterized by the so-called Asian values (Fukuyama, 1992).

The argument for cross regional research is many folded. Indeed, Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics share more differences than similarities. Language patterns, ethnicities, forms of government and social and political pasts differ. Their histories include a wide range of political entities from Imperial Russia, to independent Romanian pre-state organizations, to

Ottoman dominated Bulgaria and to the Austrian Hungarian monarchy. As difficult as comparisons across Central and Eastern Europe may be, at least three commonalities justify the effort. First, all the countries in the region have a communist past. Second, all the countries were part of imperial powers. Third, democratization has been undertaken in each and every country. Pre-communist and communist pasts are relevant factors in explaining democratic outcomes (Ekiert, 1991). Taiwan, as a term of comparison in this respect may seem, indeed, far fetched. However, when one considers that Taiwan is a new democracy, that it is a medium sized country, and that it has its history of imperial colonization, with the ensuing unclear sovereign status, a comparative analysis including Taiwan and countries from Central and Eastern Europe is not all that impossible.

According to the majority of "international assessors of democracy", Central Europe consists of consolidated market economies and democracies, while Eastern Europe, Russia and the former Soviet Republics are still in transition (Freedom House, USAID). Taiwan on the other hand, together with South Korea, are considered the forerunners of democratization within the third wave. What causes differences in political performance? Comparative studies are specifically design to answer these types of question, and this is what I attempt in this paper.

I explore whether religious denominations and church attendance patterns influence the creation of political democratic culture at the level of the society. In other words, I am asking whether being part of a particular church and participating in its activities makes one a more engaged citizen. More engaged citizen, or civic citizen, or democratic citizen, for a lack of better terms, is a person within a democratic political system that is actively participating in the democratic game, either by participating politically, or being an active member of the civil society, or even holding political values that attest his or her commitment to democracy. What it means to be a civic citizen is however conditioned by available data, and although in comparative research cross-regional data may be hard to obtain, heavy reliance on functional equivalence is not improper.

Therefore, I test two alternative hypotheses. First, I ask whether particular denominations influence its confidants' attitudes and behaviors in similar ways. This hypothesis is labeled

"essentialist", since it posits a strong connection between strands of religious thought and particular political outcomes. It is a determinist hypothesis, that does not allow for much variation within religious denominations, and that crosses national borders with a Huntingtonian eagerness. Second, I posit a "contextualist" hypothesis that allows for different religions to evolve differently in different political, cultural and social contexts. I argue that while essentialism can be tested against empirical evidence in a traditional positivist fashion, contextualism needs in-depth qualitative data

The structure of the paper is as follows. First, I am offering a brief theoretical basis for the relationship between religion and citizens' democracy in transitioning countries. Second, I am discussing the results of my research in Central and Eastern Europe and then, I am testing the model that ensued at the outset of the comparative Central and Eastern European study against empirical quantitative and qualitative data from Taiwan. Third, I am discussing the conclusion of my analysis and avenues for further research.

## Constitutions, voting booths and altars

The connection between transitions to democracy, church involvement and political participation is not obvious. Transitions to democracy imply both institutional choices and the response of the population to these new institutions. Institutional choices are easier and more controllable processes than the rooting of these institutions. As an illustrative example, Taagepera (2003) analyzes the process of choosing electoral rules for democracies in transition, and he concludes that, after reinventing the wheel, every country ends up with a variation of an already extant system. The previous example illustrates the fact that institutional choices have a limited range of variation, while the correlative process of rooting them in the national post-authoritarian context can have endless outcomes. Lijphart(1996), Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1995), Mainwarring (1992, 1997) are just a few authors that researched transitions from an institutional point of view.

In consolidated democracies, the response of the population reflects aspects of democratic political culture such as political participation and behaviors. Successful transitions need political participation, and political participation in transitional countries requires mobilization and

recruitment effort, due to the lack of democratic political culture hindered by an authoritarian regime.

Among mobilizing factors, religion and churches can mobilize citizens politically, and thus contribute to the creation of both a consolidated democracy and democratic culture.

