

The Political Legacy of Elite Repression^{*†}

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Abstract

Most work on the legacies of violence studies mass repression. In this paper, we explore the longterm effects of selective repression of local elites on ordinary community members who had not been subject to direct repression. Drawing on the literature on the legacy of violence against civilians, we hypothesize that elite-targeted repression creates a political backlash in the affected communities. Examining the legacy of Nazi-era repression of Catholic clergy in Bavaria we ask whether historical repression against Catholic priests is associated with higher support for Christian Democrats after WWII. We find that municipalities where Catholic priests had been repressed are more likely to vote for Christian Democrats in post-war elections. The legacy of priest repression on voting behavior persists into the present, although its magnitude wanes overtime. These findings suggest that repression of elites can leave lasting intergenerational legacies on mass political and social behavior.

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1 Introduction

The Dachau concentration camp, a major hub in the machinery of Nazi repression, held some 2,600 Roman Catholic priests, about a quarter of these from Germany. Around 15% of German Catholic priests in Dachau perished there (Berben, 1975). The Nazi state exterminated Jews, persecuted ethnic and social minorities like the Roma and the homosexuals, and euthanized many mentally and physically handicapped (Shirer, 1960). It also carried out a determined and large-scale campaign of intimidation against the Catholic church on German soil.¹ Seeing Roman Catholicism as a direct challenge to the supremacy of national socialism, Nazi leadership wanted the Church out of the public sphere so that the control over the hearts and minds of the faithful would pass over to the state (Lewy, 2000).²

We leverage this episode of historical anti-Catholic repression to address an important theoretical question: Does persecution of leaders shape the identity and political behavior of followers who themselves were not subject to direct repression? In exploring this question we fill a gap in the quantitative literature on the legacies of violence, which to date has largely focused on persecution and intimidation of ordinary individuals and mass repression of groups but has not examined in sufficient detail the repercussions of targeted repression against elites.³

Elites are important because they influence the formation of public preferences in the realm of politics (Zaller, 1992; Druckman and Lupia, 2000; Linz, 2012). *Religious* elites can be especially consequential because they set the moral tone for communal life and, in the case of Catholicism, hold the keys to the afterlife. Under authoritarianism, religious

¹The scale of this campaign was, of course, insignificant relative to the persecution of Jews and other minorities.

²The Protestant church was not subject to the same level of Nazi repression. This is because, organizationally, Protestantism was much more splintered and therefore less of a centralized threat and was a religious tradition native to Germany, unlike Catholicism. Under Nazism a powerful pro-state Protestant movement emerged, the Reich Church.

³A selection of the broader literature on the legacies of violence includes Nunn and Wantchekon (2011), Balcells (2012), Voigtländer and Voth (2012), Besley and Reynal-Querol (2014), Charnysh (2015), Lupu and Peisakhin (2017), Rozenas, Schutte and Zhukov (2017), Acharya, Blackwell and Sen (2016), Osorio, Schubiger and Weintraub (2018), and Fouka (2018).

groups maintain what are often the only cross-cutting large-scale associations outside of the purview of the state, and therefore “the history lesson for the authoritarian ruler is clear: religion should be suppressed or contained” (Koesel, 2014, p. 4). When religious elites in authoritarian settings choose to flex their political muscle, they are capable of mounting a powerful challenge to the ruler, as the ayatollahs did in Iran in 1979, or the Catholic clergy in Latin America and Poland during the third wave of democratization, or Muslim clerics in the Arab Spring (Gill, 1998; Nugent, 2020).

We draw expectations about why and how repression of religious leaders exerts long-lasting effects on political attitudes of followers from two literatures. First, the scholarship on violence against civilians demonstrates that repression leaves legacy effects that can last for several generations. Those who experience violence at the hands of the state and their descendants tend to develop a stronger attachment toward their ingroup and to vote at a higher rate for political parties representing it (Rozenas, Schutte and Zhukov, 2017; Rozenas and Zhukov, 2019). Family socialization has been shown to be the channel by which victim identities are transmitted across generations (Lupu and Peisakhin, 2017). Second, work in psychology has argued that community elites have an important socializing effect alongside parents and peers, as local elites embody the community identity and set an example for emulation (Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1982).

We hypothesize that repression of elites intended as a challenge to dominant community identity leaves a lasting legacy on ordinary community members. The intuition behind our argument is that in a community whose way of life is threatened by outside forces, repression of a prominent leader is a trigger that forces residents to double down in defense of their way of life and causes a strengthening of ingroup identity against outsiders. We expect the act of elite repression to result in a lasting shift in social and political identities in the affected locality in defence of the threatened community identity.

We test this theoretical proposition in the context of Nazi repression of Catholic priests in Bavaria, a predominantly Catholic region in southern Germany. Priests were targeted along-

side Nazi repression's main victims – Jews, socialists, homosexuals, and the handicapped – specifically for challenging Nazi ideology's attempted dominance in political and social life. Because of the nature of priest appointments, this targeted repression was largely orthogonal to community characteristics (Hoffmann, 1977; Lewy, 2000). To examine the effect of clerical repression we draw on a compendium detailing Catholic priest persecution (von Hehl, 1996). The data that we digitized and geolocated show that a little under half of all Catholic clergy in Bavaria (3,975 of around 8,500 priests) experienced some form of repression at the hands of the Nazi state in 1933–1945. Punishments ranged from minor police warnings to death sentences.

Under the Weimar Republic (1918-1933), in Bavarian Catholic communities life revolved around religious identity. “Opposition to various aspects of modernization triggered the development of a dense matrix consisting of religious community, associations and clubs, schools, and political representation in the form of the Centre Party. Within this web of institutions and organizations questions of life and death were clarified and the meaning of life defined” (Grossboelting, 2016, p. 27). When the Nazi state erupted on the scene and began to repress Catholic clergy, many ordinary Catholics interpreted this as an assault on their way of life. The result was a hardening of the desire to protect the Catholic community from possible future encroachments by state authorities.

The best way to do that was to back a political party that was most likely to defend Catholic values. In the post-1945 period, Christian Democrats (running as Christian Social Union, CSU, in Bavaria, and as Christian Democratic Union, CDU, nationally) were that party. In the words of a leading historian of the Catholic church in post-1945 Germany, “the CDU now had a partner in its aggressive canvassing of Catholic voters and the majority of bishops and their various dioceses massively supported the Union in the elections of 1949 and 1953, not just through more or less open appeals to voters to support the party but also by making Church infrastructure available to it” (Grossboelting, 2016, p. 61). Under the CDU/CSU government, the Church Tax was introduced at the national level and became a

vital source of funding for both Catholic and Protestant denominations, confessional religious education became a regular subject in state schools, the state promoted Catholic family values, and church officials were introduced into key state institutions like the Army, the broadcasting authorities, and government ethics commissions. Protestant critics maintained that the government was “under obvious or tacit Catholic leadership,” and many ordinary Catholics considered CDU/CSU to be the “contemporary continuation of the old Center party” (Grossboelting, 2016, p. 59).

Our expectation then is that the communal backlash against elite repression should result in higher support for the political party most likely to prevent future attacks against the dominant communal identity. Consistent with this expectation, we find that historically rural and predominantly Catholic municipalities where priests had been repressed under Nazism were more likely to vote for Christian Democrats in the initial post-war elections (1949-1969) by around two percentage points relative to municipalities where no clergy had been repressed. In the analyses of the more recent elections we show how the legacy effect of Nazi-era priest repression persisted into the 21st century and gradually diminished over time, until it was no longer discernible by 2021.

We test the microfoundations of the argument by showing that the effects of priest repression were higher in smaller municipalities, where the sense of communal identity was tighter. We also demonstrate that the legacy effects of priest repression were stronger in communities where priests served longer and therefore had a chance to bond more meaningfully with their parishioners. In this way we are able to link Catholic community strength to stronger legacy effects of priest repression after the war.

What are the mechanisms behind the transmission of the legacy effects of elite repression? Initially, it was the Catholic church itself, the institution that had been repressed, that kept alive the memory of a political threat to Catholicism. Many priests who had been repressed by the Nazis continued to serve in the same parishes after WWII. Elsewhere, the acts of historical repression were likely brought up in sermons. We demonstrate that in communities

that experienced priest repression mass attendance and voter turnout levels were higher in the post-war decades.⁴ Starting in the late 1960s, as priests retired and died, and secularization began to empty out the churches, the institutional mechanism was no longer sufficient. At that time, family transmission of partisanship gradually came to replace it (on intergenerational transmission of partisanship see Campbell et al. (1960); Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2004); Jennings, Stoker and Bowers (2009)). The first generation that directly witnessed priest repression and thus developed warmer feelings toward Christian Democrats as the potential bulwark against future encroachment on the Church transmitted these warmer feelings toward the CSU to their offspring, even as religiosity among the later generations was declining. We provide strong indirect support for these transmission mechanisms from a variety of analyses.⁵

The findings, in their totality, furnish evidence in support of the hypothesis of political identity reaffirmation in communities that experienced elite repression. They speak to two important scholarships. First, we contribute to the literature on the legacies of violence by showing that repression against elites is one of the mechanisms by which violence reshapes political behavior over the long-term. To the best of our knowledge, ours is among the first studies of the effects of elite repression on long-term shifts in political behavior (also see Krakowski and Schaub (2022); Martinez (2022); Charnysh and Pique (2023)). Second, we contribute to studies on the influence of religious authorities on political behavior (Djupe and Gilbert, 2003; Trejo, 2009; Condra, Isaqzadeh and Linardi, 2019; McClendon and Riedl, 2019; Blair et al., 2021; Pulejo, 2023). Work in this tradition emphasizes how the church can be a safe haven for anti-regime sentiment with far-reaching implications both for regime collapse and for subsequent post-authoritarian politics (Wittenberg, 2006; Grzymała-Busse, 2015).

⁴CDU/CSU is traditionally more favorable to regional rights than the Socialist party (SPD), historically Germany's other major party. Thus, it could be conjectured that we are picking up the effect of stronger preferences for Bavarian regionalism in the repressed communities. The fact that mass attendance levels are higher in communities where priests had been repressed links higher support for CSU directly to the Catholic church rather than the secular spirit of Bavarian regionalism.

⁵To demonstrate intergenerational transmission of partisanship requires survey evidence across multiple generations. These data are not available.

More broadly, our findings speak to the resurgence of literature on the influence of traditional religious leaders on public opinion (Condra, Isaqzadeh and Linardi, 2019; McClendon and Riedl, 2019; Blair et al., 2021). There are important scope conditions to our argument: the effects of Nazi repression were intense but relatively short-lived, and the Catholic milieu was very robust.

2 The Catholic Church and the German State

2.1 Repression of the Catholic Church

In Germany, the church-state struggle first became intense in the *Kulturkampf* (culture war) of 1872-78, when Chancellor Bismarck attempted to seize control over clerical appointment and to force the Catholic Church out of education. These attempts failed, and the Church emerged out of the *Kulturkampf* with a powerful political party, the Center Party (*Zentrum*), and gradually became a major force in German party politics (Kalyvas, 1996). In the last few elections before the Nazis seized power in 1933, the Center Party and its Bavarian ally held about 15% of seats in the federal parliament. At the individual level, being Catholic became a strong predictor of not voting for the National Socialist German Workers' Party or NSDAP (Spenkuch and Tillmann, 2018; Becker and Voth, 2023).

Center Party's senior officials, notably Franz von Papen, who served as the first vice-chancellor under Hitler, abetted the NSDAP's rise to power. Some of these officials acted out of fear of socialism and in the hope of preserving the everyday functioning of the church in a Nazi-dominated state. Their actions were a bad miscalculation. Nazism was a religion in its own right with powerful symbols, rituals, and dogmas built around the cult of the Aryan race and the German state (Evans, 2005). The Party elites were stridently anti-clerical. Heinrich Himmler, the head of the SS, declared that "we live in an era of the ultimate conflict with Christianity" and that it was the state's duty to "give the German people... the non-Christian ideological foundations on which to lead and shape their lives" (quoted in

Longerich (2011, p. 270)).

Shortly after Hitler's rise to power in 1933 some 2,000 functionaries of the Bavarian People's Party (BVP)—a more conservative and religious splinter of the Center Party —were rounded up and arrested. By July of that year the Vatican signed an agreement with the German state (*Reichskonkordat*) that granted the Catholic church the right to manage the religious life of its parishioners in exchange for complete withdrawal from politics. Accordingly, the Center Party and BVP self-dissolved along with the Catholic Teachers' Union. Catholic Action, a predecessor of the Christian Democratic movement, was pressured to wind down.

In the summer of 1934 prominent Catholics were swept up in the purges of the Night of the Long Knives. The head of Catholic Action, the editor of Munich's influential Catholic weekly *Der Gerade Weg*, and the national director of the Catholic Youth Sports Association were murdered (Hoffmann, 1977). In 1936 the state embarked on a campaign to destroy the Church's moral reputation. In the so-called 'immorality trials' hundreds of monastics were dragged before courts on charges of sexual impropriety and currency manipulation. Around the same time the Bavarian state government banned nuns from teaching in schools on the grounds that "the National Socialist State wants a school, a youth, and a form of education in harmony with the National Socialist spirit" (Kershaw, 2000, p. 201).

The Catholic Church responded to this wave of persecutions with formidable might. In a vehement encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*, published in 300,000 copies unprecedentedly in German and not the customary Latin, and read out in every Catholic church in Germany on Palm Sunday 1937, Pope Pius XI condemned the neo-pagan idolization of race, spoke out in defense of the rights of man as divinely ordained in a critique of the Reich's sterilization policies, and threatened that the Church "would defend its rights and its freedom in the name of the Almighty" (Spicer, 2004, p. 57).

