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The importance of religiosity and values in predicting political attitudes: evidence for the continuing importance of religiosity in Flanders (Belgium)

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ABSTRACT *It has often been argued that religions influence political attitudes only indirectly by their influence on the value system of believers. This value system, in turn, is supposed to be used as a guideline in forming political attitudes. Thus, in this view, it should be sufficient to focus on value orientations if one wants to examine religion's influence on political attitudes. However, results of this study among first year psychology students (n=389), show that although value orientations hold greater predictive strength than religiosity towards political attitudes in Flanders (Belgium), religiosity, even apart from values, does provide additional information in predicting political attitudes. Thus, our results suggest that, at least in Flanders, religion, even apart from values, is still a politically important force. The most important value types, as measured by the Schwartz' Value Inventory (Schwartz, 1992), and religiosity dimensions, as measured by the Post-Critical Belief scale (Desimpelaere et al., 1999), associated with political attitudes were identified. Results show that each political attitude included in this study (economic conservatism, cultural conservatism, racism and nationalism) is predicted by a more or less unique pattern of religiosity dimensions and value orientations.*

Sociological theorizing has stressed the role of religion and religious leaders in supporting the acceptance and stability of the existing social order (e.g. Durkheim, 1912/1954; Marx, 1848/1964). Although in some periods of revolt religion can be opposed to the existing social order, on the whole the dominant religion tends to support the existing social order over longer periods of time (Wilson, 1982). Thus religions are considered to influence their members' political attitudes. However, there at least two possible pathways as to how religion can influence political attitudes. On the one hand, some have argued that religions influence political attitudes because religious teachings stress the importance of some values and denigrate the importance of others, and, in this way, shape their members' value system (e.g. Schwartz & Huismans, 1995). This value system would then in turn

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influence the political attitudes people hold, since people are supposed to use values as a guideline in forming their political attitudes (Van Gyes & De Witte, 1999). Hence, this view suggests that, if one wants to examine religion's impact on political attitudes, it should be sufficient to focus on personal value orientations. Apart from values, religion is considered to have no influence on political attitudes. On the other hand, however, it could also be argued that religions influence political attitudes more directly. For instance, a lot of Roman Catholics in Flanders only vote for the Christian democrat party CVP because they are considered to be the political representatives of Roman Catholics in Flanders. Thus, a vote for the Christian democrat party might directly stem from one's sense of belonging to the group of Roman Catholics, rather than from the specificity of one's value system. In a similar vein, certain political ideas and attitudes may follow from belonging to a certain group. The main aim of this article is to examine whether or not religiosity, apart from values, separately contributes to people's political attitudes in Flanders. A second aim of this paper is to identify the relative importance of specific value orientations and/or dimensions of religiosity as predictors of political attitudes in Flanders.

Religiosity and values

The first empirical approach to human values as trans-situational guiding principles in one's life and the investigation of their relationship with religiosity has to be credited to Rokeach (1968, 1969a, b). Rokeach asked participants to rank 18 instrumental and 18 terminal values as guiding principles in their lives and compared religious and non-religious participants with respect to the average rank order of each value item. He found that religious participants estimated the value terms salvation, forgiveness and obedience higher and the value terms pleasure, independence, intellectual and logical lower than non-religious participants. Most of the subsequent research on the relation between religiosity and values was inspired by Rokeach's approach (e.g. Lau, 1989; Paloutzian, 1981). However, as Fontaine *et al.* (2000) have noted, Rokeach's approach shows two important shortcomings. First, religiosity is often merely defined in terms of belief vs. non-belief or research has been limited to comparisons between religious denominations. Thus, religiosity is often treated as a unidimensional characteristic. Moreover, studies that did use multidimensional operationalisations of religiosity (e.g. Tate & Miller, 1971) have relied on classic distinctions between different religious attitudes, such as intrinsic vs. extrinsic religiosity (Allport & Ross, 1967), which have recently been criticised on both psychometric (e.g. Maltby & Lewis, 1996) and conceptual grounds (e.g. Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990). A second shortcoming of Rokeach's approach is that, in this line of research, each value is considered as an isolate entity, which leads to poorly organized results. New developments both in the conceptualization and the measurement of religious attitudes (Duriez *et al.*, 2000) and human values (Schwartz, 1992), provide a potentially more interesting perspective to investigate the religiosity–values relation.

Schwartz (1992) developed a comprehensive theory about the content and the structure of the value domain, which received support in over 40 countries (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). Schwartz (1992) defines a value as a trans-situational goal that varies in importance as a guiding principle in one's life. On the basis of theoretical analyses and extensive empirical research, he identified 10 different value types, each characterized by their own motivational goal: universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, security, power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction (see Table 1). According to Schwartz (1992), these value types can be organized into a two-dimensional circular circumplex structure on the basis of the mutual compatibilities and conflicts between their respective motivational goals (see Figure 1). Value types that share compatible goals are positively correlated and emerge adjacent to one another in this two-dimensional representation. Value types that are characterized by conflicting goals are negatively correlated and are situated opposite to one another. Schwartz (1992) also proposed a simpler way to view this value structure, summarizing the relationships among the value types in terms of a two bipolar dimensions: openness to change vs. conservation and self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence (Figure 1).