Democratic regimes depend on political participation for their validation and for the mere functioning of the regime. In addition to the heavy accent placed on participation per se, democracy also requires particular forms of political participation: voting (Duch, 1993) and the open discussion of the polity's problems (Barnes, 2001). It also requires party identification, a form of political engagement that is often a close precursor of participation. In addition, political participation is usually measured by degree of involvement in political issues, ranging from voting to participation in protests and identification with a political party. However, these measurements do not speak by themselves about civic skills. Are the people participating because they feel empowered and have already developed civic skills, or are they merely recruited by a powerful agent? This question gives rise to a discussion of civil society. In established democracies, civil society is one of the main political mobilizers (Verba et al. 1995). What is its role in democratizing countries?

## Civil society and successful democratization

Civil society is a necessary complement for democracy. Building on DeTocqueville's observations of 19th century American voluntary associations, civil society comprises all the participatory aspects of the society that are not specifically political and are outside the state sphere. It is the key concept that characterizes current discourses on democratization. People outside of government getting together and solving problems is the necessary attribute of every consolidating democracy. Expanding on DeTocqueville's observations, Robert Putnam (1993, 2000) developed the concept of social capital, as the most useful resource that a good civil society has, and hence revived the term.

Civil society is usually connected with associationalism (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1997). Multiple non-governmental organizations that determine split loyalties and overlapping identities are at the base of American pluralism. However, Cohen and Arato (1994) qualify the term, and ask what

is the probability of seeing multiple groups in Central and Eastern Europe as compared to cases of consolidated democracies. Carothers (1999) explains that foreign imported associations, or associational ideas do not grow roots in Central and Eastern Europe because there is no tradition for them. In addition, Kaldor and Vajvoda (1997) explain that civil society is a more familiar term for some countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Hungary, Slovakia and, in the late 80s, Poland becomes the epitome of civil society through the Solidarity movement) while the rest are not familiar with the concept. Ekiert (1991) also asserts that the breakdown of the communist regime created a dramatic decrease in popularity and authority of both state and civil society, and resulted in apathy.

Even if Putnam is offering fairly detailed recipes for a flourishing civil society that will benefit the democratic polity, different countries follow these recipes differently, according to their respective historical, social and cultural contexts. It is thus important to focus on the effect on civic skills and political participation from those organizations that actually seem to fare better after the breakdown of the communist regime in terms of popularity and participation rates.

The triad democratization-participation-church reflects an ongoing debate about political culture and political participation that will be the last point of this section. Does democracy require democratic political culture, or is it that democratic political culture is created by the democratic regime? Is church participation the link or the deterrent for successful creation of political culture and democracy? Almond and Verba (1963) and Inglehart (1990) are advocates of the first approach. Democratic political culture manifested as civic beliefs and participatory acts conditions democratic development. This is a culturalist thesis that asserts the necessary priority of democratic values before democratization occurs. Following this thesis, the countries in Central and Eastern Europe have fairly bleak prospects for democratic consolidation, due to their communist experience: "One of the worst legacies of authoritarian rule is the lingering de-politicization of the population, where political involvement was confined to obligatory channels (and thus discredited) or else forbidden" (Barnes, 2001: 99). Even after the communist regime breaks down, people's perception of mandatory meaningless political participation can be a lingering influence. The second argument is clearly

developed in Muller and Seligson (1994). They turn the culturalist thesis on its head when they state that civic beliefs are not the prerequisite of a democratic regime, but rather, they are created and developed by a democratic regime. They clearly maintain that, at least in the case of interpersonal trust, the regime can be the creator of this quality.

There is no final agreement between the two camps, and much research is conducted along both lines. I believe that the two models are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Democratic regimes need democratic values in order to consolidate, and, in turn, they reproduce democratic values themselves. In other words, every institution emerges from a cultural context but continually affects the context as well. I maintain that civil society can be the main agent of creating democratic attitudes and behaviors. Instead of focusing on the effect of civil society as a whole on political participation per se, I take a more pragmatic approach and focus on the effect of churches, as the most "populated" area of civil society in Central and Eastern Europe.

#### The Civic Volunteerism Model

The literature on determinants of political participation emphasizes resources. Citizens with more resources tend to participate more. Socio-economic status (SES) is the primary determinant of political participation: higher income, a better social status, and more education all lead to increased participation. SES, as developed by Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) however, does not tell the full story. Their base line is indeed the socio-economic status model, and, while they identify the potential of engagement and recruitment, they do not fully specify them. The role of civil society needs to be addressed. The Civic Volunteerism Model (CVM), developed by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) allows us to account for the mobilizing role of the civil society. The CVM asserts that tangible resources are not the only predictors of political participation. Political engagement and civic skills also increase political participation. Engagement is constituted by those positive beliefs and attitudes towards democracy coupled with feelings of personal political empowerment and efficacy. Civic skills are practices and experiences that familiarize individuals with the political game, and its rules of play. Writing a petition, organizing a campaign, even voting makes more sense if it is practiced.