This led to the Nazi regime redoubling its efforts. Simultaneous membership in *Hitler Jugend* and Catholic youth associations became impossible; by July 1937 the Bavarian state

banned most Catholic youth organizations; and in 1939 the state declared that all Catholic confessional schools in Bavaria have been disbanded or converted to public/community schools (*Gemeinschaftsschulen*) (Evans, 2005; Horn, 1979). In 1941, all church newspapers and periodicals were shut down, decrees were adopted to abolish school prayers and remove crucifixes from schools, and monasteries ordered to self-dissolve (Lewy, 2000). By the time that the tide of war turned against Nazi Germany Catholic religious life had been seemingly largely erased from the public sphere.

2.2 Life in the Parish and the Dynamics of Priest-Led Resistance

In seeking to confine Catholic practice only to Sunday services and feast days, the Nazis repressed thousands of local clergy. In the Weimar Republic, Catholic communal life was centered around the Church, with its masses, feast days, religious festivals, associations for every generation and occupation group, and control over nurseries and primary schools. Symbols played an important role in that life with crucifixes displayed in every home and classroom, and Vatican's white and yellow flags flown on feast days. "[A]ctivities and festivities and above all the Church year moulded the life cycle of the individual and family. A life integrated into this milieu 'from cradle to grave' was bookended by baptism and a Church burial" (Grossboelting, 2016, p. 27).

At the center of the Catholic milieu stood the parish priest. He presided over communal activities and was the direct link to the salvation of one's soul. An activist parish priest was not hesitant to use this power. For example, when Father Heinloth of Ochsenfeld, in the diocese of Eichstaett, was instructed by the Secret State Police (*Gestapo*) to leave his post over derogatory remarks he made about the community school ran by party loyalists "he informed his parishioners that on the Bishop's orders he was taking away the Sacrament and extinguishing the sacred light in the church." (Kershaw, 2000, p. 204). Parishioners begged Heinloth to return, and, when he did illegally, Heinloth was arrested. In response, villagers shouted abuse at local officials, and SS guards were brought in to restore order. For fear

of further unrest, the case against Heinloth before the Special Court that decided political cases was dropped and he was transferred.

Everyday resistance by Catholic clergy in defense of the Church's traditional sphere of authority—what Spicer (2004) termed “pastoral resistance” (*Seelsorge-Resistenz*)—consisted of a multitude of small gestures that added up for effect. Catholic priests often demonstratively refused to use the ‘Heil Hitler’ greeting. They would put out banned church flags and refuse to fly the swastika or to ring church bells for secular political celebrations. Many would not baptize babies with non-Christian names or would not remove their hats or salute when nationalist songs were sung or Nazi symbols displayed.

As the Church–Nazi conflict intensified after 1936, some parish priests purposefully scheduled religious celebrations and catechism classes to coincide with Nazi events. Attendance at church festivals was typically higher than at those organized by the Party (Horn, 1979). Religious gatherings—and especially festivals celebrating the investiture of new priests (*Primizfeiern*)—resembled anti-government rallies. At one such gathering, at the Passion Theater of Obergammau in the diocese of Munich-Freising, “one preacher caused unrest among his listeners by hinting that the time would come when each Catholic would have to vote whether he wished to remain a Catholic and still have a priest” (Kershaw, 2000, p. 197). All of this led Gestapo in Bavaria to remark in their reports “that the churchgoing population takes at heart the side of the priests and that therefore the support for the clergy becomes greater... the influence of the Church on the population is so strong that the National Socialist spirit cannot penetrate” (quoted in Kershaw (2000, p. 201)).

Clerics varied in their willingness to challenge the regime. Some, like Father Albert Willimsky, criticized the state often and openly, from the pulpit, in the classroom, in the local inn, and even to complete strangers on public transport. Willimsky was detained several times and died in the Dachau concentration camp in 1940 (Spicer, 2008, p. 75–81). Others, like Josef Fäth, the chaplain of Leidersbach in the diocese of Würzburg, used their spiritual authority to consolidate local public opinion around them and were able, at least

for a time, to express their political views with vehemence and some impunity (Kershaw, 2000, p. 200). A small minority of Catholic priests enthusiastically supported the Nazis. Known as “brown priests”, they advocated for unity between the Catholic church and the Nazi state and some worked as government informers (Spicer, 2008). Many clerics simply stayed quiet and tried hard to create an impression of being apolitical.

The Nazi state had a low tolerance for any critics, including those from the Catholic milieu. Those clerics who criticized the regime, disrespected Nazi symbols, or resisted the state’s attempts to quash Catholic associational life were punished. The state’s police apparatus, particularly the Gestapo, along with local teachers—almost universally strongly supportive of Nazism and anti-clerical—and local Nazi party members and mayors kept a close watch for signs of resistance by the clergy. The historical record suggests that, on average, priests who were more energetic in pushing back against the state were ones who were more likely to be subject to repression.⁶

The history of the village of Fürstenfeldbruck, in the archdiocese of München-Freising, is instructive. Until 1939, Pastor Heinrich Feiler was the priest there; he “primarily limited himself to pastoral care in the narrower sense, avoided conflicts, and seemed to give in under pressure” (Forstner, 2009, p. 246). Father Feiler was not subject to state repression. On Feiler’s retirement, he was replaced by Martin Mayr, who was “very outspoken” and had been involved in political work with BVP before 1933. Within two years, Mayr was banned from teaching, and by 1942 state authorities forced Mayr’s dismissal for political unreliability (von Hehl, 1996). As Kershaw remarks, “the personality and energy of individual priests unquestionably influenced the degree of bitterness with which the Church struggle was contested” (2000, p. 198). All else equal, those who put up more of a fight were also the ones who were more likely to be repressed.

⁶Some repressed priests were denounced by local elites because of grudges. At times, in areas where the local administrative apparatus was more robust, priests were more likely to come under pressure from the state (von Hehl, 1996). We control for state capacity in the empirical section.

2.3 Political Catholicism After 1945

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the German state suffered from an acute crisis of political legitimacy. Political authorities were thoroughly discredited, and the very idea of the German nation seemed, for a time, distasteful. The Catholic church, less complicit in collaboration with the Nazis than the Protestant denomination (Lewy, 2000), stepped up to fill the resultant void in political values. Heinrich Krone, a cofounder of CDU, noted that “[t]he only choice open to us as a people is to profess our faith in Christianity” (quoted in Grossboelting, p. 43). Buoyed by an alternative sense of political purpose emanating from the Church and grateful for the fact that Catholic authorities were willing to speak up for ordinary Germans in the denazification trials, Germans began returning to the Catholic church. In the archdiocese of München-Freising alone attendance at Sunday mass increased from 35.2 to 38.9 per cent between 1945 and 1950 (Grossboelting, 2016).

Catholic hierarchs were interested in reviving the Church’s political influence, while Christian Democrats were keen to secure a broad voter base. This created a natural alliance between the CDU/CSU and the Catholic church. That alliance was initially so strong that Catholic bishops joined the CDU/CSU politicians in discouraging the revival of the Center party on the grounds that the CDU was better capable of securing the role of religion in political life than a resuscitated smaller and Catholic-only Center party. Church dogma wove itself into the fabric of political life under Germany’s first post-war chancellor Konrad Adenauer, a Catholic. Although kept out of the Basic Law through a compromise between Adenauer and the Church, religious values found institutional protection through introduction of the Church tax, state agreement to introduce religious education into school curricula, and induction of Catholic and Protestant priests into the Army, state broadcasting corporations, and government ethics commissions. Adenauer’s era (1949-1963) came to be characterized by the three Ks: Kirche, Käfer, Konservatismus ([Catholic] Church, [Volkswagen] Beetle, Conservatism) (Grossboelting, 2016, p. 24).

Catholicism’s centrality to German politics was not to last forever. Population move-

ments triggered by WWII and post-war modernization weakened the Catholic milieu, and a strictly Catholic way of life was becoming increasingly less relevant to a society rocked by social and political upheavals of the 1970s and beyond. As a result, church attendance declined rapidly through that decade. Nevertheless, the association between CDU/CSU and political Catholicism endured. Even as Christian Democrats sought to expand their appeal to all religious denominations and their Socialist rivals worked to shed the image of a Protestant workers' party, CDU's conservative stance on family values and abortion, among other issues, ensured a continuation of its status as a natural ally of the Catholic church.

3 Theory

Our expectation that repression of elites might have a lasting effect on communities comes from a synthesis of the literatures on preference formation and the legacies of violence. Research on preference formation maintains that elites play an important role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of ordinary community members by providing them with informational cues. In canonical work on preference formation Zaller (1992) has argued that elite cues are one of the main sources of political information for citizens (see also Druckman and Lupia (2000); Gabel and Scheve (2007); Linz (2012)). Studies in evolutionary biology show that community elites also shape and transmit political identities horizontally across generations by setting standards and policing them (Boyd and Richerson, 1985; Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1982; Bowles and Gintis, 2013).

Religious figures are the archetypal community elites in settings where religion commands respect. Clerics have been shown to get out the vote, influence voting decisions, and shape the dynamics of post-conflict reconciliation on the African continent, in Latin America, and in the United States (Djupe and Gilbert, 2003; Trejo, 2009; Condra, Isaqzadeh and Linardi, 2019; McClendon and Riedl, 2019; Blair et al., 2021; Pulejo, 2023). Under authoritarianism religious institutions are often the only source of associational life that exists outside of the

state’s direct control. This empowers religious institutions as potential alternative centers of power and elevates priests to the status of plausible protest leaders. In Iran, Guatemala, Chile, Poland, Tunisia, and Egypt religious leaders have been shown at the forefront of successful political protests against entrenched authoritarian rulers (Gill, 1998; Grzymała-Busse, 2015; Lynch, 2012; Nugent, 2020). Elsewhere, like in Hungary under communism, local clerics successfully nourished anti-regime political identities among their parishioners (Wittenberg, 2006). Faced with this potential challenge from religious authorities, authoritarian regimes have the choice to either co-opt clerics or suppress them. Co-optation is difficult given that priests have entrenched preferences and, in the case of Catholicism, institutional loyalties, and repression is often a more effective tool (Koesel, 2014).⁷

The literature on the legacies of violence has argued that that historical repression against *family members* often backfires and turns victims and their descendants against the perpetrators and their successors while strengthening in-group bonds within the victim community (Balcells, 2012; Bauer et al., 2016; Rozenas, Schutte and Zhukov, 2017; Fouka and Voth, 2023). The legacies of violence have been shown to be transmitted across at least three generations within families, embedded within like-minded communities, from older to younger relatives as victim identities (Lupu and Peisakhin, 2017; Charnysh and Peisakhin, 2022). In these studies, the mechanism at work is transmission of a sense of aggrievement and desire for revenge against the perpetrator.

Building on the existing literature on the legacies of violence, we hypothesize that repression against elites—who, like family members, are agents of socialization—might result in a backlash against the perpetrator. The intuition behind this argument is that an attack against well-respected and entrenched community elites might be interpreted by ordinary community members as an attack against the community way of life. A natural reaction to such an attack is a desire to protect the community against future encroachment by the perpetrator or similar agents. This results in reaffirmation of community values and expression

⁷Nalepa and Pop-Eleches (2022) show how an authoritarian regime can successfully co-opt priests in the context of Poland.

of support for political agents or institutions that are most likely to support the community way of life and prevent future encroachments against it. In the context of this study, we hypothesize that in localities where Catholic priests had been repressed under Nazism the vote for Christian Democrats—the political party most likely to defend Catholic values—was higher in the post-1945 period (H1).

A backlash effect against elite repression is more likely when local elites are well-respected and highly visible, so that an attack against them is also understood as an attack against the community itself. Not every community member needs to rally around the flag when local elites are attacked and, conceivably, repression can peel off some community members. To test the intuition that a backlash effect is more likely in more tightly-knit communities and ones where local elites are better established we hypothesize that the effect of Nazi repression on post-war support for Christian Democrats will be more pronounced in smaller, more stable and connected communities (H2) and those where priests served for longer periods and were therefore better embedded and more visible (H3).

The memory of repression and resultant changes in community identities are likely transmitted over time through the institution that was repressed—in this instance, the Catholic Church—and through families. Initially, the Church, through surviving priests or commemorative events, likely preserved the memory of the local threat to the Catholic milieu and heightened the local sense of political Catholicism. Thus, we expect that mass attendance should be higher in localities where priests had been repressed under Nazism (H4). Over time, the power of the institutional transmission mechanism was bound to decline. Priests who had served under Nazism retired and died, and a rise in secularism meant that fewer people went to church. At that point, the family likely took over as the dominant transmission mechanism for the political effect of elite repression. We know from the literature on the intergenerational transmission of partisan identities that parents influence their children’s voting choice through childhood socialization (Campbell et al., 1960; Green, Palmquist and Schickler, 2004; Jennings, Stoker and Bowers, 2009). Thus, we expect that once a stronger

pro-CSU identity took hold in the first generation of Bavarian Catholics in communities where priests had been repressed, that stronger attachment to the CSU and higher political activism was passed down to subsequent generations. Notably, transmission of a pro-CSU partisan identity did not require the younger generation to be aware of the acts of Nazi repression in their communities. What we do expect to find in the affected communities is higher political activism expressed through higher voter turnout (H5).

