universalizing tendencies of much of the literature on the political economy of government support.

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Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1996. £35.50 (hbk); £15.95 (pbk), x + 300pp. ISBN 0 8014 3241 3; 0 8014 8320 4.

Stathis Kalyvas's book will be of great interest to readers of this journal for its foregrounding of methodology and theory as well as for its subject matter; European Christian Democracy, along with European political Catholicism more generally, is beginning to receive the attention it deserves (see, for example, Hanley, 1994; van Kersbergen, 1995; Buchanan and Conway, 1996). The author conducts a rigorous analysis of the appropriate methodologies for the study of party success and failure and on that basis elaborates a thoroughly grounded theory of party formation and the construction of collective political identities. There is a small price to be paid for the author's insistence on explanatory clarity: the bones of his argument feature not only prominently, but rather repetitively. Having said this, it remains the case that Kalyvas's application of his theory to the study of the formation (and non-formation) of Christian democratic parties in six West European countries makes a major contribution to the study of political parties.

In one sense, Kalyvas's starting point is Lipset and Rokkan's theory of party system formation rooted in cleavages. From this baseline, he takes it upon himself to supply some of the micro-foundations of the Rokkanian approach, specifically examining why France, where Church–state conflict was intense, did not see the successful formation of a mass-based confessional political party whilst the other countries he studies (Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Italy) did. By micro-foundations, Kalyvas means the study of actors and of political processes, both of which structuralists neglect. Kalyvas's approach is also thoroughly comparative and his criticism of the existing literatures is sweeping: they are under-theorized and often consist of case studies whose arguments can be seen to be invalid when placed within a comparative framework. In addition to the frequent assumption of national peculiarity, Kalyvas identifies four commonly found errors: an instrumental and teleological functionalism in which outcomes 'explain' causes; essentialism, whereby religious identity is assumed to be primordial and its translation into a political phenomenon unproblematic; the assuming away of the collective action problem; and the neglect of the choices made by elites (i.e. the importance of both agency and process). In particular, he emphasizes the importance of *path dependency* – that is, decisions and their timing matter.

Methodologically, then, Kalyvas condemns the over-abstract sociological reductionism of the worst sort of structuralism, insisting on the importance of agency and strategy, in specific historical circumstances, in shaping political developments. The intentionality of key actors, in this case primarily conservative and Church elites and, later, the new confessional party elites, is thus foregrounded in a rational-choice approach which, nevertheless, is fully cognizant of the importance of unexpected and unintended outcomes. Indeed, the formation of successful Christian democratic parties is explained as being precisely one such outcome. Kalyvas drives home again and again the dislike that conservative and ecclesiastical elites felt for autonomous quasi-religious actors, though here the distinction between ordinary priests and higher ecclesiastical figures is important. Kalyvas carefully elaborates the strategies employed by the Church to prevent the emergence of independent organizations and then to recover the situation once democratic legitimation enabled the new party leaders to claim their autonomy. The source of such legitimation was the literally incredible electoral success of the new parties which upset the calculations of clerics and conservative notables. As a consequence of this success, the nature of the right was transformed, as was that of Catholicism. A new plurality of participatory opportunities and identities opened up to Catholics. That is, on the one hand they began participating not only in ecclesiastically controlled religious associations but also in the core political structures of the modern parliamentary state. On the other, they had the possibility of practising democratic ideals, something scarcely possible in the Church itself. And yet, confessional parties' political identities were consolidated not on the basis of Catholic social doctrine but more generically: 'Christian inspiration' or, more vaguely still, 'religious inspiration' or even, in the Belgian case, the humanist values of western civilization. Thus, Kalyvas concludes, 'Catholicism was drained of its religious content even while being legitimated as a political identity' (p. 244).

From this analysis of party formation, Kalyvas further concludes that Christian democratic parties contributed, from the outset, to the process of secularization. This contribution, it might be argued, continued after the Second World War when Pius XII launched a series of crusades to re-Christianize Europe, making concessions to democracy only of the most instrumental kind. Secularization, in any case, is not a simple linear process. The timing, extent and meaning of this term are still the subjects of debate. In any event, contemporary developments regarding these parties, which are more dramatic than Kalyvas suggests (p. 261), cannot be understood as mere reaction to and adaptation to secularization. These parties have contributed to this process. More generally, the point is made well that parties do more than adapt. The concept of party adaptation, whilst it stresses parties as strategic actors, tends nevertheless to confirm them as being fundamentally reactive, almost passive. Parties, and we see this especially in the evolution of party families, shape history.

With respect to the mechanics of his argument, Kalyvas focuses on the strategies of Church and conservative elites, primarily the former, in reacting to the anti-clericalism of the later 19th century. Attack by liberal states was the necessary, but not sufficient, trigger to Catholic counter-mobilization and organization. An alternative strategy was compromise, adopted in France upon the reasonable expectation (before 1891) of regime change. This strategy was

generally preferred because mobilization and organization brought costs and dangers. From necessity, however, the organizational strategy was usually adopted. Yet even this strategy was, initially at least, emphatically not political. Only when it showed scant impact did a shift to political participation take place, but even then by proxy, via support for conservative elites who lacked the resources (and the will) for mass mobilization. Only when this too proved inadequate did party formation take place, usually despite ecclesiastical misgivings and/or outright opposition. And with this step came the unravelling of the Church's control over Catholic organization (then otherwise undergoing a formidable process of hierarchical centralization under papal authority) and of its strategies for maintaining such control.

Whilst Kalyvas's work focuses on the period from the 1860s to the 1920s, its arguments are enlightening not only for an understanding of the contemporary crisis of Christian democracy but also, with due allowances, for those studying contemporary party formation in countries currently undergoing processes of democratic transition and consolidation.

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Paul G. Lewis, ed., *Party Structure and Organization in East-Central Europe*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1996. £49.95 (hbk), xviii + 219 pp. ISBN 1 85898 289 8.

Though much has already been written about political parties in postcommunist democracies, little is known about these systems' parties as functioning organizations. The book under review presents for the first time research on political parties in these countries as organizations with leaders, followers and problems. This book, the fourth in a series, results from the project on Regime Change in East-Central Europe, sponsored by the British Economic and Social Research Council's East–West Programme. The eight chapters cover five countries, with two chapters each on Hungary and the Czech Republic; single chapters cover Poland, Bulgaria and, unusually, East Germany. Together, these cases illustrate a very wide range of phenomena, and the diversity of research