The authors show that participation in non-political organizations, such as unions, voluntary organizations, churches and the workplace, creates a familiarity with the ways organizations function and give the individual a feeling of efficacy, while routinizing her in the structures of organizational functioning.

Specifically in the case of churches, Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) explain that they have the benefit of eliminating resource driven inequalities apparent in the American system. Racial minorities especially, find the church an empowering arena. To be sure, the authors warn that not all churches have the same impact on creating civic skills. Protestant churches, for example, are better at empowering citizens since they are focused on more discussion and participatory practices. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, is not such an effective civic skills builder, due to its strictly hierarchical organization. Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) do not explain in detail the effect of a particular religion/denomination on its political potential.

I find one major problem with the CVM model, which lies in the authors' inability to deal with the limitations of the model imposed by the internal culture of the church. Richard Wood (1999) asserts the causal autonomy of culture and states that the internal political culture of the church is formed from its cultural strategy and its cultural base. He argues that political science and social movement literatures do not address the critical issue of church's internal structure in both limiting and affecting its effect on civic skills building.

The cultural base of a church represents those segments of participants' cultural terrain that the church appeals to, those common unifying traits of the population that offers the legitimizing base for the church's actions. The cultural strategy indicates what part of community life the organization will draw upon. These two factors lead to the formation of an internal political culture, made up of shared assumptions, perceptions and symbols that facilitate the understanding of the surrounding world. The political culture affects the projection of social power and the ability to shape the public realm.

Wood (1999) details the challenges that churches face in their formation and preservation of internal political culture. Wood's approach is designed for the pluralist religious space existing in the United States. His announced goal was to determine the effectiveness of church participation in the representation of minorities. So part of his analysis will not apply to cases of dominant religion or even state religion. The overall framework, though, is useful. Cultural base and cultural strategy carry meaning when applied outside the North-American context.

Wood's model can be used to amend the Civic Volunteerism Model. Verba et al. (1995) discuss the difference between Catholic and Protestant churches in assisting the citizens to develop civic skills. Because of the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church, these skills are not so easily acquired, in comparison to Protestant Churches. Wood (1999) develops a more general and useful way to conceptualize and study the different influence of different denomination on political attitudes, beliefs and behaviors.

The CVM holds the assumption that initial religious motivations are converted into civic skills. This assumption underlines the presence of two consecutive conversions. First, the religious motivations that prompt a person to go to the church are converted into a process of learning civic skills. Second, once these civic skills are learnt, they are subsequently converted into political participation. Wood's analysis addresses the institutional aspect of these assumptions: initial religious motivations are converted into civic skills and then into political participation in accordance with the internal political culture of the church. In addition to this aspect, there is also an individual volitional aspect, namely the intention of the individual to perform this series of conversions.

In the next section, I make a distinction between various denominations and countries, in order to control for the variation imposed by each church's internal political culture. The two alternative hypotheses are the following. First, there is the denominational hypothesis: individual denominations have the same uniform impact on political participation, independent of the context. Second, there is the contextual hypothesis: churches function differently depending on their contexts, and so one can see within denomination variation.

# Results of the Central and Eastern European study - testing against evidence from Taiwan

The research conducted on countries in Central and Eastern Europe disconfirmed the essentialist thesis and made way for a more nuanced and contextualized understanding of the relationship between religion and democracy in countries effectuating transition and consolidation. While essentialist hypotheses stated that democracy will spread insofar as Western Christianity, my results show that the ways in which churches can affect democratization are not in fact dependent on denomination. Hence, while in Romania, the Orthodox Church is an efficient political recruiter, that mobilizes people to vote, only because it has a preference towards the party that is placed more towards the socialist end of the specter, in Bulgaria, the Orthodox Church does not play any role, and in the Baltic countries the Orthodox Church became a true democratic player, by creating an arena for advocating rights of the Russian minority. Similarly, in Albania, the muslim churches are also effective arenas for learning civic skills, since muslim church goers are also active civic citizens that participate in the political game, and record high level of political interest and engagement.