4 Data

4.1 Repression

The causal variable in this study is incidence of repression against Catholic clergy in Bavaria—this includes parish priests, chaplains, teachers of religion who have priestly rank, and monastics. The data are digitized from a historical compilation of Nazi-era repression against Catholic clergy commissioned by the Church (von Hehl, 1996). The compilation is now in its fourth edition and stands at over 3,000 pages. The entries are based on records from the Gestapo, police, courts, and diocese archives, and post-war surveys of Catholic priests. Any missingness, insofar as it exists, is primarily due to the fact that some security archives were destroyed in WWII. The data are organized in the form of brief individual biographical entries that detail the priest’s name, date of birth and death, locations where the person was repressed and positions within the church hierarchy, and a narrative section, usually a few sentences about the acts of repression. That section usually gives the dates of specific incidents and describes them as well as the resultant state sanctions.

In Bavaria, 47% of all Catholic priests (3,975 of about 8,500) were subject to some form of repression under Nazi rule. Generally, activists priests who directly or indirectly criticized or challenged the regime were targeted. In total, allowing for the fact that larger towns had more than one priest, some 35% of the 7,300 Bavarian municipalities—and 43% of all rural municipalities—saw Catholic clergy repressed between 1933 and 1945. The location of re-

pression episodes is reported at settlement level. Given that the dependent variable—voting returns—is at municipality (*Gemeinde*) level, we aggregate repression data to municipalities too. Municipalities are either a single larger settlement or an aggregation of two to three villages. Especially in the countryside, where historical municipality and parish boundaries often coincided, it makes substantive sense to aggregate repression in this way. The majority of repressed priests stayed put in the same parish throughout the Nazi period, and many remained there after WWII. Among repressed priests, 48% were subject to repression in a single parish. The remainder moved about and were persecuted in multiple parishes.⁸

We measure repression by, first, constructing a binary variable that takes on a value of “1” if there was at least one instance of clergy repression in a given municipality in 1933–1945 and “0” otherwise. In some municipalities multiple priests were repressed at various points in time. To capture this variation we also compute the total count of repressed priests in a given municipality. The total number of repressed priests in a municipality ranges from 0 to 62. The repression count is especially high in cities like Munich and Augsburg and at large monasteries, which were home to hundreds of clerics. The indicator and count variables are our primary measures of priest repression. Given that larger settlements had more priests, there is a risk of a mechanical finding that larger settlements—where voting patterns might be different—experienced more repression. To address this concern we control for the number of residents at the level of municipalities in the baseline specification, and in Appendix D.1 we also normalize the number of repressed priests by 1,000 residents at the municipal level. Normalized results are consistent with those reported in the body of the paper.

In the robustness checks we use two additional measures that get at the severity of repression. One is a manually coded five-point scale of repression intensity ranging from warnings from party authorities (category 1) to lengthy prison sentences or execution (category 5).⁹ The other measure is a repression sentiment score constructed by 13 native German speakers, who independently scored lemmatized proper nouns in the biographical entries from -3 (least

⁸The maximum number of repression locations is six.

⁹More details on how this variable is constructed and its description is in Appendix E.1.

repressive) to 3 (most repressive). Each biographical entry was assigned a total repression score by summing the scores for individual nouns in that entry.¹⁰

The geography of repression is represented visually in Figure 1, where municipalities that experienced at least one episode of repression are denoted alongside information on the proportion of Catholics across all of Bavaria’s municipalities. It is clear from this figure that repression affected the entirety of Bavaria but was relatively milder in the Protestant corridor in the North where there were few Catholic priests.

4.2 Outcome Variables

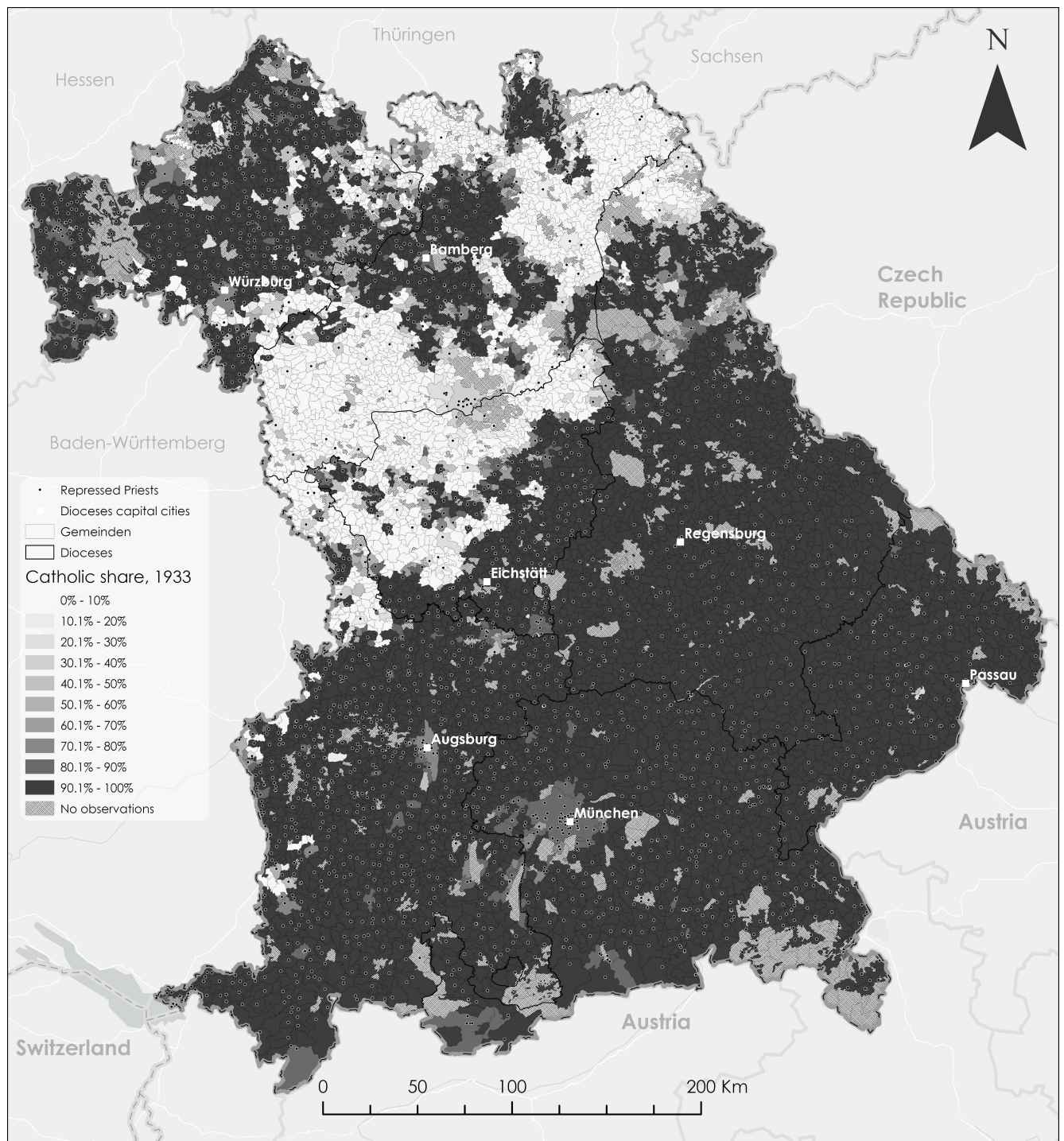
The main outcome variable is post-WWII electoral support for Christian Democrats. We study the effect of Nazi-era repression of Catholic clergy in every federal parliamentary election from 1949 to 2021 by examining the level of support for the CSU in municipalities where priests had been repressed compared to those where no clergy was persecuted.¹¹ As the sample is limited to exclusively Catholic communities, it is safe to assume that most municipalities in the control group had at least one cleric. In subsidiary analyses we also restrict the sample to communes with at least one known religious building; the results hold (see Appendix D.3). We obtained all electoral data from the Bavarian Statistical Office. We do not examine voting in state elections because the data necessary to construct controls for Weimar-era voting at that level were destroyed in the war.

To test the mechanisms behind the post-war activation of the Catholic base as a legacy of priest repression we also collected data on electoral turnout and mass attendance. Mass attendance data at municipality level are difficult to find, but we did manage to obtain a selection of such disaggregated data from the German Bishops’ Conference for the diocese of Munich-Freising, the largest of the seven dioceses in Bavaria, at ten-year intervals from 1970 to 2010 (data point for 2000 is missing).

¹⁰Further details on this measure are in Appendix E.2.

¹¹Since 1953 voters cast two votes in federal parliamentary elections: one for a specific candidate and one for a party. We look at the proportional tier vote for parties. Voting results are usually very similar across both tiers. The first post-war election in 1949 only had the party vote.

Figure 1: Geography of Priest Repression and the Presence of Catholics



Note: The figure displays the location of municipalities in which at least one priest was repressed during the Nazi era and the proportion of Catholics at municipality level.

5 Research Design

5.1 Unit of Analysis

Municipality is the lowest unit of analysis in this project. There were 7,261 municipalities in Bavaria in the 1930s. Municipal borders remained largely unchanged from the 1920s to the immediate post-war period; the few changes that did occur are referenced in Appendix A.2.¹² For ease of referencing, we use the municipality and district (*Kreis*) boundaries as they stood in 1951.¹³ A major administrative reform in the 1970s reduced the number of Bavarian municipalities to 2,054 through amalgamation. For the first six post-war elections from 1949 to 1969 our explanatory and outcome variables are at the level of historical municipalities. In the analyses of long-term persistence from 1972 to 2021 we use modern-day municipalities, and the explanatory variables and historical controls are aggregated to the level of these larger post-reform units. We refer to the pre-1970 municipalities and district as “historical” and to the post-1970 units as “modern-day.”

5.2 Sample

We restrict the sample to rural municipalities that were more than 90% Catholic in the 1930s. It is in these communities that we expect priests to be especially effective and for news of repression to reach most inhabitants. Because religious sorting was very pronounced in Bavaria much of the state is predominantly Catholic (see Appendix A.5). Cities are excluded from the sample, because they are more subject to population movement than rural settlements. The fact that many residents of Bavarian cities today do not trace their ancestry to inhabitants of these settlements in the 1930s makes the theory of identity transmission inoperable there. Once cities and majority-Protestant municipalities are excluded we are left

¹²The exclave of Palatinate is excluded from all analyses; it was part of Bavaria before WWII but was ceded to Rheinland Pfalz in 1946.

¹³Referencing units to the 1951 borders introduces minor measurement error only in the two controls on interwar voting.

with 78% of Bavarian municipalities in 1933.¹⁴

5.3 Specification

An ideal specification would be a difference-in-difference design reporting a change in support for Catholic parties between the interwar and post-WWII periods in communities that experienced priest repression and those that did not. This type of specification requires municipality-level voting data for the interwar period. However, electoral data at that level of aggregation did not survive the war. The only available interwar voting data—assembled by Hänisch (1989) and Falter, Lindemberger and Schumann (2009)—are at the level of rural districts, municipalities of over 2,000 inhabitants, and cities. Districts contain dozens of municipalities, whereas the theory stresses the close-knit bond between the local priest and his parishioners. A district level difference-in-difference analysis is relegated to Appendix F.1 and yields results consistent with the main specification. Given the interwar data limitations, our baseline estimation is a series of cross-section regressions of the CSU vote share at the municipality level after WWII on the incidence of repression from 1933 to 1945 also at the level of the municipality, with district level controls for interwar support for Catholic and Nazi parties and other municipality-level historical controls. In the main specification we model electoral behavior in the post-war period as follows:

$$\text{CSU Vote Share}_{ict} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Repression}_i + X'_c \Phi + W'_i \Gamma + \kappa \Delta \text{voters}_{i,t-1949} + \rho + \epsilon_{ict} \quad (1)$$

where Repression_i denotes whether at least one priest in municipality i in district c was repressed during the Nazi era, and with $t \in \{1949, 1953, \dots, 2021\}$.

Expression (1) includes two district-level controls X_c for electoral behavior prior to the onset of Nazi rule. The first is support for Catholic parties—the Center Party and the

¹⁴The classification into rural municipalities and cities is from the 1933 census. We also exclude municipalities that have turnout of over 105% because of concerns over the quality of administrative data in these units; this reduces the sample by 3.8%.

Bavarian People’s Party—in the 1928 election, to acknowledge that post-WWII vote for the CSU might be a product of pre-Nazi support for political Catholicism.¹⁵ The second is vote for the NSDAP in 1928, because in settlements where the Nazi party was popular repression against the clergy might have been more likely.¹⁶ The specification contains a battery of controls for municipality characteristics in the interwar period, W_i : population size, percentage of Catholic inhabitants, percentage of inhabitants working in agriculture, and income tax revenue. These come from a variety of historical data sources; see appendices A.1 for details and A.3 for summary statistics. We account for population growth over time by controlling for percentage change in the number of voters between election t and 1949. To minimize unobserved heterogeneity between municipalities we include modern-day district fixed effects ρ .¹⁷

5.4 Balance

The analyses are premised on an assumption that priest repression is orthogonal to political characteristics of the municipality. If, in contrast, priests, who are subsequently repressed, are appointed to especially pro-Catholic parishes then what our analyses would pick up is that historically especially pro-Catholic parishes are persistently more likely to vote for a Catholic political party after WWII.

The historical record suggests that the logic of priest appointment had little, if anything, to do with political leanings of the priest or his future parishioners. The Clerical Legal Code of 1917 specified that appointments were subject to availability of vacancies and exam

¹⁵We use the data for a single year, 1928, because there are missing values for some of the previous elections. Vote for the Center Party and BVP in 1928 correlates very strongly with earlier elections. BVP was more autonomist, monarchist, and conservative than the Center Party. BVP’s successor, the Bavarian Party (BP), was revived in 1946 and competed for votes with CSU in the 1949 and 1953 elections. By 1957 BP became irrelevant after a series of strategic blunders.