TABLE 1. *Definition of motivational value types in terms of their goals and the values that represent them*[a]

Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources (social power, authority, wealth, preserving my public image) [social recognition][b]
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards (successful, capable, ambitious) [influential, intelligent]
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself (pleasure, enjoying life, self-indulgence, sexuality)
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty and challenge in life (daring, a varied life, an exciting life)
Self-direction	Independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring (freedom, independent, choosing own goals) [creativity, curious, self-respect]
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature (broad-minded, social justice, equality, a world at peace, a world of beauty, unity with nature, protecting the environment) [wisdom]
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact (helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible, true friendship, mature love)
Tradition	Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas traditional culture or religion provide (humble, devout, respect for tradition, moderate, detachment) [accepting my portion in life]
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms (obedient, politeness, honoring parents and elders) [self-discipline]
Security	Safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships and of the self (national security, social order, sense of belonging) [family security, clean, reciprocation of favors, healthy]

[a] After Schwartz & Huismans (1995).
[b] Values in square brackets were not used in computing indexes for value types.
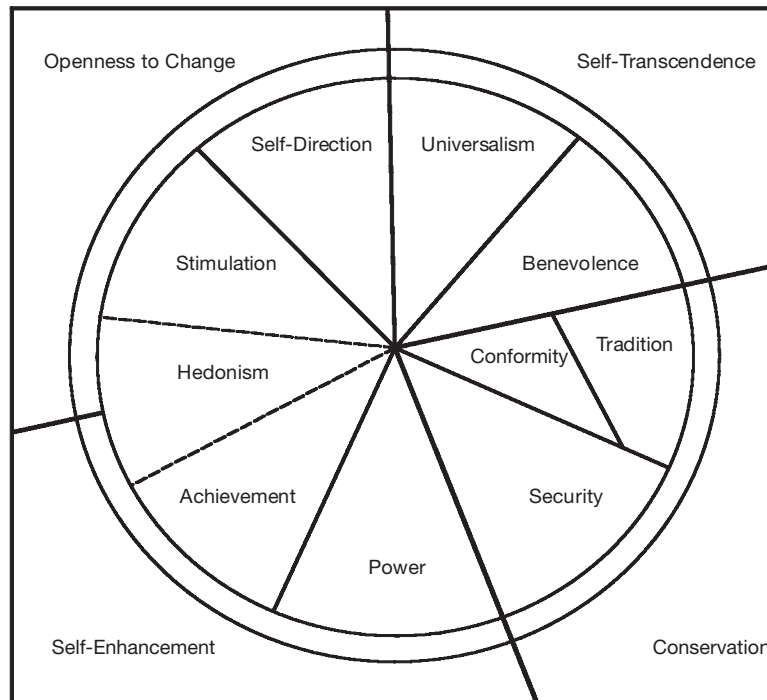
FIGURE 1.   *Theoretical model of relations among value types (after Schwartz & Huismans, 1995)*

In a study on the relationship between religiosity and value priorities among adherents of four religions (Judaism, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy), Schwartz and Huismans (1995) found a theoretically meaningful pattern of associations between the Schwartz value orientations and religious commitment. For each religious denomination, religiosity was associated with the importance of 'respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture and religion provide' (Schwartz & Huismans, 1995, p. 90) and a de-emphasis on 'pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself' (Schwartz & Huismans, 1995, p. 90). Fontaine *et al.* (2000) replicated these findings, and addressed the shortcoming of this study by using the multidimensional measurement of religious attitudes developed by Hutsebaut and his colleagues (1996, 1997; Duriez *et al.*, 2000). This measurement is based on Wulff's (1991; 1997) scholarly overview of the various possible attitudes towards religion. According to Wulff, the various approaches to religion can be located in a two-dimensional space (see Figure 2). The vertical axis specifies the degree to which the objects of religious interest are granted participation in a transcendent reality (inclusion vs. exclusion of transcendence). The horizontal axis indicates whether religion is interpreted literally or symbolically (literal vs. symbolic). These dimensions define four quadrants, each covering a specific attitude toward religion: literal affirmation, literal disaffirmation, reductive interpretation and restorative interpretation (see Figure 1). The upper left quadrant, literal affirmation, represents affirmation of the literal existence of religious objects. The lower left quadrant, literal disaffirmation,
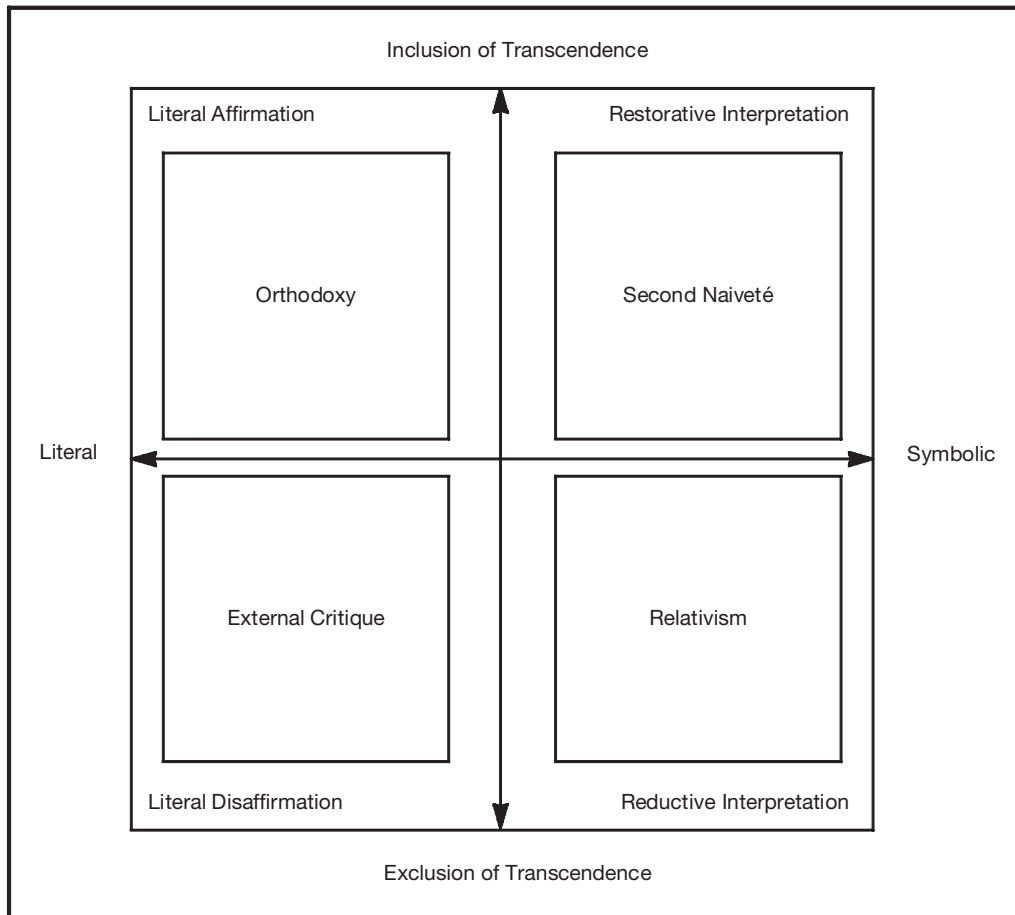
Inclusion of Transcendence