In Taiwan, there is available research that correlated religious denomination and participation with political participation, and found that Presbyterian and Buddhist believers and church goers are more politically engaged. Presbyterian believers and church goers are also at the forefront of defending liberal values and minority rights protection. Therefore, my own quantitative analysis is geared more towards the effect that being part of a particular denomination and participating in its activities has on the development of the civic citizen (understood as the citizen that is active within civil society).

The survey data is part of the Taiwan Social Change Survey, conducted by the Academia Sinica. While in this paper I am only using the 2004 wave of the survey, data is available for several years, and time series analyses would greatly complement my analysis. The qualitative data, consisting of in-depth interviews, I gathered myself as part of a Taiwan Foundation for Democracy visiting fellowship in the summer of 2006. I am greatly grateful to them for offering me this opportunity.

# **Quantitative Data**

The Taiwan Social Change Survey includes numerous measures of religiosity and religious participation, and a few political attitudes measures. The analysis contains a brief description of levels of religiosity and church attendance in Taiwan, and also popular attitudes towards secularization. In order to test the effect of religious denomination and participation on civic measures, I am using variables that measure involvement in civil society, as both financial donations and voluntary work.

Table 1 shows the denominational distribution. Interestingly, almost 33% of the sample declare themselves as having no religion. However, in Taiwan, religious identification does not have to be as highly specific as in Christian countries, and a person can be a believer without actually belonging to any denomination. This assertion benefits from support in tables 2 and 3, which detail patterns of church attendance and levels of religiosity (measured as answers to the question as to whether a particular respondent feels that he or she is a devout believer). The image that these tables convey is one that is highly apparent in most post industrial societies. While only 20% of the sample go to church several times a month or more often, more than 60% of the sample consider themselves devout believers. Post industrial societies record the same pattern of religious activity, with religion becoming a highly privatized matter. Table 4 plots the relationship between denomination and church attendance, and shows that within every religion, church attendance is not a widespread phenomenon, except for the Presbyterian Church, that shows almost 60% of their believers also participating to

service more than once a month. This is also an expected result since the Presbyterian Church is an institution that places high emphasis on structure and church identification.

In order to properly assess levels of religiosity and attitudes towards secularization in Taiwan, I am offering more evidence. Table 5-8 thus show the answers to four questions measuring secularization in Taiwan. It is interesting that 48.8% of respondents believe that schools should offer religious training, 64.2% believe that politicians could be religiously involved, and almost 60% believe that the more people are involved in religious matters, the more peaceful a society would be. On the other hand, almost 50% believe that people should not believe in demons and gods, since their existence cannot be demonstrated. If one looks beyond the scope of this paper, would find Taiwan as a rather religious country, with religion however manifesting itself differently than in Europe or the United States. There is a very strong connection between religion, superstition, supernatural and tradition, which does not stand true about the Christian churches of the West.

Tables 9 - 11 measure degree of support for both religious and secular activities and it is used as a measure of the strength of civil society in Taiwan. While almost 55% of the sample mentioned making donations to churches or religious organizations, only 23.8% made donations to other groups within the society, and a mere 9.9% mentioned being involved in any type of voluntary work. While these numbers are low in comparison to post-industrial democracies, they are comparable with values found in transitioning democracies of Central and Eastern Europe.

Tables 12 - 14 analyze in more depth the determinants of involvement within the civil society. In other words, I want to find out if churches in Taiwan are true arenas for the development of civil society and so I assess whether being part of a particular religion, being a believer and actually participating in the activities of that religion makes one a more civic citizen (measured as donations to religious and non-religious organizations and groups, and also as voluntary work). These tables are outputs of logistic regression analysis, with three different dependent variables: donations for secular organizations, donations for religious organizations and voluntary work. Regression analysis measures the separate effect that each independent variable has on the dependent variable, while

keeping the other independent variables constant. Therefore, socio-economic variables have been included, in order to be able to better measure the impact of religious variables. The socio economic variables are education, income and gender. The religious variables are church attendance, religiosity (measured by one's perception as a believer or not), and each denominational group (Buddhist, Taoist, catholic, and protestant).

Table 12 shows that donations to secular groups are made by people with higher income and education, and also more so by males than females. This finding is highly consistent with findings in other democracies, since education and income usually make someone more prone to participating in the civil society. The interesting results are played out by the church attendance variable that seems to affect in a positive way donations to secular groups. While it is commonsensical to observe a correlation between church attendance and religious donations, the fact that church going is also affecting donations to non religious groups clearly indicates the positive effect that church going has on citizens' civicness. The impact of every religious denomination is mixed and rather insignificant, meaning that irrespective of denomination, people that are church goers are also more prone to donate money to secular groups. It is this result that disconfirms the essentialist hypothesis: going to church affects civicness without a clear denominational effect; going to church makes one a more engaged citizen, but to what church one is going is not important.