¹⁶In Appendix B we report the results with an alternative election cycle, November 1932, when Nazi electoral popularity was at its peak. We prefer to use the 1928 data in the main specification because for the 1932 and 1933 elections voting results were not reported at the more fine-grained level of municipalities over 2,000 inhabitants. Results hold.

¹⁷Redistricting in the 1970s reduced the number of districts from 198 to 96. Historical district fixed effects are highly collinear with interwar electoral data, which is why we use modern-day districts for the fixed effects.

Table 1: Balance Table

	No Repressed	Repressed		
	Priest	Priest	Diff.	p-value
1928 Catholic Vote	45.78	45.35	0.43	0.311
1928 NSDAP Vote	2.38	2.44	-0.06	0.360
1933 Catholics (%)	99.06	98.57	0.49	0.000
1933 ln(Population)	5.84	6.46	-0.62	0.000
1939 ln(Income Tax)	0.01	0.03	-0.02	0.000
1939 Agriculture (%)	68.28	55.27	13.01	0.000
<i>N</i>	2,524	1,966		

Note: This table compares means of key controls for municipalities which saw their parish priest repressed and those that did not (=1 if any priest was repressed in town sometime between 1933 and 1945 and 0 otherwise).

scores in theology. While older clerics were able to apply for specific vacancies, almost all appointments were subject to nomination by the Vicar-General and approval by the diocesan administrative council, the *Ordinariat* (Jones, 1950).¹⁸

That priest repression under Nazism is orthogonal to a settlement’s political leanings before the onset of Nazi rule is confirmed in balance tests where we compare the vote for Catholic parties (Center Party and BVP) and the NSDAP in 1928 in areas that were to experience priest repression later and those that would not.¹⁹ The results are reported in Table 1. If anything, pre-1933 support for Catholic parties is by a small margin lower in communities where priests would be repressed later, although the statistical significance of this effect disappears once controls are added.

From this table it also appears that repression was more common in larger, less agricultural, and wealthier municipalities. This puts into question the assumption that municipalities that experienced repression and those that did not were similar on every dimension. To address this concern we add controls and execute supplementary analyses. First, we account for the repressive capacity of the Nazi regime by adding to the main model a variable for

¹⁸A small number of positions were subject to ‘patronage nominations’ by the state government or local nobility. These appointments were also subject to approval by church authorities.

¹⁹Balance tests using the 1932 and 1933 electoral results are reported in Appendix B; they are similar.

the number of state officials, a standard measure of state capacity. Second, we also control for the extent of non-elite repression. There was no indiscriminate mass repression in Bavaria, but socialists and, especially, Jews were targeted. Socialists were persecuted largely in cities, where factories were located, and this group is therefore less relevant in our rural sample. We do add a control for the intensity of anti-Jewish repression at the municipal level.²⁰ Third, in supplementary analyses we control for the pre-Nazi intensity of Catholic associational life—where available, we coded the number and type of Catholic associations by municipality—to account for how well entrenched institutionally Catholicism was. Lastly, to allow for the fact that the Catholic church might have been responding strategically to state repression we reconstructed priests’ trajectories in one diocese and are able to drop from the analyses all priests appointed after Nazi’s rise to power in 1933.

In addition, we use two strategies to account for possible *unobserved* variation between repressed and unrepressed communities. In the first, we *only* consider communities where at least one priest had been repressed and ask whether repression of *additional* clerics was associated with an increase in the post-war support for CSU. The second strategy is the aforementioned difference-in-difference analysis at the county level where we examine whether the difference in support for Catholic parties between repressed and non-repressed communities increased after Nazism. Results across all these tests and sub-analyses are qualitatively equivalent: we find consistently that Nazi-era elite repression is associated with higher support for Christian Democrats after the war.

²⁰To the best of our knowledge, we are the first team of researchers to gain access to the individualized dataset of Jewish repression and make use of its geographic structure (see Appendix A.6 for spatial visualization of this variable).

6 Results

6.1 Main Model

In Table 2 we present the main set of results. In these analyses we regress post-war CSU vote share in the six elections prior to the redrawing of municipality boundaries on two alternative measures of priest repression under Nazism. These are (1) a binary variable for whether at least one priest had been repressed in a given municipality (columns 1-6) and (2) a count variable that measures the effect of repression of each additional priest in that municipality (columns 7-12). Municipalities in which no priest had been repressed are in the baseline. All models include the full battery of historical controls. We cluster standard errors at the level of historical districts, as interwar electoral returns are aggregated at that level, and include modern-day district fixed effects.

The results indicate that municipalities where a parish priest had been repressed by the Nazis were considerably more likely to vote for the CSU in the immediate post-war elections by comparison to municipalities where repression had not taken place. The effects are statistically significant and large. A one-standard deviation increase in the number of repressed priests in a given town is associated with an increase in the CSU vote share of between 2.7 and 3.2 percentage points. To contextualize the magnitude of this effect, the CSU won 36% of the vote in our sample of rural, Catholic municipalities in 1949, 55% in 1953, and 68% in 1957 and 1969. Additional votes cast for the CSU generally came at the expense of the Socialists (SPD) (see Appendix E.3), who in the post-war decades were understood to favor liberal reproductive rights and oppose conservative family values (Grossboelting, 2016). Additional votes for the CSU could not have meaningfully come from the far-right camp because far-right parties were marginal through these decades; support for the far-right in communities where priests had been repressed is, nevertheless, negative, although rarely statistically significant (Appendix E.3). All in all, the results are consistent with hypothesis 1.

Table 2: Vote Share of the CSU in the 1949–1969 Bundestag elections at municipality level as a function of the frequency of priest repression

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969	(7) 1949	(8) 1953	(9) 1957	(10) 1961	(11) 1965	(12) 1969
Repressed priest (1933-1945, binary)	1.62*** (0.37)	1.04*** (0.35)	1.29*** (0.31)	1.20*** (0.28)	1.16*** (0.31)	1.42*** (0.28)						
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)							0.47*** (0.09)	0.42*** (0.07)	0.38*** (0.06)	0.40*** (0.07)	0.37*** (0.07)	0.45*** (0.06)
Population (1933, log)	-1.23** (0.57)	-1.38** (0.57)	-1.91*** (0.47)	-1.75*** (0.39)	-1.47*** (0.38)	-1.35*** (0.39)	-1.12* (0.56)	-1.35*** (0.57)	-1.83*** (0.46)	-1.68*** (0.39)	-1.40*** (0.38)	-1.27*** (0.39)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.13** (0.06)	0.26*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.03)	0.13** (0.06)	0.26*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.22 (0.39)	0.87** (0.34)	0.77*** (0.28)	0.69** (0.28)	0.84*** (0.28)	0.92*** (0.27)	0.40 (0.38)	0.96*** (0.34)	0.92*** (0.28)	0.82*** (0.28)	0.96*** (0.28)	1.08*** (0.26)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	7.24 (5.05)	16.00** (6.53)	25.04*** (5.39)	24.03*** (5.07)	29.66*** (5.42)	27.35*** (5.20)	1.73 (5.25)	11.76* (6.58)	20.81*** (5.15)	19.60*** (5.08)	25.81*** (5.28)	22.55*** (5.00)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.76 (0.60)	0.73 (0.55)	1.13** (0.53)	0.56 (0.50)	0.46 (0.47)	0.30 (0.45)	0.69 (0.59)	0.65 (0.55)	1.07** (0.53)	0.49 (0.50)	0.40 (0.46)	0.23 (0.45)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.43*** (0.01)	0.42*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.44*** (0.01)	0.43*** (0.01)	0.38*** (0.01)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.56*** (0.19)	0.69*** (0.15)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.39*** (0.10)	0.41*** (0.11)	0.45*** (0.11)	0.56*** (0.19)	0.69*** (0.15)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.39*** (0.09)	0.41*** (0.11)	0.45*** (0.11)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.67*** (0.14)	0.51*** (0.11)	0.52*** (0.09)	0.69*** (0.09)	0.66*** (0.08)	0.58*** (0.09)	0.68*** (0.14)	0.52*** (0.11)	0.53*** (0.09)	0.70*** (0.09)	0.67*** (0.08)	0.59*** (0.09)
Change in Number of Voters (%)		-0.00* (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)		-0.00* (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)
Constant	-38.01*** (13.84)	-11.99 (11.22)	-1.39 (8.88)	-18.83** (9.11)	-13.50 (8.40)	-8.83 (9.46)	-39.81*** (13.47)	-12.65 (11.04)	-2.73 (8.66)	-19.94** (8.95)	-14.56* (8.25)	-10.17 (9.25)
Modern district fixed effect	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.52	0.53	0.61	0.69	0.68	0.62	0.52	0.53	0.61	0.69	0.68	0.62

Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are for modern-day districts.
Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

The results are also robust to normalizing the total count of repressed priest by municipal population (Appendix D.1).²¹ To account for the influence of bishops on parish priests we also re-run the model with fixed effects for the seven Bavarian dioceses instead of administrative districts; the results hold (see Appendix D.2). The results are robust to subsampling the data to municipalities with religious buildings (70% of the sample) – thus, ensuring that the baseline definitely contains unrepressed clerics – and to adjusting standard errors to allow for spatial correlation whereby information on priest repression might circulate between neighboring municipalities (see Appendices D.3 and D.4, respectively).²²

Type and Intensity of Repression. The richness of the historical compendium on priest persecution allows us to consider alternative measures of repression. We reconceptualize the causal variable as (i) a five-category measure of repression intensity, running from minor sanctions to a concentration camp sentence and (ii), a hand-coded measure of repression intensity based off the biographical entries describing the nature of persecutions. When these two variables are used as substitutes, the direction and statistical significance of the legacy effect on voting remains unchanged—see Appendices E.1 and E.2.

6.2 Addressing Selection Concerns

There is a reasonable concern that the reported results might not be a product of priest repression but of some set of unobserved variables. We address it in this section. First, we run a difference-in-difference analysis at the level of *historical districts* that keeps everything other than the fact of priest repression constant. Because priests had been repressed in all rural districts, in this analysis we explore whether the change in the level of support for Catholic parties was different in districts where repression was above the sample average relative to those below it. If support for political Catholicism is due to some confounder then

²¹The specification where repression is normalized by population is also directly comparable with the subsequent longer-term analyses in Section 7.

²²Results also hold if we log-transform the repression count variable to address the problem of uneven distribution of repression across municipalities.

the difference between districts below and above the sample repression mean should be zero as both sets of districts lived through the same set of historical experiences other than priest repression. If, on the other hand, priest repression heightens support for Catholic parties then we should observe a positive difference across the two sets of districts in favor of areas where more priests had been repressed. The results are reported in Appendix F.1. We validate the parallel trend assumption—the idea that districts above and below the repression mean had very similar voting patterns prior to the onset of priest repression—and find that support for Christian Democrats went up after WWII in districts with higher levels of priest repression. There the CSU received, on average, more votes by about seven percentage-points.

An alternative way to allay concerns about the selection on unobservables is to exclude all municipalities where no priests had been repressed and explore whether more repression is associated with stronger post-war support for Christian Democrats. When we restrict the sample only to municipalities where at least one priest had been repressed, we find, consistent with expectations, that post-war support for CSU went up with every additional priest repressed; see Appendix F.2 for details.

Another potential threat to inference is that diocesan officials might have taken politics into account when appointing parish priests by, for instance, only giving parish assignments to priests who were non-activist after the Nazis came to power. We are able to explore whether the effect of repression on priests appointed after the Nazi seizure of power in 1933 disappears. To run this test we reconstructed the career trajectories of all repressed priests in the diocese of Augsburg (800+ priests repressed) to record the year when they were appointed to a given municipality.²³ We find that even in municipalities where priests were appointed after 1933 repression is associated with higher post-war vote for the CSU; for details see Appendix F.3. This suggests that politics did not play a decisive role in the process of priest assignment to parishes.

Finally, we re-run the main model with additional control variables that might plausibly

²³We limited this resource-intensive exercise to a single diocese.

account for alternative explanations for the findings. First, municipalities may have varied in the density of Catholic networks, which might explain both the logic of appointment of activist priests in 1933–1945 and post-war support for the CSU. To address this possibility, we control for the presence of Catholic associations and their type in the 1920s. Associations do matter for post-war support for CSU—they are an alternative measure for the strength of Catholic community life—but clergy repression coefficients remain statistically significant; see Appendix F.4.1 for results.²⁴ Second, we include a control for the intensity of repression against Catholics in the *Kulturkampf*; these data are from Haffert (2022). We find that the legacy effect of Nazi repression remains unchanged; see Appendix F.4.2.²⁵ Third, we control for the presence of Catholic priests who collaborated with the Nazi regime (data from Spicer (2008)). The results are not affected; see Appendix F.4.3. We also add a district-level control from Braun and Franke (2021) on the influx of German refugees from Central and Eastern Europe after WWII; the results remain substantively unchanged as shown in Appendix F.4.4.²⁶

7 Long-Term Effects

We now turn to the longer-term legacy effects. In these analyses historical repression indicators are aggregated to the level of the consolidated post-reform modern municipalities. Redistricting in the 1970s created municipalities of different sizes; to account for this we normalize the total count of repressed priests by municipality population in 1969, the year of the last census before redistricting.²⁷ Historical controls are likewise aggregated to modern-day municipalities; summary statistics for these variables are in Appendix A.4.