Literal Affirmation

Orthodoxy

Restorative Interpretation

Second Naiveté

Literal

Symbolic

External Critique

Relativism

Literal Disaffirmation

Reductive Interpretation

Exclusion of Transcendence

FIGURE 2. *Integration of Hutsebaut's concepts in Wulff's (1991, 1997) theoretical model (after Duriez et al., 2000)*

represents a position in which one neither believes in the literal meaning of religious words nor in the possibility that these words refer to truths for which there is no literal language. The lower right quadrant, reductive interpretation, represents a position in which one denies reality to the transcendent referent of religious language and practice and claims a privileged perspective on the meaning of religion's myths and rituals. The upper right quadrant, Restorative Interpretation, represents a position in which one posits the transcendent realm as real, but in which one searches for the symbolic meaning instead. Inspired by Wulff's (1991; 1997) approach, Hutsebaut and his colleagues (1996, 1997; Duriez *et al.*, 2000) developed the post-critical belief scale, which captures four different approaches to Roman Catholic religion that map onto Wulff's sheme: orthodoxy, external critique, relativism and second naiveté (see Duriez *et al.*, 2000). Orthodoxy is located in the upper left quadrant, external critique is located in the lower left quadrant, relativism is located in the lower right quadrant, and second naiveté is located in the upper right quadrant (see Figure 2).

In a study of young adults, Fontaine *et al.* (2000) found that these religious attitudes were differentially related to value priorities, and that the associated value priorities could largely be explained as a specific combination of two theoretically derived value patterns, namely a transcendence / mutual care pattern and a social order / uncertainty avoidance pattern. The transcendence / mutual care pattern was derived from a theological analysis of the relationship between values and religiosity and implies awe and respect for a God which is expressed through regular worship and personal control over material and affective desires, as well as the rejection of self-centeredness and care for other humans (Fontaine *et al.*, 2000). The social order / uncertainty avoidance pattern on the other hand was derived from a socio-psychological analysis of the relationship between values and religiosity and implies respect for and reliance upon the social order, which leads to a clear structuring and a reduction of the complexity of human life (Fontaine *et al.*, 2000) [1].

Values and political attitudes

In the past, researchers often assumed that both political parties and political attitudes could be arrayed on a single left-right dimension (e.g. Lipset, 1960; McClosky, 1958). However, more recently it has been argued that the meaning of the left–right dimension varies across nations and over time and is thus often insufficient to represent the relevant political dimensions in a given society (e.g. Inglehart, 1990; Rokeach, 1973). Middendorp (1978), for instance, analysed the ideological components of this left–right dimension and of basic political conflicts and distinguished two dimensions rather than one: a liberalism–egalitarianism dimension (economic conservatism vs. progressivism) that concerns the desirable degree of economic equality among people and an authoritarianism-libertarianism dimension (cultural conservatism vs. progressivism) that concerns readiness for social change and individual rights and freedoms. According to Middendorp (1978), economic conservatism is characterized by opposition to the value 'equality' whereas economic progressivism is based on it, and cultural conservatism is characterised by opposition to the value 'freedom' whereas cultural progressivism is based on it. But although Middendorp (1978), as well as Rokeach (1973, 1979), singled out the values equality and freedom as the paramount political values, some researchers noted that other values should also be taken into account (e.g. Cochrane *et al.*, 1979; Inghlehart, 1977, 1990). Hence, Barnea and Schwartz (1995) set out to study the influence of other values on voting, using Schwartz's (1992) value approach. Their results pointed out that supporters of different political parties could be discriminated on value-based functions that correspond to the two ideological dimensions that turned out to be relevant in Israel: state vs. religion and libertarianism-authoritarianism. Thus, they concluded that all value types identified in Schwartz's (1992) value theory may be politically relevant depending on context.

Barnea and Schwartz (1995) indicated that politically relevant dimensions might differ over countries, and that it is important to consider the specific political

context. In a series of studies, De Witte and Billiet (1999) identified four dimensions that are politically relevant in Flanders. A first is based on the difference between Catholics and non-Catholics, a second is based on the conflict between capital and labour, a third is based on the communitarian conflict between the Flemish and French speaking part of Belgium, and a fourth is based on the conflict between left-libertarians and right-authoritarians. However, it is also a well documented finding that voting for the fascist Vlaams Blok is largely determined by one single issue only, namely the negative attitude towards immigrants (e.g. Billiet & De Witte, 1991; De Witte & Billiet, 1999). Hence, the attitude towards immigrants can be considered as a politically relevant dimension in its own right. According to De Witte and Billiet (1999) the first dimension reflects the distinction cultural conservatism vs. progressivism (Middendorp, 1978), whereas the second reflects economical conservatism vs. progressivism (Middendorp, 1978). The third dimension is reflected in the concept of Flemish nationalism. The fourth dimension is largely reducible to a combination of cultural and economic conservatism vs. progressivism. The fifth dimension is reflected in the concept of racism.