Table 13 replicates the analysis but has as dependent variable donations for churches. The difference is that education now does not play an important role, but income and gender play the same roles. Once again, church attendance is positively correlated with donations, and also being a devout believer makes one more prone to giving money to religious organizations. Similarly, denomination does not play a part. The fact that education does not play an important role as an independent variable shows that less educated people are also not civically engaged. The idea is that going to church makes one a better citizen, but more educated individuals are still more prone to be better citizens.

Finally, table 14 measures the effect of the same set of independent variables on voluntary involvement. Interestingly education stops playing a part, with gender and income playing the same roles as above. Religious denomination does not play a role, while being a believer and a churchgoer again play important roles. Indeed, being a churchgoer is the one most important independent variable for explaining voluntary work. This finding correlated with the findings from tables 6 and 7 suggest clearly that church going is one factor that makes people more engaged citizens, and strengthens civil society.

In Taiwan, like in Central and Eastern Europe, the effect of church going, and, more broadly religious participation, has on measures of political participation and civil society involvement, is not conditioned by religious denomination. The model that I developed for new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe thus stands against empirical evidence from a non Christian East Asian new democracy. The research question that originates in this findings is the following: How can one account for the fact that going to church makes one a better citizen, while churches are different in both doctrine, organization, structure and handling of on religious matters. I argue that this finding is explained by a phenomenon of institutional mimetism that is prevalent among churches in Taiwan, to which I now turn.

#### Qualitative Data

Statistical modeling is but one way of analyzing correlations between variables. Quantitative data, while highly generalizable, does not take into account political, social, historical and cultural context that only qualitative data can measure. Therefore, I am complementing my previous findings with a more in-depth analysis of church, state and society relationships in Taiwan, both before transition to democracy, and during consolidation.

Because my interest was heavily on how churches constitute an arena for democratization in Taiwan, most of the interviews have been conducted with members of church leadership. One interview was realized at the Ministry of the Interior, in order to grasp the relationship between church and state in Taiwan. The rest have been conducted with members of Presbyterian and

Catholic Churches, and the representative of one Buddhist organization. Difficult access to Buddhist organizations make the results of my research somewhat limited, although members of Christian Churches also kindly accepted to talk to me about the influence of Buddhist churches.

The position of the Taiwanese state is one of clear separation from religion, in terms of funding. Churches and temples are self sufficient financially. However, my respondent at the Ministry of the Interior told me that in reality the situation is not really that clear, and that there are still cases of political figures associating themselves with a particular denomination, as a symbolic gesture, in order to attract more votes. In turn, some denominations make public their support of such and such candidate (this assertion can be confirmed with evidence presented in table 6).

Several interesting results have come out of these interviews, and they will be presented groups under common headings. First, whether the church is a defendant of democracy or not seems to be affected by that church's position during the authoritarian regime and during transition. Therefore, the Presbyterian Church, always at the forefront of democratization, became the most active promoter of deepening democracy in Taiwan. The Presbyterian Church has been one of the most vocal opponents of the authoritarian regime, and actively opposed it. During these decades, members of the Presbyterian Church have been imprisoned and suffered the repression of the state, only to promote in more ways their attachment to democracy. The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan managed to oppose the authoritarian regime only because of its extensive international network of churches, in a context in which the Taiwanese regime did not want to attract reproaches from consolidated western democracies. Repeated manifestos for freedom have been put forth by the Presbyterian Church during the 70s and 80s and the population became more and more aware of their presence and pro democratic stance. This finding is another confirmation compatible with established wisdom according to which protestant churches are natural allies for liberal democracy: "it is our faith in freedom". Consequently, one would expect the much smaller Catholic Church in Taiwan to play a significant pro democratic role, especially if one takes into account their oppositional stance in Poland during the communist reign. However, the Catholic Church did not become a defender of democracy during the authoritarian regime, and the explanation resides in its hierarchical structure and highly formalized decision making mechanisms: the Catholic Church arrived in Taiwan from mainland China, with most KMT members being Catholic. Therefore, during the authoritarian regime, the leaders of the Catholic Church were also important members of the KMT, and support for its policies was thus guaranteed. This, however, did not preclude other members of the Catholic Church to form a separate group that started opposing the support that their institution was granting to the authoritarian regime. Buddhist churches have been rather silent during the authoritarian regime, because of their outer worldly view, and also because of their recognition by the state. Buddhist organizations did not have traditionally a social mission, and they have been satisfied to be allowed by the authoritarian regime to exist, and thus focused on religious matters.