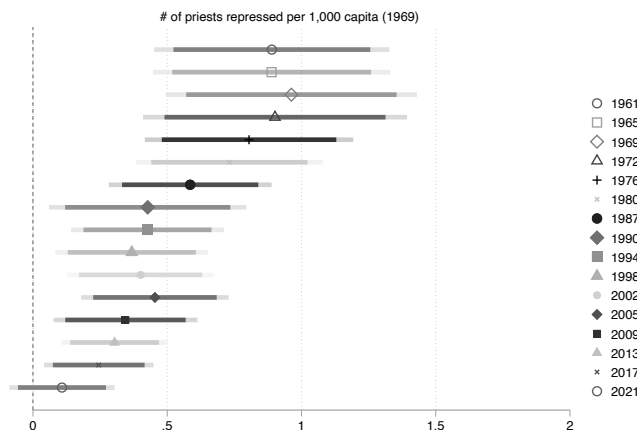
²⁴We do not control for the density of Catholic associations in the main specification because information on Catholic associations is not available for every diocese.

²⁵We cannot include this measure in the main analyses because it is highly collinear with the battery of fixed effects.

²⁶This variable is not included in the main model because of endogeneity concerns: over time migrants may have self sorted into like-minded communities.

²⁷If priest repression in the earlier models for 1949–1969 is normalized by population (in 1933) results hold; see Appendix D.1. Likewise, normalizing priest repression in the longer-term models (1961–2021) by 1933 population yields statistically significant results.

Figure 2: Effect of Repression on CSU Vote Share in Bavaria for Bundestag Elections, 1961-2021



Note: Total number of parish priests repressed aggregated at modern municipality and normalized by 1969 population. The figure displays OLS coefficients. Unit of analysis: modern-day municipality ($N = 1,358$). All models include the full set of covariates and modern district fixed effects ($N=71$); standard errors are clustered at the level of historical districts. Refer to Appendix C for regression table.

We run the same specification for the long-run models as for the earlier baseline model. In Figure 2 we plot the marginal effects of the number of priests repressed per 1,000 inhabitants in a given municipality on CSU vote share in all elections over a 50 year period from 1961 to 2021; regression results are in Appendix C.²⁸ In 1961, an increase in the number of priests repressed by Nazi authorities by one standard deviation is associated with an increase in the vote share of the CSU by 1.54 percentage points. By 2021 this effect diminishes to 0.21 of a percentage point and for the first time becomes statistically indistinguishable from zero. Between these two data points there is a continuous and gradual decline in the magnitude of the legacy effects.

These results provide additional support for the hypothesis that state repression against religious elites leaves a lasting political legacy and confirm that violent attempts at secularization can produce a powerful and long-lasting political backlash effect. Overall, we

²⁸The Bavarian Statistical Office has made electoral returns at the level of post-reform municipalities available starting from the 1961 election. We use this to facilitate a comparison of earlier treatment effect magnitudes in the analyses at the level of historical municipalities for 1961-69 to those that use modern municipal boundaries.

document a legacy effect of almost a century in duration and its gradual decay. This is novel in the literature on the legacy effects, which rarely documents diminishing legacy effects over time.

To check for the robustness of the long-term results we implement a placebo test. A placebo is an outcome that is not connected to the hypothesized causal variable and therefore should not vary with variation on the causal variable. We use the level of support for a ban on smoking in public places in a 2010 Bavaria-wide referendum as a placebo. As expected, we find that priest repression does not predict support for the smoking ban; these results are reported in Appendix G.

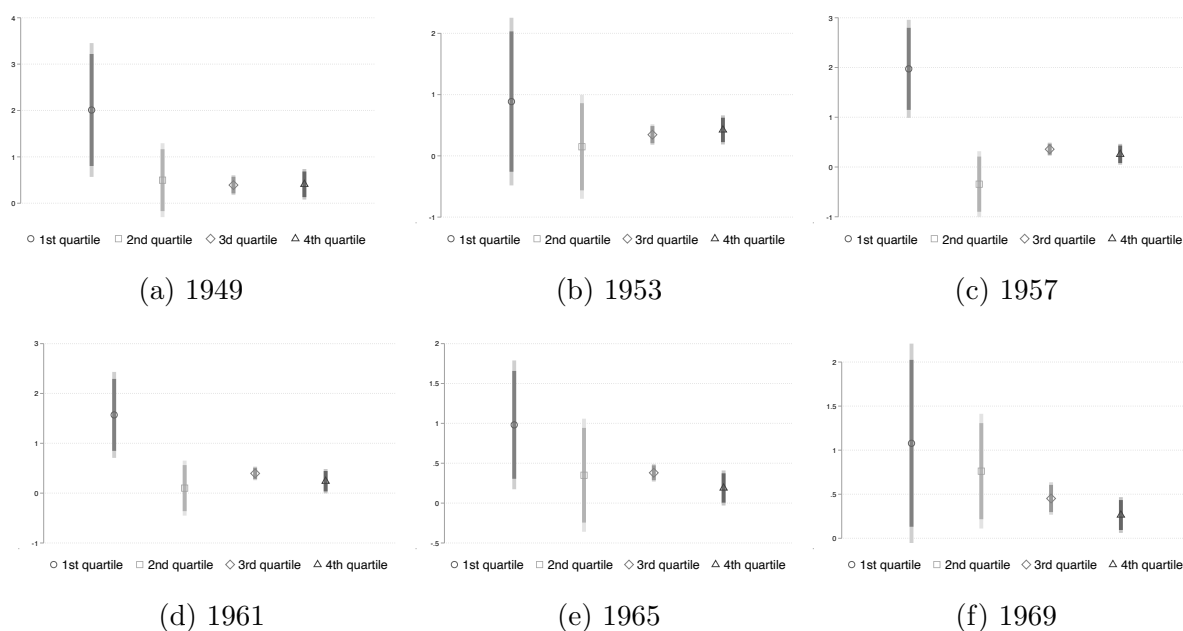
8 Microfoundations

In this section we explore whether there is supporting evidence for the microfoundations of the argument. The theory suggests that the legacy of repression should be felt more in communities where the bond between the parish priest and parishioners is stronger, i.e. in smaller municipalities and those where priests served longer. There residents are more likely to know that the priest has suffered persecution and to internalize the act of repression as an attack against their Catholic identity.

We compare the strength of the legacy effects in smaller and larger municipalities in Figure 3. There we divide municipalities into quartiles by population size and examine the effect of repression, operationalized as the count of priests repressed, for each quartile in the six elections before the municipal boundary reform. We find that the repression effects are consistently higher in smallest municipalities (up to 258 inhabitants) by around one percentage point than in largest municipalities (over 728 inhabitants). Consistent with expectations, effect magnitude decreases gradually as municipalities increase in size. This provides evidence in support of hypothesis 2.²⁹

²⁹This finding also allays a possible concern about the logic of repression raised in the section on historical balance where it seemed that larger and wealthier municipalities were more likely to see priests repressed. While priest repression was more frequent in larger municipalities, its effect reverberated more deeply in

Figure 3: Vote Share of the CSU in the 1949–1969 Bundestag elections at Municipality level by Municipality Size and Election Cycle



Note: OLS coefficients shown for municipalities of different population size (as per the 1933 census): first quartile (less than 258 inhabitants), second quartile (359-420), third quartile (421-727), and fourth quartile (more than 728 inhabitants). All models include a full set of covariates along with modern district fixed effects and standard errors clustered at historical district level.

We explore how the effect of repression varied by the length of priests' tenure in a parish by leveraging priests' age. Going over the diocesan yearbooks we noticed that older priests were considerably less likely to move between parishes than younger ones. Generally, by age 40 priests tended to settle. As priests have highly standardized career paths we make a simplifying assumption that older priests are also ones who have spent more time in the municipality where they had been persecuted.³⁰ The legacies of the repression effect for different priest age groups are explored in Figure 4. Here we divide the sample into priests under and over the age of 40 as of 1930. We find that repression of priests in both age groups increased post-war support for Christian Democrats. However, consistent with hypothesis 3, the effect size for the older cohort with deeper roots in the community is significantly larger than for the younger generation.³¹

9 Mechanisms of Transmission

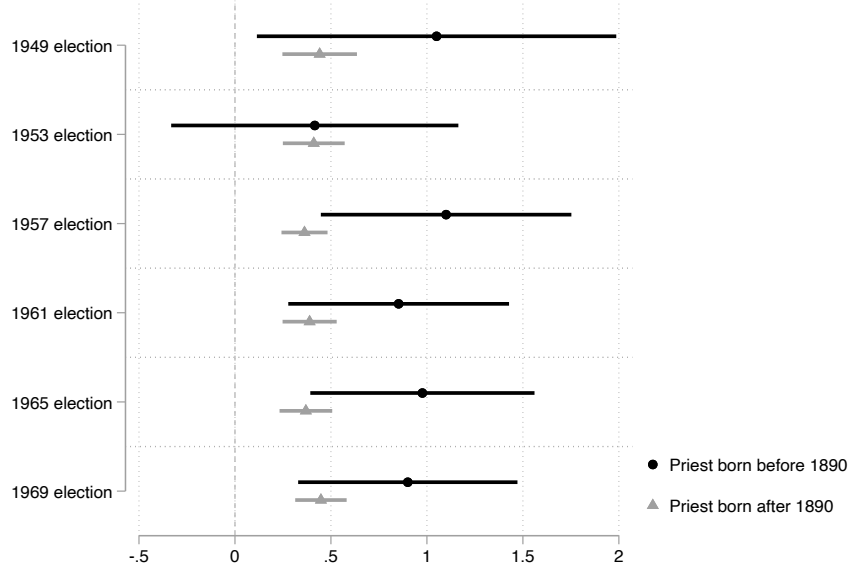
The long-term elite repression effects reported earlier in Figure 2 shed light on the hypothesized transmission mechanisms. Initially, the Church itself was likely reminding parishioners in the affected municipalities that the Catholic milieu there came under a particularly intense attack under Nazism. Many priests who had suffered non-lethal repression continued to work in the parishes where they had experienced persecution. Until 1965 about half of the repressed priests were still alive, and many had not retired. By the 1972 election, 70% of repressed priests were deceased, and by 1994 all of them had passed on. In parallel, church attendance declined as the relevance of religion to daily life came under attack. By implication then, a mechanism other than the institution of the Church must be responsible for the effect transmission since at least the 1970s. That mechanism is most likely the family,

smaller, more tightly-knit communities.

³⁰Insofar as some older priests did move around, by comparing the repression effect on older and younger priests we back out a lower-bound estimate of this effect.

³¹These results are suggestive, as old age might be correlated not only with duration of service in a given community but also with rhetorical skill and administrative acumen.

Figure 4: Effect of Repression by Birth Cohort of Repressed Priest



Note: OLS coefficients shown for municipalities separated by whether the priest who served there had been born before or after 1890. All models include the full set of covariates, modern-day district fixed effects, and standard errors clustered at historical district levels.

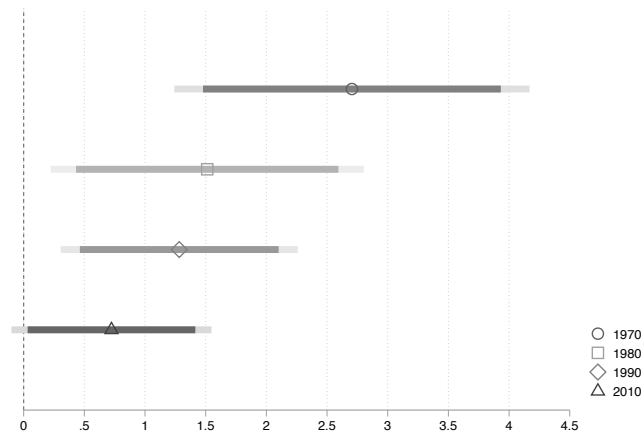
whereby the first generation that directly witnessed priest repression altered its partisan preferences in favor of CSU and then passed on this stronger pro-CSU partisan identity onto the subsequent, more secular generations.³² While demonstrating this effect rigorously requires evidence from inter-generational surveys, the results reported here provide strong indirect support for it.

The transmission hypothesis has two other observable implications. We argued that in communities where priests had been repressed, parishioners should have been mobilized in defense of the threatened Catholic identity by the Church itself and/or within families. In this section we test whether repressed communities had higher levels of attendance at mass and higher voter turnout.

In Figure 5 we explore the effect of Nazi-era priest repression on mass attendance levels.

³²Theoretically, there might also be an institutional channel of transmission via schools. In practice, this channel is irrelevant in the context of rural Bavaria, as the Catholic church was not able to open many religious schools after the war, and of the few that existed, most were in cities.

Figure 5: Effect of Repression on Mass Attendance in the Diocese of Munich-Freising in 1970–2010



Note: Total parish priests repressed normalized by population and aggregated at modern municipality. The figure displays OLS coefficients. Unit of analysis: modern municipalities in the diocese of Munich-Freising ($N = 284$). All models include a full set of covariates aggregated at modern municipality level along with modern district fixed effects ($N=71$) and standard errors clustered at historical district level. 90% and 95% CI in dark and light color respectively. Corresponding regression output is in Appendix H.

We have these data for a single diocese, that of Munich-Freising, for the years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2010. The data reflect a gradual decline in mass attendance. In 1970, on average 40% of Catholics attended Sunday mass but only 15% did so in 2010. The underlying model specification is the same as in Figure 2 with the standard battery of controls and fixed effects.³³ It is clear from the figure that Nazi-era priest repression has historically been associated with higher mass turnout levels in the affected municipalities. For each additional priest repressed, attendance at mass increased by around 2.7 percentage points in 1970 and 0.7 percentage points in 2010. This evidence is consistent with hypothesis 4, and we see that the effect of priest repression on political Catholicism has been waning over time.

Second, we examine whether municipalities where priests had been repressed have higher turnout. For simplicity of presentation we only report the coefficients for the count variable that captures the legacy effect for every additional priest prosecuted in the municipality.³⁴

³³We are not able to control for pre-Nazi mass attendance levels, because we have not been able to find the necessary historical data at the micro-level.