Religiosity, values and political attitudes

As mentioned before, various authors (e.g. Schwartz & Huismans, 1995) have suggested that religion influences political attitudes only indirectly, and attribute religion's influence on political attitudes mainly to the fact that religious teachings stress the importance of some values and denigrate the importance of others, and, this way, shape the value systems of their members. This value system is then likely to influence the (political) attitudes people hold, since people will use it as a guideline to form their political attitudes (Van Gyes & De Witte, 1999). This suggests that the study of the impact of religion on political attitudes can, theoretically speaking, be restricted to the study of the impact of personal value orientations on political attitudes. For instance, Billiet and Dobbelaere (1976) examined the discourse of the Roman Catholic Church in Flanders. They concluded that this church is upholding an entire value system, which can be referred to as socio-cultural Christianity and which is likely to influence the political attitudes of Roman Catholics in Flanders. However, it is our contention that the claim that the influence of religion on political attitudes is only mediated by values should not be taken for granted a priori, but should be empirically investigated. Religion could also influence political attitudes in a more direct way. For instance, we already mentioned the fact that certain political ideas and attitudes could be held in function of the group to which one belongs. Dobbelaere (1995), for instance, has noted that Belgian political history can partly be written in terms of the conflict between Catholics on the one hand and (radical) liberals and socialists on the other hand (cf. De Witte & Billiet, 1999). The core of both the liberal and the socialist party consisted of secular humanists who were anti-Catholic and later even anti-religious (Dobbelaere, 1995). Thus, a vote for the Christian democrat party might directly stem from one's sense of belonging to the group of Roman Catholics, rather

than from the specificity of one's value system. In a similar vein, belonging to the group of Roman Catholics makes it very likely to hold political attitudes that emphasize tradition and conformity, not because these political attitudes are compatible with one's value system, but simply because these political attitudes are sociologically, so to speak, associated with the Roman Catholic Church in Flanders.

Hypotheses

The main aim of this article is to examine whether measures of religiosity, when values are controlled, provide additional predictive power concerning political attitudes. A second aim of this article is to identify the most important predictors of political attitudes in Flanders.

We expect the following relations between political attitudes and religiosity (see Table 2). We expect no relationship between racism and frequency of church attendance (cf. Duriez & Hutsebaut, 2000). However, we expect racism to correlate positively with both Orthodoxy and External Critique, because intolerance for ambiguity, which is characteristic of literal thinking (see Wulff, 1991, 1997), was reported to be related to a higher susceptibility to racism (Sidanius, 1985). Racism is expected to correlate negatively with relativism, because relativism implies tolerance towards other opinions and cultures (Duriez & Hutsebaut, 2000) and with second naiveté, because in this outlook the commandment of brotherhood should be taken seriously. Billiet (1988) has noted that Flemish nationalism and Roman Catholicism are strongly interwoven. Therefore, we expect nationalism to be positively related to both frequency of church attendance and orthodoxy and second naiveté, and to be unrelated or negatively related to external critique and relativism. Since De Witte and Billiet (1999) have argued that the distinction between Catholics and non-Catholics can be grasped in terms of cultural conservatism and since Middendorp (1978) has shown that there is a positive relationship between cultural conservatism and nationalism, we expect the same pattern of relationships for cultural conservatism. Concerning economic conservatism, we expect no relationship with frequency of church attendance, orthodoxy and second naiveté. Although the Roman Catholic Church sometimes criticizes the excesses of capitalism, it doesn't oppose its general principles. We also expect external critique to be unrelated to economic conservatism, since we see no reason why this stance should be related to economic conservatism in any way. However, we expect relativism to be negatively related to economic conservatism, since it is very likely that, when one is able to put into perspective one's own (un)belief, one is presumably also capable of putting typical western values, including capitalist values, into a more relativistic perspective.

We expect the following relations between value orientations and political attitudes (see Table 2). According to Barnea and Schwartz (1995), support for egalitarian political parties should be based on attributing importance to values that endorse concern for and promotion of the welfare of others (=self-transcendence values). Support for liberal parties should be based on attributing

TABLE 2. *Hypotheses regarding the relations between the religiosity measures and the political attitude measures and between the value orientations and the political attitude measures*

	Economic cons.	Cultural cons.	Nationalism	Racism
Church attendance	0	+	+	0
Orthodoxy	0	+	+	+
External critique	0	0/–	0/–	+
Relativism	–	0/–	0/–	–
Second naiveté	0	+	+	–
Power	+	+	+	+
Achievement	+	+	+	+
Hedonism	0	0	0	0
Stimulation	0	–	0	0
Self-direction	0	–	0	0
Universalism	–	–	–	–
Benevolence	–	–	–	–
Tradition	0	+	+	+
Conformity	0	+	+	+
Security	0	+	+	+