Accordingly, the Presbyterian Church became a very visible political actor during transition to democracy, pushing the democratic government towards more liberal democracy in Taiwan. While this can be traced to its Western sources, the Prebyterian Church having strong affiliation to Western Europe and North America, at the present moment it has mostly Taiwanese staff and is financially independent from its transnational hierarchy. Moreover, the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church is a fierce advocate for human rights around the world. The Catholic Church slowly changed its leadership, and the new hierarchy recognizes the importance of democratic ideals. However, their number of believers decreased dramatically after the fall of the authoritarian regime (probably because of the perceived support that the Catholic Church was offering to it). In conclusion, one interesting finding is the fact that the ways churches affect democratization in Taiwan is highly dependent on the ways in which they survived and acted before transition to democracy.

Another interesting factor is the Buddhist revival once democracy got under way. There are a multitude of Buddhist temples, their membership raises continuously, and there is tough competition between them. According to Finke and Stark (1998), the revival itself can be triggered by the fierce competition that pressures each streak of Buddhism to make itself more appealing to the population. Like I mentioned before, Buddhist did not have a history of involvement into social life, being more

focused on outer worldly matters. However, after the installation of democracy, Buddhism in Taiwan became a very active member of civil society. While some organizations are only focusing on the poor and disadvantaged, others have a widely diverse social mission, that includes education, health services, natural disaster emergency organizations, that spread internationally, and it is not uncommon to have a Taiwanese Buddhist temple that has branches in the United States, Europe and the rest of Asia. Therefore, Buddhism seemed to be one religion that recognized the need to change once the political regime changed, and, taking as example pre-existing Christian churches and their social mission, started a process of institutional mimetism that led to the flourishing of Buddhist social services.

The third interesting finding of my interviews is the Presbyterian Church constant pressure on the Taiwanese regime for further democratization. The Presbyterian Church is the most vocal defender of human rights in Taiwan it is representing the indigenous population, and constructed itself as their active agency. Additionally, the church is also defending the rights of illegal immigrants, it protects the safety of women immigrants, and it offers programs for the elderly. With Taiwan changing economically and politically at a high pace, the traditional family ties that guaranteed senior's respect and care, there are older people completely left alone and in need for assistance. The Presbyterian Church is also a strong defendant of Taiwan's independence from Mainland China.

The fourth and last interesting finding is the preoccupation with ecumenism. Buddhist, Protestant and even Catholic churches are collaborating in order to better fulfill their social mission. It is my understanding that Buddhist organizations started this trend of inter-church collaboration in social service provision, and even more self oriented churches such as the Catholic Church now is part of these efforts. However, this tendency towards ecumenism can also be triggered by the eclecticism of the population, that can pick and choose religions that fit their creeds the best, and so it is not uncommon for a Taiwanese believer to attend Catholic mass one Sunday and then pray in a Taoist Temple.

One last word about churches and their input into Taiwan's democratization: the competing and also sometimes complementary social services offered by the different churches in Taiwan are causing a true relief for the state that knows that churches are accomplishing a lot in health, education and welfare. Therefore, as of late, the state started to informally recognize the input of the church in these matters, and started a program of grants that churches can apply for, and which are not difficult to obtain given the credibility that the churches have built over time.

#### Conclusion

This is exploratory research. The relationship between religion and democracy is yet one to be grasped by researchers and policy makers alike. Its complexity, dynamism and contextuality are difficult to measure and assess.

I have analyzed the effect that church going has on citizens of new democracies. At the outset I assumed that going to church may have an effect on citizens' political attitudes and behaviors, on the way they participate in politics, or in the sphere of civil society. The results of previous research on countries in Central and Eastern Europe show that there is no particular pattern of church going influence on political attitudes and behaviors along denominational lines Essentialist hypotheses have not been confirmed, and the same denominations and seem to influence their confidants differently according to national, and sometimes even sub-national/regional political, historical, social ad cultural context.