³⁴Results are consistent if the binary variable is used instead.

Table 3: Turnout Models, 1949–1969

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.31*** (0.06)	0.17*** (0.06)	0.09** (0.05)	0.13*** (0.03)	0.11** (0.05)	0.09** (0.04)
Population (1933, log)	-1.83*** (0.32)	-1.62*** (0.34)	-1.47*** (0.28)	-1.13*** (0.25)	-1.28*** (0.25)	-1.39*** (0.27)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.09*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.09*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.47** (0.21)	0.81*** (0.22)	0.52*** (0.20)	0.34** (0.14)	0.35** (0.15)	0.30 (0.18)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	14.30*** (3.19)	11.24** (4.59)	12.75*** (3.31)	5.60** (2.39)	7.18*** (2.72)	9.41*** (3.37)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.02 (0.33)	0.18 (0.33)	-0.04 (0.33)	0.02 (0.22)	0.41* (0.24)	0.37 (0.26)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	-0.00 (0.08)	0.16** (0.08)	0.02 (0.09)	0.14** (0.06)	0.18*** (0.07)	0.10 (0.08)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.30*** (0.07)	0.01 (0.06)	0.23*** (0.06)	0.13** (0.05)	0.14*** (0.05)	0.07 (0.06)
Change in Number of Voters (%)		-0.13*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Constant	60.87*** (6.84)	86.75*** (5.90)	63.87*** (5.98)	78.39*** (5.52)	75.31*** (5.52)	82.07*** (6.37)
District FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,469	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.26	0.33	0.45	0.34	0.34	0.31

Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of registered voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects correspond to modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

The results are reported in Table 3. Consistent with hypothesis 5, we find that for every additional priest repressed by Nazi authorities in a municipality, turnout in post-war elections there went up. For a one standard deviation increase in the number of repressed priests turnout increased by 0.5 and 0.13 percentage points in 1949 and 1969 respectively.³⁵ The magnitude of the repression effect on turnout gradually decreased over the post-war decades. This suggests that there is a decay in the mobilizational legacy of elite repression in parallel with one reported earlier in voting behavior. The fact that the decay is present for voting and voter turnout suggests that Catholic mobilization and vote for Catholic parties are connected, as the theory stipulates.

10 Conclusion

In this paper we set out to explore the effects of elite repression on subsequent political behavior by ordinary community members who themselves had not experienced direct repression. We explored this question in the context of Nazi repression of Catholic priests in Bavaria and post-WWII voting dynamics. Our expectation was that repression against elites backfires by threatening communal values and resulting in members of the affected community backing the political party that is most likely to protect the communal way of life. In this instance, we hypothesized that localities where priests had been repressed would be more likely to vote for Christian Democrats, the party most closely affiliated with the Catholic cause, after the war.

Drawing on a unique compendium of state repression against Catholic priests and historical and more recent social and political data we found that, consistent with expectations, Nazi-era repression of Catholic clergy was associated with higher support for Christian Democrats in all the post-war elections, all the way into the 21st century. The magnitude of this effect has been declining over time. In the immediate post-war elections historical repression was associated with an increase of about two-percentage points in the vote share of

³⁵Turnout in these elections was very high at 85.7% in 1949 and 86.7% in 1969.

Christian Democrats. By the late 2010s Christian Democrats had around a half-percentage point electoral advantage in municipalities where persecution had taken place.

In exploring the mechanisms behind the transmission of stronger Catholic identities forged through the repression of clergy by the Nazis, we showed how the Catholic base was more strongly mobilized in municipalities where repression had taken place as evidenced by higher turnout at elections and attendance at mass in those localities. This set of tests provided strong indirect support for the role of the Church and, subsequently, families in the transmission of stronger political Catholicism and pro-CSU partisanship. In addition, we showed that the legacy effects are stronger in smaller communities where repressed priests had served for longer periods—this is consistent with the hypothesis that elites have greater influence over political identities if they are well embedded in community life, and if the community is tightly knit.

To the best of our knowledge, this is among the first studies in political science to explore the political legacy of elite repression (see also Thomson (2022); Krakowski and Schaub (2022); Martinez (2022)). This set of findings has important implications for our understanding of how targeted repression of particularly influential individuals in their communities can have major downstream effects on political behavior. This is relevant to the study of the impact of secularization and repression of religious figures in the contexts of colonial conquest, foreign interventions, or domestic repression of clergy. And these findings also suggest that repression of civil rights leaders and other opinion makers might have created consequential backlash effects in their communities.

It bears noting that the case under study is particularly favorable to the theory in that Catholic clergy were historically very influential in Bavarian communities, whereas Nazi repression was relatively short-lived (see also Charnysh and Pique (2023) on priest repression in Poland). Further work is needed to explore the effects of elite repression in settings where elites are less well-entrenched and where repression might be more sustained.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

The Political Legacy of Elite Repression

Supporting Information

These appendices contain materials, results, and robustness checks that supplement the main text.

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A Data

A.1 Sources

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Jewish victims: Das Bunderarchiv, *Die Liste der jüdischen Einwohner im Deutschen Reich 1933-1945*. See Figure A-2 for a visualization of the geography of Jewish victims.

Priest Trajectory (Augsburg): Schematismus der Geistlichkeit des Bistums Augsburg für das Jahr 1950, 1. February 1950. Augsburg: Bischöflichen Ordinariates Augsburg.

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Expellees: Braun, Sebastian T. and Richard Franke. 2021. "A County-Level Database on Expellees in West Germany, 1939-1961." *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 108(4): 522-540.

A.2 Redistricting, 1920–1951

Our lowest unit of aggregation is the Gemeinde (municipality). We georeferenced the 7,000+ municipality and 190+ district (Kreis) boundaries for Bavaria as of 1951 from a map that we obtained from the Bayerischen Statistischen Landesamt. *Gemeindengrenzen Karte von Bayern, 1951, Maßstab 1:300,000*. Whereas municipality boundaries remained fairly stable over the years, district boundaries changed moderately. From 1920 to 1928, there were 198 districts in Bavaria proper (i.e. excluding the enclave of Palatinate). Eight districts were involved in merges between 1928 and 1932: First, between 1928 and 1932, Bamberg I and Bamberg II merged into a single county: Bamberg; Teuschnitz and Kronach merged to become the kreis of Kronach; Zusmarshausen and Augsburg merged into Augsburg; and Stadtamhof and Regensburg merged into Regensburg. Between 1932 and 1951, the district of Berneck was dissolved and split into three other kreise: Muenchenberg, Baureuth, and Kulmbach. To avoid aggregation issues, we dropped all municipalities located in any of the 12 districts experiencing any merge/split between 1932 and 1951.

A.3 Rural Catholic municipalities by pre-1970 borders

All variables are measured at the level of historical municipalities except for interwar electoral data. The latter are drawn from Falter and Hänisch's (1990) dataset. These data, widely used in related literature (e.g., Haffert (2022); King et al. (2008); Spenkuch and Tillmann (2018)) are aggregated at the level of city districts, municipalities over 2,000 inhabitants in rural districts, and rural districts (excluding municipalities over 2,000 inhabitants where these exist). In the elections of 1932-33 the municipalities over 2,000 inhabitants layer as missing, as electoral results were not reported at that level by the Weimar Statistical Office. All remaining variables are measured at the historical municipality level. The

Table A-1: Summary statistics for rural, Catholic municipalities defined by pre-1970 borders

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Level
Outcome Variables						
CSU Vote Share (1949, %)	4483	39.74	16.57	5.3	93.6	municipality
CSU Vote Share (1953, %)	4475	60.75	14.98	17.5	100	municipality
CSU Vote Share (1957, %)	4471	72.53	13.53	28.8	100	municipality
CSU Vote Share (1961, %)	4463	76.36	13.87	29.8	100	municipality
CSU Vote Share (1965, %)	4452	77.57	13.2	30.8	100	municipality
CSU Vote Share (1969, %)	4410	74.55	12.58	34.5	100	municipality
Repression						
Repressed priest (1933-1945, binary)	4492	.44	.5	0	1	municipality
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	4492	.79	1.66	0	65	municipality
Manual Code of Repression	4489	1.33	1.65	0	5	municipality
Sentiment score (maximum)	4492	3.7	5.03	0	30.39	municipality
Baseline Controls						
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	4490	45.59	14.11	3.16	79.53	sub-district
Catholic Population (1933, %)	4492	98.85	1.91	90.08	100	sub-district
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	4490	2.41	2.21	.08	25.18	municipality
Population (1933, log)	4492	6.11	.74	4.19	9.02	municipality
State Officials (1939, log)	4492	1.43	1.06	0	8.2	municipality
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	4490	.02	.04	0	.62	municipality
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	4492	.1	.3	0	1	municipality
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	4490	62.58	20.99	2.27	98.39	municipality

Note: These values correspond to the subset of Bavarian municipalities used in the analysis, namely rural and at least 90% Catholics. The last column, *Level*, reports the level of aggregation of the covariate. Both villages and sub-counties are historical (i.e., prior to 1970s redistricting).

effective sample is of 4,482 municipalities, about two-thirds of all historical municipalities. The remaining one-third do not qualify as Catholic-majority municipalities or are located in counties that were merged/split between 1920 and 1951.

A.4 Rural Catholic municipalities by post-1970 borders

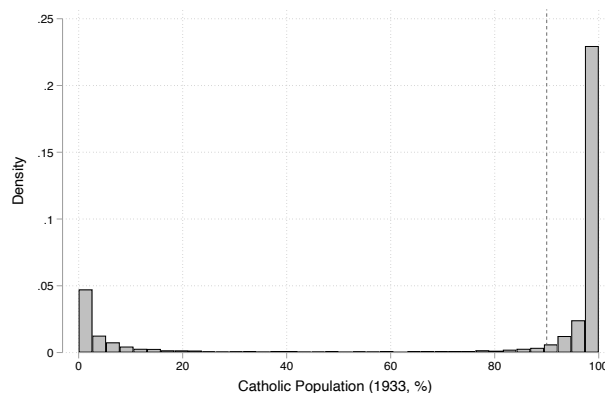
Table A-2: Summary statistics for rural, Catholic municipalities defined by post-1970

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Repressed Priests per th. capita as of 1969	1363	.95	1.07	0	22.13
Repressed Priests per th. capita as of 1933	1363	1.31	1.47	0	33.57
Population (1933, log)	1370	7.3	.7	4.8	9.31
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	1369	43.37	12.91	4.78	79.53
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	1370	53.87	18.47	4.84	92.11
Total Civil Servants (1939, log)	1370	2.67	1.04	0	8.2
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	1370	3.67	.88	.88	6.79
NSDAP Vote share (1928, %)	1369	2.29	1.88	.23	19.04
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	1370	.28	.45	0	1
Catholic Population (1933, %)	1370	98.43	2.04	90.08	100
Mass Attendance in 1970 (% of Catholics)	286	41.72	13.44	9.7	80
Mass Attendance in 1980 (% of Catholics)	285	34.3	12.58	5.11	68.11
Mass Attendance in 1990 (% of Catholics)	287	27.42	9.76	8.26	55.04
Mass Attendance in 2010 (% of Catholics)	288	15.45	6.27	4.79	44.53
Yes Vote in Smoking Ban Referendum (%)	1367	59.29	7.02	26.26	80.96

Note: The sample is a subset to modern-day municipalities that were 90%+ Catholic in the 1933.

A.5 Religious Residential Sorting

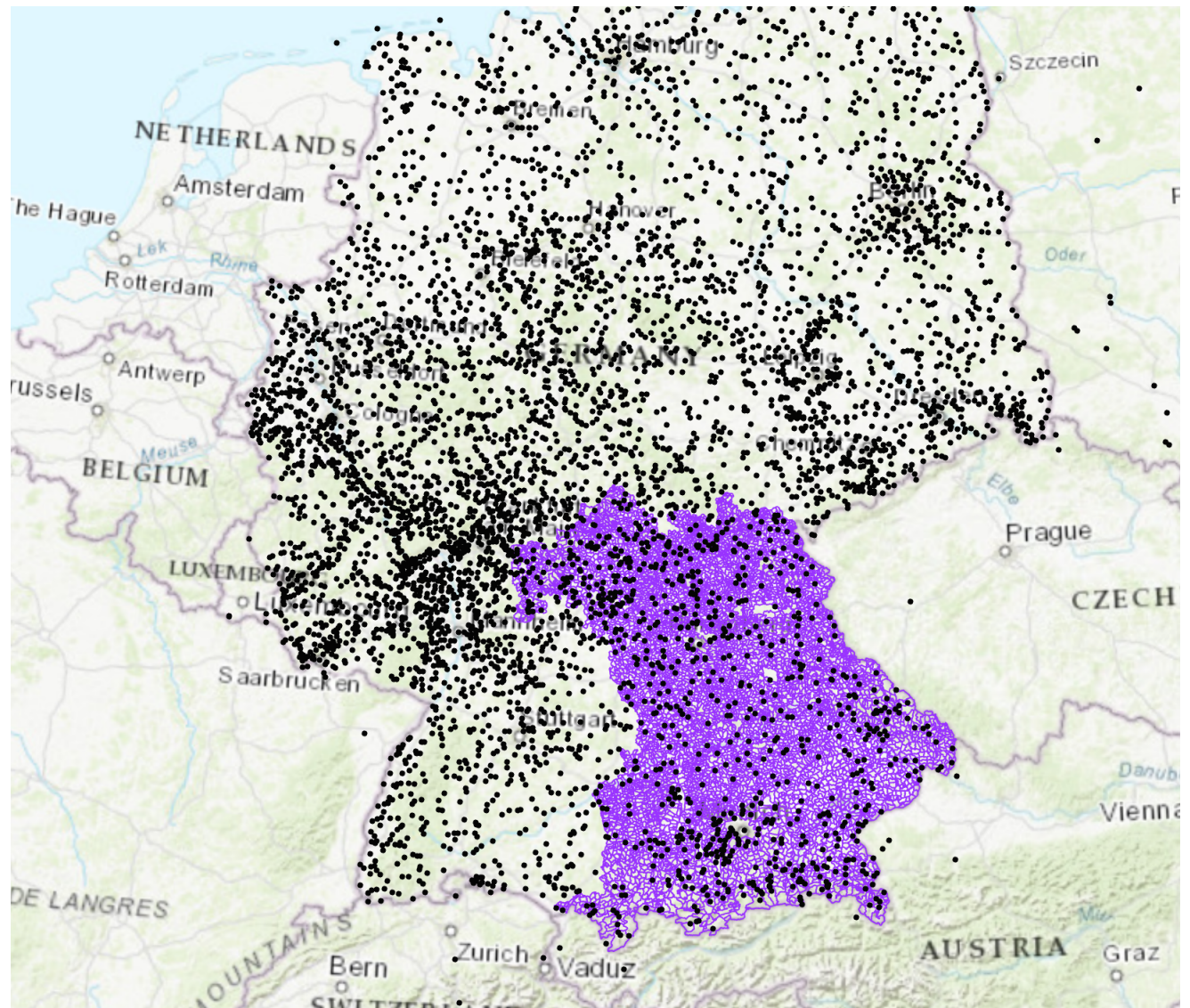
Figure A-1: Religious Residential Sorting in 1933



Note: Percentage of Catholic Population in Bavaria in 1933 at the municipality level. Our working sample focuses on municipalities above the 90% threshold (vertical do line).