importance to values that endorse the attainment of wealth and influence and a superior status for oneself, and that legitimize the hierarchical relations (=self-enhancement values). We therefore expect economic conservatism to be positively related to power and achievement, to be unrelated to hedonism, stimulation and self-direction, to be negatively related to universalism and benevolence, and to be unrelated to tradition, conformity and security. According to Barnea and Schwartz (1995), support for authoritarian parties should be based on attributing importance to values that endorse protection of the social order and certainty (= conservation values and self-enhancement values). Support for libertarian parties should be based on attributing importance to opposite values (openness to change values and self-transcendence values). We therefore expect cultural conservatism to be positively related to power and achievement, to be unrelated to hedonism, to be negatively related to stimulation, self-direction, universalism and benevolence, and to be positively related to tradition, conformity and security. Regarding racism, we hypothesise that the pure self-enhancement values (power and achievement) will be positively related to racism because they share an emphasis on promoting the (economic) interests of the self. This self-interest is best served by trying to get rid of the poor and needy who appeal to our support. Those who are perceived as poor and needy and not rightfully belonging here (non-Western immigrants in particular) are likely to be the first ones to attract negative responses. We hypothesize that the pure openness to change values (stimulation and self-direction) will be unrelated to racism because, although the presence of minorities might contribute to the pursuit for novelty and the expression of autonomy, minorities might also be seen as dangerous and hence threatening to one's independence and one's pursuit for

novelty. We expect the self-transcendence values (universalism and benevolence) to be negatively related to racism because they emphasize understanding, acceptance and showing concern for the welfare of other human beings (even though their way of life differs from one's own). Finally, we hypothesize conservation values (tradition, conformity and security) to be positively related to racism because minorities are likely to confront members of the dominant group with challenges to the status quo and cultural arrangements. We thus expect racism to be positively related to power and achievement, to be either slightly positively or not at all related to hedonism, to be unrelated to stimulation and self-direction, to be negatively related to universalism and benevolence, and to be positively related to tradition, conformity and security. Regarding nationalism, we expect the same pattern, since Maddens *et al.* (2000) noted that Flemish nationalism is imbedded in an ethnic discourse. However, since part of the Flemish nationalist movement does advocate a multicultural society, we expect the relation to be substantially weaker.

Method

Participants

Participants were 389 first-year psychology students from a Belgian university, ranging in age from 17 to 23 years with a mean age of 18. All participants had Belgian nationality and belonged to the Flemish-speaking part of the country; 79% were female. Concerning the frequency of church attendance, 25% indicated to attend weekly or at least often (compared to about 10% in the general Flemish population according to the Belgian Office of Church Statistics), 43% indicated to attend at special occasions only, and 32% indicated to never attend. Participation was obligatory. Participants received course credit. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed.

Procedures and Measures

All participants completed the Dutch translation of Schwartz's value survey, which consists of 55 values, representing 10 value types (Table 1). Each value was rated in terms of its importance as a guideline in one's life on a 9-point scale, ranging from 'opposed to my principles' (–1) to 'not important' (0) to 'of supreme importance' (7). In the present sample, estimates of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) were 0.72 for power (mean=1.69, SD=1.23), 0.75 for achievement (mean=3.77, SD=1.29), 0.76 for hedonism (mean=4.44, SD=1.15), 0.78 for stimulation (mean=3.42, SD=1.36), 0.54 for self-direction (mean=5.04, SD=0.95), 0.79 for universalism (mean=4.51, SD=1.01), 0.70 for benevolence (mean=5.12, SD=0.75), 0.56 for tradition (mean=2.29, SD=1.10), 0.70 for conformity (mean=3.88, SD=1.21), and 0.55 for security (mean=3.50, SD=1.19). As in Schwartz and Huismans (1995), the value scales were computed after

correction for the mean score for each subject. More precisely, the scores were centred around the mean score of each subject across all 55 values. In this way, systematic response sets are controlled.

Participants also completed a 28-item Post-Critical Belief scale (Desimpelaere *et al.*, 1999) consisting of four subscales: orthodoxy (seven items), external critique (eight items), relativism (six items) and second naiveté (seven items). All items were scored on a 7-point Likert scale (1=completely opposed, 4=neutral, 7= completely in agreement). In the present sample, estimates of internal consistency (Cronbach alpha's) were 0.61 for Orthodoxy (mean = 2.06, SD = 0.78), 0.73 for external critique (mean = 3.50, SD = 0.97), 0.57 for relativism (mean = 5.47, SD = 0.69), and 0.84 for second naiveté (mean = 3.68, SD = 1.32). Orthodoxy was negatively related to external critique ($r = -0.28$, $p<0.0001$) and relativism ($r = -0.20$, $p<0.0001$) and positively to second naiveté ($r = 0.38$, $p<0.0001$). External critique was unrelated to relativism ($r = 0.02$, n.s.) and negatively to second naiveté ($r = -0.52$, $p<0.0001$). Relativism and second naiveté were unrelated ($r = 0.10$, n.s.). Frequency of church attendance was positively related to Orthodoxy ($r = 0.42$, $p<0.0001$) and second naiveté ($r = 0.59$, $r<0.0001$), unrelated to relativism ($r = 0.02$, n.s.) and negatively related to external critique ($r = -0.52$, $p<0.0001$).

