

# Religion and the Radical Right Vote

The Radical Right in Western Europe

## Review Religion Summary



## Last week

- ▶ Voting for the Extreme Right driven by the same mechanisms
- ▶ As voting for other parties (ideological proximity)
- ▶ Next to nil support for a (pure) protest hypothesis
- ▶ But pure protest perhaps a bit of a straw man
  - ▶ People protesting because government policy
  - ▶ (Rationally) voting for parties more radical than preferences

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- ▶ Review:
  - ▶ Long term factors: Party identification, ideology, values
  - ▶ Short term factors: Candidates, issues
- ▶ Immigration is an issue, linked to values, ideology, social identities . . .
- ▶ How does religion fit in? Modern right parties focus on non-Western immigrants

## What role for religion?

- ▶ Muslims singled out amongst immigrants
- ▶ Yet West European countries highly secularised
- ▶ Many Extreme Right parties without strong links to Christianity
  - ▶ Some traditionally opposed to church/Christianity: FPÖ, NPD, BNP, Lega Nord
  - ▶ Many Extreme Right voters non-believers or very lukewarm Christians
- ▶ Religion a pretext?

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  - ▶ Many Extreme Right voters non-believers or very lukewarm Christians
- ▶ Religion a pretext?
- ▶ “Religiosity” a complex phenomenon
  - ▶ Visible and private practice
  - ▶ Inner spirituality vs. (historically) conforming with norms
  - ▶ Core teachings and individual beliefs

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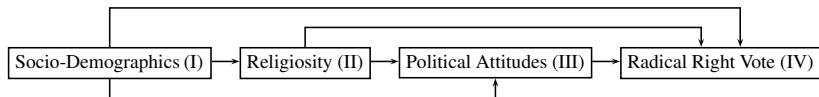
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3. All *direct* relationships between religion and the vote are spurious (e. g. due to socio-demographic profiles)

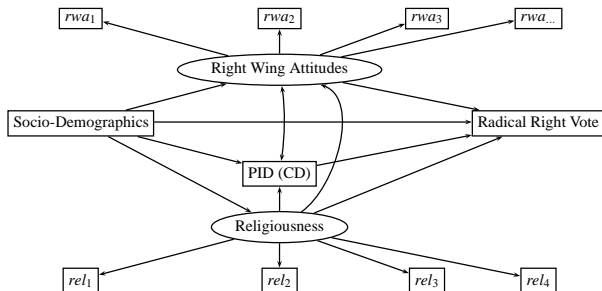
## Data and methods

- ▶ Data: European Social Survey 2002/2003 (replication with new data: basically same findings)
- ▶ Method: Simultaneous Equation Modelling
  - ▶ Various links between variables are modelled simultaneously
  - ▶ Can deal with all sorts of variables
  - ▶ Can handle latent variables and measurement models

# The Causal Chain



# Enter the Model



1. Squares stand for observed variables, circles/ovals represent latent constructs.
2. “Socio-Demographics” refers to class (a dummy for workers and petty bourgeoisie), Age (dummies for being under 30 or above 65), gender, and level of formal education. The respective effects of these four variables are estimated separately.
3. Arrows for the residuals are not shown for lack of space.

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- ▶ But: Religiosity has strong positive effect on CD/conservative party ID → probability of ER vote massively reduced
- ▶ Socio-demographics have no effect once attitudes are controlled for

# Summary

- ▶ Potentially complex role of religion but works mostly via encapsualtion
- ▶ And yet, many parties ditch their traditional anti-semitism
- ▶ To focus on Islam



## Class questions

- ▶ Can you summarise, in your own words, the core findings on the effect of religion?
- ▶ Why does Islamophobia work for Radical Right parties?

# The Kentish Town (Camden) Community Centre experience

- ▶ Streetfights between white, Indian, Pakistani boys
- ▶ What can be done regarding race/religious tensions?
- ▶ Chair: local Labour councillor
- ▶ Groups: left-libertarian whites, Muslim immigrants from Pakistan, Hindu immigrants from India, working class whites