A.6 Geolocated Jewish Repression

Figure A-2: The Geography of Jewish Persecution in Germany and Bavaria (purple)



B Balance

Table A-3: Vote Share for the Catholic Parties (BVP + Zentrum) and Nazis (NSDAP) for every election in the interwar period in municipalities with and without repressed priests.

	No Priest Repressed	Priest Repressed	Diff.	p-value
Catholic Vote				
1920	58.99	57.57	-1.42	0.001
May 1924	57.12	56.45	- 0.67	0.167
Dec 1924	52.22	51.86	-0.35	0.401
1928	45.78	45.35	-0.43	0.311
1930	48.88	48.16	-0.71	0.073
July 1932	49.91	48.88	-1.02	0.003
Nov 1932	48.64	47.73	-0.91	0.009
1933	40.32	39.94	0.37	-0.260
Mean 1920–1933	50.23	49.54	-0.69	0.067
NASDP Vote				
May 1924	7.86	7.86	0.00	0.986
Dec 1924	1.89	1.95	0.06	0.199
1928	2.38	2.44	0.06	0.360
1930	9.84	10.32	0.49	0.001
July 1932	22.67	23.67	1.00	0.000
Nov 1932	21.34	22.52	1.18	0.000
1933	41.77	41.57	-0.19	0.542
Mean 1920–1933	15.39	15.77	0.38	0.017

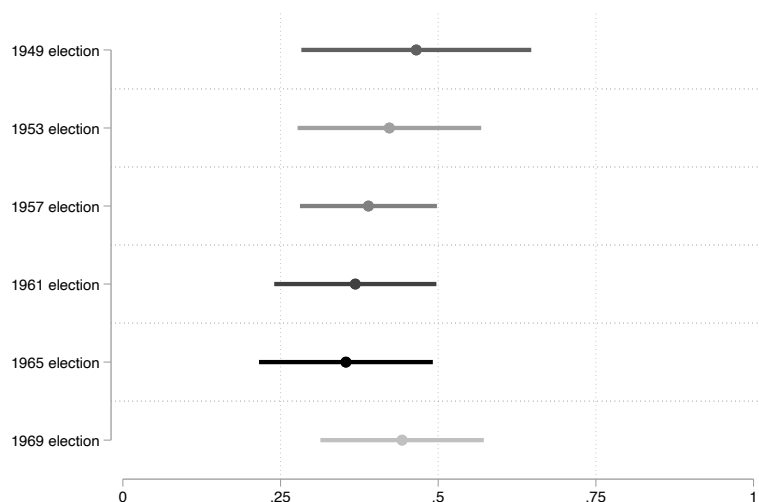
Note: Values are expressed in percentage points.

In the interwar period, there is a virtual tie in the vote share of Catholic parties between towns where no priest was repressed and towns in which at least one priest was repressed. The last row shows the average vote share of Catholic parties for the entire period. When there is imbalance (e.g., July 1932) it is small and goes against the working hypothesis (i.e., political Catholicism was stronger in places that experienced less repression). Vote patterns for the NSDAP show the mirror case: Differences between towns with and without priest repression are tiny; if any, it suggests that priest repression was higher in towns with stronger support for the Nazis.

In the empirical models we stick with the vote share in the 1928 election because it marginally has fewer missing values and it is relatively centered in the time period considered. Results hold if we choose any other election. For illustration, we replicate models in Table

2 in the main paper by replacing the BVP's and Nazi's vote share in 1928 for those in November 1932. We plot the coefficient for priest repression in Figure A-3. Results are virtually indistinguishable from those in the main paper using the 1928 party vote share controls.

Figure A-3: Main effects when Vote share for Catholics and Nazis values for 1928 are replaced by those in November 1932, the last free election before the war.



Note: These are OLS estimates of the effect of Total Priests Repressed per Town on CSU vote share post-WW2 controlling for Catholic and Nazi vote in November 1932 (as opposed to 1928) plus a full set of controls, modern-day district fixed effects, and standard errors clustered at historical district.

Table A-4: CSU Vote Share as a function of Priest Regression, 1961–2021

	(1) 1961	(2) 1965	(3) 1969	(4) 1972	(5) 1976	(6) 1980	(7) 1983	(8) 1987	(9) 1990
Repressed Priests per th. capita as of 1969	0.80*** (0.22)	0.89*** (0.22)	0.96*** (0.24)	0.90*** (0.25)	0.80*** (0.20)	0.73*** (0.18)	0.59*** (0.15)	0.56*** (0.19)	0.43** (0.19)
Population (1933, log)	0.58 (1.08)	0.63 (1.01)	0.01 (1.00)	0.32 (0.93)	0.62 (0.88)	0.17 (0.95)	0.73 (0.89)	0.04 (0.96)	0.06 (0.90)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.22*** (0.04)	0.14*** (0.04)	0.18*** (0.05)	0.16*** (0.04)	0.16*** (0.04)	0.14*** (0.04)	0.13*** (0.04)	0.10*** (0.04)	0.12*** (0.03)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.45*** (0.02)	0.46*** (0.02)	0.43*** (0.02)	0.42*** (0.02)	0.38*** (0.02)	0.40*** (0.02)	0.35*** (0.02)	0.31*** (0.02)	0.26*** (0.02)
Total Civil Servants (1939, log)	1.03** (0.48)	0.88* (0.46)	0.91*** (0.45)	1.01*** (0.42)	1.05*** (0.40)	1.32*** (0.42)	0.70** (0.38)	0.78** (0.41)	0.75** (0.39)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	-0.53 (0.79)	-0.30 (0.70)	0.11 (0.74)	-0.11 (0.64)	-0.65 (0.63)	-0.20 (0.66)	-0.35 (0.60)	0.26 (0.67)	0.27 (0.62)
NSDAP Vote share (1928, %)	0.50*** (0.16)	0.29 (0.18)	0.34** (0.17)	0.28 (0.17)	0.19 (0.18)	0.12 (0.19)	0.20 (0.18)	0.27 (0.18)	0.26 (0.17)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.51 (0.45)	0.25 (0.41)	-0.08 (0.44)	-0.24 (0.40)	-0.07 (0.35)	-0.20 (0.37)	-0.15 (0.32)	-0.25 (0.33)	0.05 (0.35)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.40*** (0.12)	0.28** (0.12)	0.35*** (0.12)	0.16 (0.12)	0.11 (0.11)	0.19* (0.12)	0.16 (0.10)	0.27** (0.12)	0.13 (0.11)
Constant	-9.82 (11.75)	6.45 (11.27)	0.69 (12.33)	18.65 (12.33)	28.31** (11.80)	20.26* (11.80)	27.08** (10.41)	15.70 (11.84)	26.61** (10.72)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.358
Observations	0.70	0.71	0.69	0.71	0.69	0.68	0.67	0.64	0.59
R-squared	(10) 1994	(11) 1998	(12) 2002	(13) 2005	(14) 2009	(15) 2013	(16) 2017	(17) 2021	
Repressed Priests per th. capita as of 1969	0.43*** (0.14)	0.37** (0.14)	0.40*** (0.14)	0.45*** (0.14)	0.34** (0.14)	0.30*** (0.10)	0.24*** (0.10)	0.11 (0.10)	
Population (1933, log)	-0.25 (0.83)	-0.92 (0.84)	-0.34 (0.74)	-1.07 (0.89)	-1.07 (0.82)	-0.31 (0.60)	-0.32 (0.58)	-0.70 (0.47)	
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.07** (0.03)	0.08*** (0.03)	0.07* (0.03)	0.05 (0.04)	0.01 (0.03)	0.06** (0.03)	0.08*** (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)	
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.26*** (0.02)	0.26*** (0.02)	0.25*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.18*** (0.02)	0.19*** (0.01)	0.15*** (0.01)	0.09*** (0.01)	
Total Civil Servants (1939, log)	0.62* (0.32)	0.66*** (0.33)	0.39 (0.31)	0.27 (0.31)	0.40 (0.27)	0.32 (0.24)	0.46** (0.22)	0.29* (0.17)	
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	0.73 (0.59)	1.28*** (0.59)	0.80 (0.56)	1.19* (0.67)	1.35** (0.64)	0.68 (0.47)	0.26 (0.44)	0.51 (0.37)	
NSDAP Vote share (1928, %)	0.20 (0.17)	0.14 (0.15)	0.09 (0.14)	0.04 (0.12)	0.06 (0.13)	0.07 (0.12)	0.23* (0.12)	0.09 (0.10)	
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.16 (0.33)	0.49 (0.34)	0.21 (0.27)	0.12 (0.27)	-0.03 (0.28)	0.12 (0.24)	0.29 (0.22)	0.10 (0.20)	
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.06 (0.10)	0.05 (0.10)	0.20** (0.09)	0.14 (0.09)	0.22*** (0.08)	0.23*** (0.08)	0.18*** (0.07)	0.05 (0.07)	
Constant	36.68*** (9.89)	36.67*** (10.36)	30.63*** (9.52)	34.22*** (9.07)	23.96*** (8.83)	20.02** (8.08)	14.90** (6.85)	26.86*** (7.46)	
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Δ Number of Voters	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.358	1.356	1.360	1.360	1.360	
Observations	0.56	0.57	0.67	0.65	0.65	0.59	0.53	0.47	
R-squared									

Note: Priest regression is aggregated at the modern-day gemeente (unit of analysis) and normalized by 1969 population. Standard errors clustered at historical district level. Δ Number of Voters measures the percentage growth of population between 1949 and election year (aggregated at modern-day municipality). District FE refer to modern-day counties. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

C Results in Figure 2 in Regression Format

D Robustness Tests for the 1949–1969 models

D.1 Priest Repression Count Normalized by Population

In this table, we normalize the repression count by 1933 municipality population; hence it is directly comparable to the long-run models, where we also normalize by population.

Table A-5: CSU Support and Per Capita Repression

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Repressed priests per th. capita	0.29*** (0.06)	0.22*** (0.04)	0.22*** (0.03)	0.25*** (0.04)	0.21*** (0.04)	0.24*** (0.04)
Population (1933, log)	-0.79 (0.56)	-1.08* (0.56)	-1.58*** (0.45)	-1.40*** (0.38)	-1.15*** (0.38)	-0.97** (0.39)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.13** (0.06)	0.27*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.33 (0.38)	0.91*** (0.34)	0.86*** (0.28)	0.75*** (0.28)	0.91*** (0.28)	1.02*** (0.26)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	6.27 (5.09)	15.62** (6.54)	24.36*** (5.25)	23.50*** (5.05)	29.01*** (5.35)	26.47*** (5.15)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.81 (0.60)	0.76 (0.55)	1.16** (0.53)	0.59 (0.50)	0.49 (0.46)	0.34 (0.45)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.44*** (0.01)	0.43*** (0.01)	0.38*** (0.01)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.56*** (0.19)	0.69*** (0.15)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.39*** (0.09)	0.41*** (0.11)	0.45*** (0.11)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.66*** (0.14)	0.50*** (0.11)	0.52*** (0.09)	0.68*** (0.09)	0.66*** (0.08)	0.57*** (0.09)
Constant	-40.28*** (13.50)	-13.26 (11.02)	-3.16 (8.66)	-20.32** (9.00)	-15.10* (8.29)	-10.85 (9.32)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.52	0.53	0.61	0.69	0.68	0.62

Note: In this table, the total number of repressed priests is normalized by the municipality population in 1933 (mean = 1.31, std. dev = 2.83). Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

D.2 Diocese FE

Table A-6: CSU as a function of priest repression including Diocese Fixed Effects