The same stands true for non-Christian case that is Taiwan. Quantitative and qualitative research shows that church going and, more generally, religious participation, serves as an arena for democratization.

The research topic that I focused on in this paper is one that needs more attention from scientists, especially in the context of heightened religious conflict around the world. I would urge for interdisciplinary research, and fruitful collaboration of social scientists from political science, sociology, psychology, religion and anthropology. Additionally, research should combine

quantitative and qualitative research, and admit the importance of context when studying the relationship between religion and democracy.

# <u>Tables</u>

**Table 1 Denominational distribution** 

**DENOM** 

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	390	20.7	32.6	32.6
	1.00	450	23.9	37.6	70.1
	2.00	287	15.3	24.0	94.1
	3.00	10	.5	.8	94.9
	4.00	61	3.2	5.1	100.0
	Total	1198	63.7	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	683	36.3		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 = no religion; 1 = Buddhist; 2 = Taoist; 3 = Catholic; 4 = Protestant

Table 2 Church attendance (including temple, altar)

CHATT

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	1490	79.2	80.5	80.5
	1.00	360	19.1	19.5	100.0
	Total	1850	98.4	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	31	1.6		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 =once a month or less; 1 =several times a month or more

Table 3 Whether one considers oneself a devout believer (Do you view yourself as a devout believer?)

**BELIEVER** 

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	471	25.0	37.7	37.7
	1.00	777	41.3	62.3	100.0
	Total	1248	66.3	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	633	33.7		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 = no; 1 = yes

**Table 4 Church attendance by denomination** 

**DENOM** \* CHATT Crosstabulation

			CHA	ATT	
			.00	1.00	Total
DENOM	.00	Count	369	17	386
		% within DENOM	95.6%	4.4%	100.0%
		% within CHATT	38.4%	7.7%	32.7%
		% of Total	31.2%	1.4%	32.7%
	1.00	Count	339	101	440
		% within DENOM	77.0%	23.0%	100.0%
		% within CHATT	35.3%	45.7%	37.3%
		% of Total	28.7%	8.6%	37.3%
	2.00	Count	218	66	284
		% within DENOM	76.8%	23.2%	100.0%
		% within CHATT	22.7%	29.9%	24.0%
		% of Total	18.5%	5.6%	24.0%
	3.00	Count	9	1	10
		% within DENOM	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within CHATT	.9%	.5%	.8%
		% of Total	.8%	.1%	.8%
	4.00	Count	25	36	61
		% within DENOM	41.0%	59.0%	100.0%
		% within CHATT	2.6%	16.3%	5.2%
		% of Total	2.1%	3.0%	5.2%
Total		Count	960	221	1181
		% within DENOM	81.3%	18.7%	100.0%
		% within CHATT	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	81.3%	18.7%	100.0%

Church attendance

0 =once a month or less; 1 =several times a month or more

Denominational distribution

0 = no religion; 1 = Buddhist; 2 = Taoist; 3 = Catholic; 4 = Protestant

Table 5 Religion in school (In junior high school or elementary school, students should be taught to read some religious articles)

**RELIGSCH** 

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulativ e Percent
Valid	.00	868	46.1	48.6	48.6
	1.00	917	48.8	51.4	100.0
	Total	1785	94.9	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	96	5.1		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 = no; 1 = yes

Table 6 Politics and religion (government officials can take part in any religious activities)

#### **RELIPOL**

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	533	28.3	30.6	30.6
	1.00	1207	64.2	69.4	100.0
	Total	1740	92.5	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	141	7.5		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 = no; 1 = yes

Table 7 Secularization of values (people should not believe in gods and demons because there is no proof of their existence)

**SECULAR** 

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	934	49.7	51.8	51.8
	1.00	869	46.2	48.2	100.0
	Total	1803	95.9	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	78	4.1		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 = no; 1 = yes

Table 8 Religion and society (the more people believe in religion, the more peaceful the society will be)

**RELIGIOS** 

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	671	35.7	37.3	37.3
	1.00	1126	59.9	62.7	100.0
	Total	1797	95.5	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	84	4.5		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 = no; 1 = yes

Table 9 Religious donations (Within the past year, have you donated money to temples, monasteries, churches, or religious organizations?)

**RELIGDON** 

		_			Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	854	45.4	45.4	45.4
	1.00	1027	54.6	54.6	100.0
	Total	1881	100.0	100.0	

0 = no; 1 = yes

Table 10 Non-religious donations (Did you donate money to groups (excluding religious groups)?)