In order to measure the politically relevant dimensions in Flanders, four measures were used. All items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1=completely opposed, 3=neutral, 5=completely in agreement). Participants completed a 12-item economic conservatism scale and a 12-item cultural conservatism scale developed by De Witte (1990), as well as a 6-item Flemish nationalism scale and a 24-item racism scale (Duriez, 1998). The economic conservatism scale addresses issues such as the desirable impact of trade unions in companies, the desirable level of government interference in economics, and income differences. The cultural conservatism scale addresses issues like upbringing, work ethic, the position of women in society, abortion, euthanasia and premarital sex. The nationalism scale addresses issues like whether one is proud of one's national identity and whether one is in favour of the creation of a nation-state. The racism scale taps both subtle racism and blunt racism [3]. In the present sample, estimates of internal consistency (Cronbach alpha's) were 0.78 for economic conservatism (mean=2.51, SD=0.52), 0.71 for cultural conservatism (mean=2.30, SD=0.50), 0.60 for nationalism (mean=2.81, SD=0.68), and 0.92 for racism (mean=2.11, SD=0.58). Economic conservatism was unrelated to cultural conservatism ($r=0.03$, n.s.) and positively to nationalism ($r=0.17$, $p<.001$) and racism ($r=0.19$, $p<.0005$). Cultural conservatism was positively related to nationalism ($r=0.28$, $p<0.0001$) and racism ($r=0.39$, $p<0.0001$). Nationalism and racism were positively related ($r=0.34$, $p<0.0001$).

Results

Initial correlation analysis

In order to get an overview of the relations between religiosity and value orientations on the one hand and political attitudes on the other hand, we computed Pearson correlations between the measures of religiosity, value orientations and political attitudes. Table 3 presents the relations between religiosity and the political attitudes in this study. Economic conservatism was, as expected, unrelated to frequency of church attendance, orthodoxy and second naiveté and external critique and negatively related to relativism. Cultural conservatism was, as expected, positively related to frequency of church attendance, orthodoxy and second naiveté, and unrelated to external critique and relativism. Nationalism was positively related to frequency of church attendance, and unrelated to orthodoxy, external critique, relativism and second naiveté. The positive relation with frequency of church attendance was in line with our expectations. However, the relations with both orthodoxy and second naiveté were not. Racism was, as expected, positively related to orthodoxy and external critique, unrelated to frequency of church attendance, and negatively related to relativism. However, racism and second naiveté were unrelated (cf. Duriez *et al.*, 2000; Duriez & Hutsebaut, 2000) [4].

Table 3 also presents the observed correlations between the value types and the political attitudes. As expected, economic conservatism correlated positively

TABLE 3. *Correlations between the religiosity measures and the political attitude measures and between the value orientations and the political attitude measures*

	Economic cons.	Cultural cons.	Nationalism	Racism
Church attendance	0.03	0.21****	0.14**	0.02
Orthodoxy	0.04	0.33****	0.08	0.15**
External critique	−0.12	−0.08	0.01	0.13*
Relativism	−0.18***	−0.07	−0.03	−0.21****
Second naiveté	−0.08	0.23****	0.03	−0.11
Power	0.32****	0.24****	0.18***	0.37****
Achievement	0.18***	0.27****	0.24****	0.39****
Hedonism	0.00	−0.06	0.04	0.11
Stimulation	0.08	−0.07	0.16**	0.07
Self-direction	0.01	−0.24****	−0.01	−0.04
Universalism	−0.24****	−0.33****	−0.26****	−0.54****
Benevolence	−0.19****	−0.22****	−0.17***	−0.24****
Tradition	0.05	0.14**	−0.09	−0.17***
Conformity	0.05	0.34****	0.16**	0.28****
Security	0.08	0.25****	0.14**	21****

n=389; * *p*<0.05, ** *p*<0.01, *** *p*<0.001, **** *p*<0.0001

with power and achievement, and negatively with universalism and benevolence. Cultural conservatism correlated positively with power, achievement, tradition, conformity and security, and negatively with self-direction, universalism and benevolence. This was in line with our hypotheses, except for stimulation. Nationalism correlated positively with power, achievement, stimulation, conformity and security, and negatively with universalism, benevolence, and tradition. This was in line with our expectations, except for stimulation. Racism, finally, correlated positively with power, achievement, conformity and security, and negatively with universalism, benevolence and tradition. This was in line with our expectations, except that tradition was negatively instead of positively related to racism.

Multiple regression analyses

To investigate whether religiosity measures had additional predictive power when controlling for values, we first compared the predictive power of the measures of religiosity and values in general. For this purpose, we separately inserted the religiosity scales and the values as a group in multiple regression analyses using the stepwise procedure (see Table 4). The procedure of Alf and Graf (1999) revealed that one can be 99% confident that the value orientations are better predictors of cultural conservatism ($0.03 \leq R^2$values – R^2religion ≤ 0.29), nationalism ($0.01 \leq R^2$values – R^2religion ≤ 0.20), and racism ($0.22 \leq R^2$values – R^2religion ≤ 0.44), but not of economic conservatism ($-0.06 \leq R^2$values – R^2religion ≤ 0.17). Next, we jointly inserted the religiosity scales as a group and the value types as a group in hierarchical multiple regression analyses. The predictive power increased significantly when the religiosity measures were added to the values ($F(5, 368)$ $=6.36$, $p<0.0001$ for economic conservatism; $F(5, 369)=6.36$, $p<0.0001$ for cultural conservatism; $F(5, 367)=3.02$, $p<0.05$ for nationalism; and $F(5, 367)=3.35$, $p<0.01$ for racism). Table 4 shows that the predictive power of the religiosity measures on the one hand and value types on the other hand was even nearly additive for economic conservatism and nationalism.