#### **SECDON**

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	1432	76.1	76.2	76.2
	1.00	448	23.8	23.8	100.0
	Total	1880	99.9	100.0	
Missing	Sy stem	1	.1		
Total		1881	100.0		

0 = no; 1 = yes

Table 11 Voluntary work (Do you do voluntary work now?)

#### **VOLUNTAR**

					Cumulativ e
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	.00	1695	90.1	90.1	90.1
	1.00	186	9.9	9.9	100.0
	Total	1881	100.0	100.0	

0 = no; 1 = yes

Table 12 logistic regression output - effect of independent variables on non-religious donations

# Variables in the Equation

		В	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step	CHATT	.441	.169	6.791	1	.009	1.554
1	EDUCAT	.404	.106	14.561	1	.000	1.498
	GENDER	417	.155	7.202	1	.007	.659
	BELIEVER	.022	.156	.019	1	.890	1.022
	BUDDHIST	.107	.168	.405	1	.525	1.113
	TAOIST	178	.201	.787	1	.375	.837
	CATHOLIC	.362	.771	.220	1	.639	1.436
	PROTESTA	135	.346	.152	1	.697	.874
	INCOME	.172	.030	31.940	1	.000	1.188
	Constant	-2.095	.204	105.197	1	.000	.123

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: CHATT, EDUCAT, GENDER, BELIEVER, BUDDHIST, TAOIST, CATHOLIC, PROTESTA, INCOME.

chatt = church attendance (ordinal, low to high, cut off point at once a month) educat = education (ordinal, low to high, cut off point at below high school and after high school) gender = gender (nominal, 1 = male, 0 = female)

income = ordinal (low to high) believer = whether one is a devout believer (1 = yes, 0 = no) buddhist, taoist, catholic, protestant = dummy for the respective denomination

Table 13 logistic regression output - effect of independent variables on religious donations

#### Variables in the Equation

		В	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step	CHATT	.750	.162	21.383	1	.000	2.117
1	EDUCAT	064	.093	.472	1	.492	.938
	GENDER	490	.136	13.057	1	.000	.612
	BELIEVER	.472	.136	12.069	1	.001	1.604
	BUDDHIST	239	.150	2.529	1	.112	.787
	TAOIST	451	.170	7.000	1	.008	.637
	CATHOLIC	443	.723	.377	1	.539	.642
	PROTESTA	.073	.350	.044	1	.834	1.076
	INCOME	.140	.032	19.612	1	.000	1.151
	Constant	.027	.174	.024	1	.878	1.027

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: CHATT, EDUCAT, GENDER, BELIEVER, BUDDHIST, TAOIST, CATHOLIC, PROTESTA, INCOME.

chatt = church attendance (ordinal, low to high, cut off point at once a month)

educat = education (ordinal, low to high, cut off point at below high school and after high school)

gender = gender (nominal, 1 = male, 0 = female)

income = ordinal (low to high)

believer = whether one is a devout believer (1 = yes, 0 = no)

buddhist, taoist, catholic, protestant = dummy for the respective denomination

Table 14 logistic regression output - effect of independent variables on voluntary work

#### Variables in the Equation

		В	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step	CHATT	1.083	.207	27.299	1	.000	2.952
1	EDUCAT	.124	.143	.751	1	.386	1.132
	GENDER	406	.213	3.640	1	.056	.666
	BELIEVER	.412	.228	3.271	1	.071	1.510
	BUDDHIST	016	.227	.005	1	.945	.984
	TAOIST	396	.291	1.850	1	.174	.673
	CATHOLIC	-3.862	7.819	.244	1	.621	.021
	PROTESTA	.327	.382	.730	1	.393	1.386
	INCOME	.068	.036	3.486	1	.062	1.070
	Constant	-2.851	.276	106.512	1	.000	.058

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: CHATT, EDUCAT, GENDER, BELIEVER, BUDDHIST, TAOIST, CATHOLIC, PROTESTA, INCOME.

chatt = church attendance (ordinal, low to high, cut off point at once a month)

educat = education (ordinal, low to high, cut off point at below high school and after high school)

gender = gender (nominal, 1 = male, 0 = female)

income = ordinal (low to high)

believer = whether one is a devout believer (1 = yes, 0 = no)

buddhist, taoist, catholic, protestant = dummy for the respective denomination

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