Second, multiple regression analyses, using the stepwise procedure, in which all religiosity measures and all value orientations were jointly inserted

TABLE 4. *Results of the multiple regression analyses with the political attitude measures as dependent variables and the religiosity measures and the value orientations as independent variables*

	Economic cons.	Cultural cons.	Nationalism	Racism
		R^2		
Religion	.07****	.13****	.03*	.10****
Values	.13****	.29****	.14****	.36****
Religion and values	.20****	.35****	.17****	.39****

$n=389$; * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, **** $p<0.0001$

TABLE 5.   *Reduced models for the prediction of the political attitude measures, the amount of variance these models explain and the standardized parameter estimates and t-values for each significant predictor*

Economic conservatism	beta	t	$R^2=0.17$
Power	.32	6.69******	
External critique	−.28	−5.08******	
Second naiveté	−.18	−3.39****	
Relativism	−.10	−2.10*	
Cultural conservatism	**beta**	**t**	**$R^2=.034$**
Orthodoxy	.19	4.17******	
Conformity	.19	4.15******	
Universalism	−.16	−3.20***	
Second naiveté	.15	3.20***	
Security	.13	2.99***	
Achievement	.14	2.85***	
Benevolence	−.13	−2.84***	
Self-Direction	−.10	−2.11*	
Nationalism	**beta**	**t**	**$R^2=0.15$**
Achievement	.22	4.51****	
Stimulation	.21	4.39****	
Church attendance	.16	3.35***	
Conformity	.13	2.65**	
Security	.11	2.34*	
Racism	**beta**	**t**	**$R^2=.37$**
Universalism	−.38	−7.71****	
Conformity	.14	3.20**	
Orthodoxy	.13	3.08**	
Benevolence	−.12	-2.69**	
Tradition	−.11	−2.61**	
Achievement	.11	2.19*	
Security	.08	2.01*	

$n=389$; * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, **** $p<0.0001$

as independent variables, were performed to identify the most important predictors of the political attitude dimensions. Table 5 presents the significant predictors for each political attitude separately. Power was the most important predictor of economic conservatism, followed by external critique, second naiveté and relativism. Orthodoxy was the most important predictor of cultural conservatism, followed by conformity, universalism, second naiveté, security, achievement, benevolence and self-direction. For nationalism, achievement was the most important predictor, followed by stimulation, frequency of church attendance, conformity and security. Universalism was by far the most important predictor

of racism, followed by conformity, orthodoxy, benevolence, tradition, achievement and security.

Discussion

Results show that religiosity directly contributes to the prediction of political attitudes (although only to some extent). Thus, our data seem to support the hypothesis that religiosity, even apart from the value system it promotes, continues to be important in predicting political attitudes in Flanders. However, this conclusion has to be met with caution. Our data do not allow us to decide on whether our findings are simply due to the fact that the Schwartz (1992) measure is missing out on some important, culturally specific, religious values, and/or whether religion is indeed associated with political attitudes in Flanders in a more direct way. In other words, the religiosity measures could contain some specific (religious) values which are important in the prediction of political attitudes, but which are not captured by the Schwartz. Thus, our findings could be due to the influence of religious values, which are not captured by Schwartz (1992). Further research into the content and structure of the value domain is needed to clarify this. Nevertheless, results point to the fact that in general value orientations are better predictors towards all political attitudes than religiosity measures (except for economic conservatism).

Each political attitude dimensions seems to be associated with a more or less unique combination of religious attitudes and values. Economic conservatism was unrelated to frequency of church attendance, orthodoxy and second naiveté, and was negatively related to external critique and relativism. This was largely in line with our expectations, and suggests that, although the Roman Catholic Church condemns the large inequalities brought about by economic conservatism, rejection of this form of conservatism is mainly associated with the exclusion of transcendence. Cultural conservatism was, as expected, positively related to frequency of church attendance, orthodoxy and second naiveté, and tended to be negatively related to both external critique and relativism. Apparently, the distinction between Catholics and non-Catholics can indeed, to a large extent, be grasped in terms of cultural vs. economic conservatism (De Witte & Billiet, 1999). Nationalism was, as expected, unrelated to external critique and relativism, and positively related to frequency of church attendance, but unrelated to orthodoxy and second naiveté. One possible explanation for the finding that nationalism is related to frequency of church attendance, but not to orthodoxy and second naiveté, is that although people holding nationalist convictions go to church, they cannot truly be regarded as believers [5]. Finally, racism was positively related to orthodoxy and external critique, unrelated to frequency of church attendance, and negatively related to relativism and second naiveté. This supports the idea that racism is associated with closed-mindedness rather than with religiousness (Duriez & Hutsebaut, 2000). The relations between the value types and political attitudes also largely confirmed the hypotheses. Economic conservatism was positively related to self-enhancement

(power and achievement) and negatively to self-transcendence (universalism and benevolence). Economic conservatism and self-enhancement go hand in hand, and apparently this self-enhancement is attained at the expense of others. Although economic and cultural conservatism were unrelated, they show a lot of similarity in terms of the associated value pattern. Cultural conservatism is also positively related to self-enhancement and negatively to self-transcendence. But, contrary to economic conservatism, cultural conservatism was, as expected, positively related to conservation values (tradition, conformity, security) and negatively to self-direction. The main difference between economic conservatism and cultural conservatism seems to be that the latter is associated with the conservation of the own culture, while the former is not. Apparently, attaching importance to conservation and attaching importance to self-direction is incompatible. Another major difference is that cultural conservatism is related to inclusion of transcendence, whereas economic conservatism is not. Nationalism was positively related to both economic and cultural conservatism, and showed a lot of similarity to both forms of conservatism in terms of the associated value pattern. Nationalism was positively related to self-enhancement, stimulation and partly to conservation (conformity and security only), and was negatively related to self-transcendence. It is noteworthy, however, that unlike both forms of conservatism, nationalism was positively related to stimulation. This could suggest that a substantial amount of people perceive nationalist attitudes as of a rebellious nature. Moreover, the fact that nationalism is perceived as of a rebellious nature, could account for the fact that nationalism was unrelated, contrary to expectations, to tradition. Racism, finally, showed a very similar value pattern as nationalism, despite the fact that racism and nationalism, as we mentioned before, showed a very different pattern of associations with the religiosity dimensions. Thus, in general, each political attitude is associated with a more or less unique combination of religious attitudes and values. The value pattern associated with racism is, in several ways, unique. First, the greater strength of relations with the values suggests that racism is more value-related than nationalism or any other political attitude. In particular, racism is not only associated with a tendency to reject self-transcendence, but also with a tendency to reject tradition. Furthermore, racism is related with self-enhancement (even more than economic conservatism), and with conformity and security (like cultural conservatism and nationalism).

Results also show that the relative importance of religious attitudes and values in predicting political attitudes varies in function of the various political attitudes. First, economic conservatism is primarily associated with power. Moreover, all religious attitudes characterized by a reflection about the religious realm negatively predicted economic conservatism. Second, cultural conservatism is associated with a preparedness to conform to society and the religious framework society presents. Moreover, cultural conservatism is associated with a focus on achievement and security and/or on self-transcendence and self-direction. Third, nationalism is associated with achievement and stimulation, and also with a tendency to conform to society and the religious framework society presents, even without actually believing. Security is also important, but much less than is often supposed. Racism,

finally, is associated with not being concerned about others, and with a preparedness to conform to society and, in an orthodox way, to the religious framework society presents. Racism, in Flanders, is apparently not in line with attaching importance to tradition. Economical concerns (e.g. power and achievement) and security concerns are only slightly important. The fact that each political attitude is associated with a more or less unique value pattern casts doubt on the ideas of both Rokeach (1973, 1979), who singled out equality and freedom as the paramount political values, and Middendorp (1978), who singled out equality and freedom as the values underlying respectively economic conservatism and cultural conservatism. Results clearly point to a more complex picture. Moreover, whereas we cannot deny that universalism (the value type to which equality belongs) appears to be important in predicting cultural conservatism and racism, it predicts neither economic conservatism nor nationalism. Self-direction (the value type to which freedom belongs) turned out to be even less important (cf. Cochrane *et al.*, 1979; Van Gyes & DeWitte, 1999). Self-direction was only a marginal predictor of cultural conservatism, and did not predict the other political attitudes.

Finally, several important limitations of this study need to be mentioned. First, participants in this study were university students ranging in age from 17 to 23 years. Thus, further research is needed to cross-validate these results in other populations, especially since it is possible that a solid and truly coherent value systems which lies at the basis of the formation of one's political attitudes only fully develops at a somewhat later age. Hence, in an older sample, religiosity might no longer provide additional predictive power towards political attitudes. However, on the other hand, it can also be argued that in an older population religiosity might have a more direct influence on political attitudes, because older people, at least in Flanders, grew up in a society that was a lot less secularized. Second, our study was limited to one specific cultural setting only, namely Flanders (Belgium). Future research will have to determine whether our findings can be generalized to other countries. Finally, results are correlational in nature, and thus, strictly speaking, no conclusions regarding causality can be drawn. However, from a theoretical point of view, it can be argued that, if one manages to alter certain value orientations, this will probably lead to a change in the associated political attitudes. One cannot deny that the current capitalist system, resulting from economic conservatism, produces large inequalities and/or certain needs, which, in a variety of ways, instigate massive migration. Nor can one deny that this massive migration is unavoidably turning societies into highly multicultural societies. Coping with these changes and the accompanying challenges, is therefore an important task for every society. Obviously, political attitudes such as racism, cultural conservatism and nationalism are at least potentially problematic in this respect. Results suggest that raising the importance attached to universalism could be an effective strategy to counter racism and cultural conservatism. When combined with attempts to degrade the importance attached to power, achievement and conformity, this strategy could even be more effective. In the long run, the educational system could play an important role in all this.

Notes

[1]   Recently, Duriez *et al.* (2001) argued that it would be fruitful to disentangle the transcendence / mutual care pattern into a pure transcendence and a pure mutual care pattern in order to come to a better understanding of the association between religiosity and values.

[2]   Examples of items for orthodoxy, external critique, relativism and second naiveté respectively are: 'Even though this goes against modern rationality, I believe Mary truly was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus', 'In the end, faith is nothing more than a safety net for human fears', 'Secular and as religious conceptions of the world give valuable answers to important questions about life', and 'Because Jesus is mainly a guiding principle for me, my faith in him would not be affected, if it would appear that he never actually existed as a historical individual'.

[3]   Examples of items for economic conservatism, cultural conservatism, nationalism and racism respectively are: 'Difference between high and low incomes should remain the same', 'Women should do the household and men should goes out making money', 'I am proud to be Flemish', and 'We have to keep our race pure and fight mixture with other races'. Note that it could be argued that the racism scale is not truly measuring racism. Billiet and De Witte (1991), among others, have argued that scales like the one used here are comprised of two conceptually different components: xenophobia and true racism. However, the scree test (Cattell, 1966) on the items belonging to this scale clearly pointed to one component only.

[4]   It has often been argued that frequency of church attendance is curvilinearly related to both nationalism and racism (see Duriez & Hutsebaut, 2000). However, one-way ANOVA analyses (between-groups-design) yielded no evidence for this.

[5]   Support for this interpretation stems from the following analysis. On the basis of the question 'Do you belief in the existence of God?', we divided our sample in three sub-samples: disbelievers (those who do not believe in God), doubters (those who doubt the existence of God) and believers (those who believe in God). Church attendance and nationalism were positively related among disbelievers ($r = 0.18$, $p<0.05$, $n = 191$), unrelated among doubters ($r = 0.02$, n.s., $n = 159$) and negatively among believers ($r = –0.27$, n.s., $n = 33$). However, this last correlation did not reach significance, because of the small number of believers in the sample. Thus church attendance and nationalism go hand in hand only among disbelievers.

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