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.48*** (0.12)	0.45*** (0.08)	0.40*** (0.06)	0.39*** (0.07)	0.35*** (0.07)	0.43*** (0.07)
Population (1933, log)	-1.41 (0.87)	-1.34* (0.72)	-1.88*** (0.53)	-1.55*** (0.40)	-1.12*** (0.38)	-0.96** (0.40)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.08 (0.06)	0.24*** (0.05)	0.23*** (0.03)	0.18*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.02)	0.16*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.30 (0.42)	0.83** (0.36)	0.53 (0.33)	0.60** (0.28)	0.75*** (0.28)	0.89*** (0.27)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	5.45 (5.93)	7.17 (5.85)	12.80** (5.35)	9.92** (4.28)	8.98** (4.26)	7.12* (4.08)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	-0.34 (0.76)	-0.31 (0.65)	0.07 (0.60)	-0.06 (0.51)	-0.16 (0.46)	-0.36 (0.45)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.15*** (0.02)	0.23*** (0.02)	0.32*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.33*** (0.02)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.18 (0.28)	0.54*** (0.21)	0.35** (0.18)	0.23 (0.14)	0.12 (0.15)	0.15 (0.15)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.45** (0.18)	0.36** (0.15)	0.45*** (0.11)	0.69*** (0.10)	0.69*** (0.09)	0.61*** (0.10)
Constant	-10.13 (18.06)	5.34 (15.07)	6.41 (11.72)	-18.86* (9.80)	-15.13 (9.53)	-10.12 (9.50)
Diocese FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.40	0.41	0.52	0.66	0.67	0.59

Note: These models replace the modern-day district fixed effects for diocese fixed effects. There are 7 dioceses in Bavaria: Augsburg, Bamberg, Eichstatt, Munchen-Freisig, Passau, Regensburg, and Würzburg. Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

D.3 Municipalities with Religious Buildings

Bavaria had over 7,000 municipalities in the interwar period. We presume that parishioners attended mass and interacted with clergy in the nearest church to their home residence. According to dioceses' church yearbooks for the mid-1930s most towns in rural Catholic Bavaria (70%) had at least one religious building, such as a church, monastery, and/or a Catholic school or hospital. In the analyses that follow we subset the sample only to municipalities with at least one religious building. This helps address two possible concerns: (1) that in the control group we have some municipalities where there were no Catholic clerics because there were no religious buildings there (in fact, our expectation is that in such communes parishioners went to mass in neighboring communities; this contaminates our control with treated municipalities and therefore diminishes treatment effects), and (2) that Nazi authorities might have been more likely to repress priests in municipalities with religious buildings, as there was a clearer target there. To confirm that the results are not driven by some set of unobservable characteristics, in Table A-7 we rerun the main analyses from Table 2 by excluding towns that did not have any religious buildings. Results are almost identical to those in the body of the paper, suggesting that the incidence of priest repression extended to members of congregation that lived in the vicinity of the affected church. In the next subsection, we address geographic dynamics by accounting for spatial correlation.

Table A-7: CSU Support as a function of Catholic Repression in municipalities that hosted a religious building

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.47*** (0.10)	0.39*** (0.06)	0.33*** (0.05)	0.37*** (0.06)	0.33*** (0.06)	0.43*** (0.06)
Population (1933, log)	-1.41** (0.67)	-1.73*** (0.62)	-2.50*** (0.54)	-2.40*** (0.47)	-2.12*** (0.48)	-1.93*** (0.48)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.14** (0.06)	0.26*** (0.04)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.47 (0.47)	1.06** (0.42)	0.95** (0.38)	0.99*** (0.34)	1.21*** (0.32)	1.37*** (0.33)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	3.02 (5.69)	12.38** (6.07)	21.77*** (5.43)	19.36*** (5.28)	22.20*** (5.31)	19.36*** (5.03)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.39 (0.62)	0.13 (0.59)	0.48 (0.57)	0.23 (0.56)	0.05 (0.48)	-0.35 (0.48)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.16*** (0.02)	0.22*** (0.02)	0.32*** (0.02)	0.43*** (0.01)	0.42*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.47** (0.19)	0.66*** (0.13)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.36*** (0.08)	0.40*** (0.09)	0.43*** (0.09)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.70*** (0.18)	0.58*** (0.14)	0.57*** (0.11)	0.65*** (0.10)	0.57*** (0.10)	0.50*** (0.11)
Constant	-38.54** (18.02)	-14.93 (13.34)	-0.11 (10.41)	-10.53 (9.49)	-0.07 (9.63)	3.02 (10.27)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	3,134	3,130	3,131	3,130	3,126	3,102
R-squared	0.56	0.55	0.63	0.70	0.69	0.63

Note: Only towns that host a religious building are considered. Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

D.4 Spatial Correlation

Standard errors in this table adjust for spatial correlation. We set relevant spatial radius to 25km and let correlation decay linearly with distance. Results, not shown here for reasons of space and available on request, hold when different radius are used and/or gradual decay is not assumed.

Table A-8: CSU Vote Share as a function of Repression and adjusting for spatial correlation

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.47*** (0.09)	0.42*** (0.07)	0.38*** (0.06)	0.37*** (0.07)	0.35*** (0.07)	0.44*** (0.07)
Population (1933, log)	-1.12** (0.46)	-1.26** (0.51)	-1.61*** (0.39)	-1.15*** (0.34)	-1.02*** (0.34)	-1.00*** (0.35)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.13** (0.05)	0.26*** (0.04)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.16*** (0.02)	0.12*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.40 (0.33)	0.95*** (0.31)	0.87*** (0.26)	0.77*** (0.25)	0.88*** (0.25)	1.00*** (0.25)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	1.73 (5.14)	5.61 (5.01)	7.06* (4.22)	5.45 (3.91)	2.37 (3.45)	1.07 (3.27)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.69 (0.57)	0.63 (0.53)	1.03* (0.54)	0.38 (0.45)	0.21 (0.40)	0.05 (0.42)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.32*** (0.01)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.56*** (0.17)	0.69*** (0.11)	0.49*** (0.09)	0.37*** (0.09)	0.37*** (0.09)	0.41*** (0.10)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.68*** (0.13)	0.51*** (0.11)	0.53*** (0.09)	0.64*** (0.08)	0.60*** (0.07)	0.52*** (0.08)
Constant	-0.00 (0.28)	0.00 (0.25)	-0.00 (0.20)	-0.00 (0.18)	-0.00 (0.17)	0.00 (0.19)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.52	0.21	0.42	0.60	0.62	0.53

Note: Conley Standard Errors of 25km radius and Bartlett decay. Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

E Alternative Dependent Variables

E.1 Type of Repression

We commissioned our most trusted research assistant, a German native speaker, to classify the biography entries in the repression compendium into five categories. In ascending order, these categories are:

1: minor threats or inconveniences (e.g. stones thrown through windows) or informal threats from police or administrators, priest being watched by authorities, or all convictions being vacated by a court or other administrative bodies.

2: services disrupted, house search, interrogations, being summoned by an administrative or police official, official reprimand, and small fine (up to 50 RM).

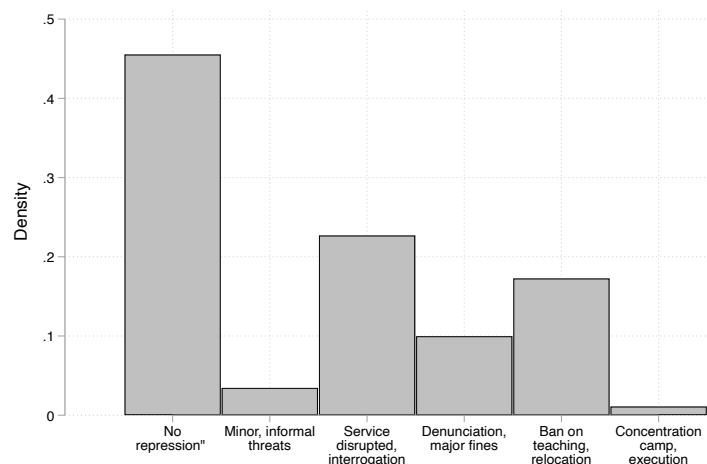
3: denunciations in the press, prison sentence between 1 and 5 month (including detention on bail up to 30 days) or equivalent monetary fine (from 50 to 300 RM); pension cancelled.

4: ban on teaching, priest being completely banned from organizing services; priest forced to relocate to a different parish; priest being forcibly retired; prison sentence of 6 to 12 months or equivalent (large) monetary fine (more than 300 RM).

5: prison sentence of over 12 months; concentration camp; execution; or equivalent (i.e. very large) monetary fine in the thousands.

The distribution of severity of repression scores is described in Figure A-4.

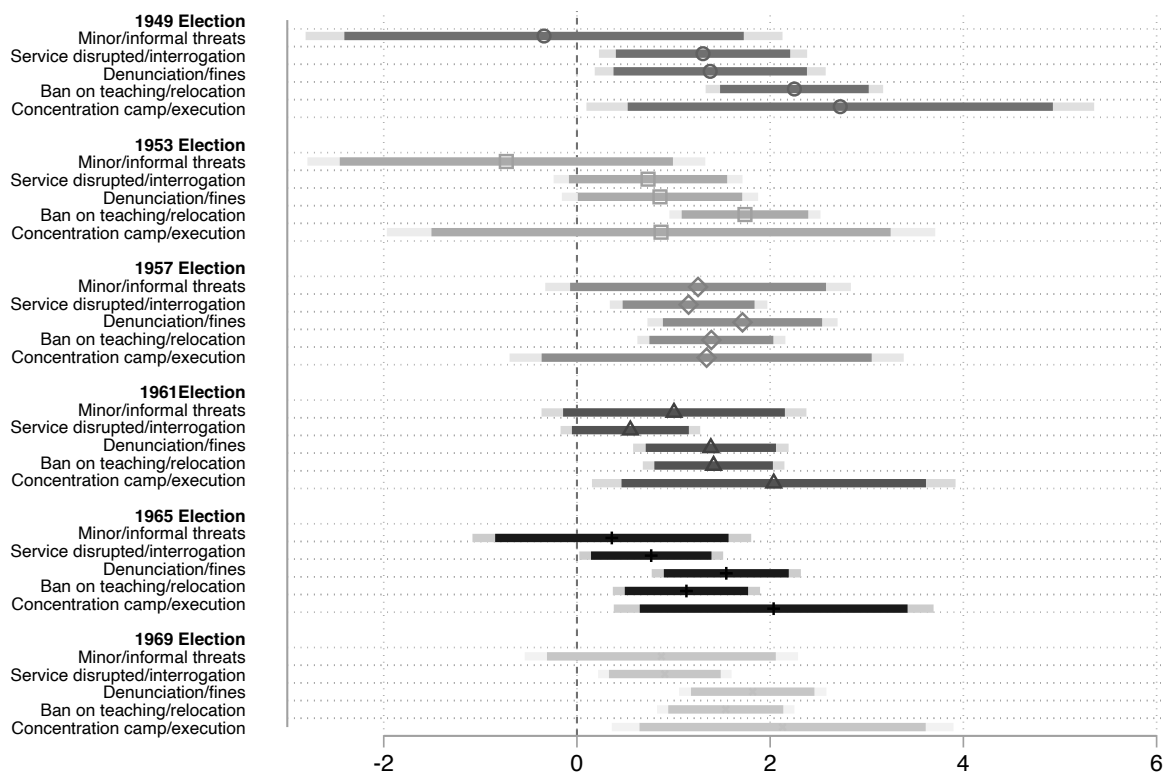
Figure A-4: Intensity of Nazi Repression of Catholic Clergy



The adaptation of the qualitative repression measure for the statistical analysis is not without challenges. The information in the repression compendium allows us to know whether a priest was repressed in any given municipality, but not the location in which he experienced the most severe episode was he repressed in multiple municipalities. This

problem is compounded when multiple priests served in the same municipality. Keeping these limitations in mind, we assign each municipality the highest repression score among all priests that were ever repressed in that municipality. Hence, this exercise retrieves the effect of having a priest most severely repressed in town and that of having a priest repressed in town who nevertheless experienced the most intense episode of repression elsewhere.

Figure A-5: Vote Share of the CSU in 1949–1969 Bundestag elections at municipality level as a function of the intensity of priest repression (categorical version)



Note: The figure displays OLS coefficients. All models include a full set of covariates and standard errors are clustered at the historical district.

Results are largely consistent with our expectation—that the effect of persecution on solidifying political Catholicism increases as repression becomes more severe (see Figure A-5). For every election between 1949 and 1969, we observe a gradual increase in the magnitude of the coefficient as the intensity of repression grows. The confidence interval of the fifth category—concentration camp/execution—is big because there are relatively few observations in that category. On the other end of the repression scale, minor offenses and informal threats carried little or no effect on forging political Catholicism. Given the state of constant threat against the Catholic community in this period, parishioners could have grown accustomed to low intensity threats from the state.

E.2 Sentiment Score

We extracted 719 lemmatized words from the bibliographic vignettes in the repression dataset. We hired 13 native German Speakers to code these words using the instructions in Figure A-6. Based on their scores, we computed an average measure for each lemmatized word. Finally, we matched the average scores to each individual vignette and estimated the intensity of repression by the arithmetic sum of scores. The distribution of the resulting variable is plotted in Figure A-7. The lowest and highest value of the sentiment score are -2 and 27.4, respectively. For ease of interpretation, we add +3 to all entries and assign 0 to municipalities which did not see their priest repressed.

Figure A-6: Sentiment Score

Anleitung zur Einschätzungsanalyse	
Wählen Sie eine Einschätzung basierend auf den folgenden Kriterien:	
Einschätzung	Beispiel
Schwerwiegende Repression (3)	Beispiel: Haftstrafe von mehreren Monaten/Jahren oder Hinrichtung
Repression mittlerer Höhe (2)	Beispiel: Haftstrafe von mehreren Wochen, eine äquivalente Geldstrafe, oder schwerwiegende Bedrohungen/Angriffe
Geringfügige Repression (1)	Beispiel: geringfügige Geldstrafe, Bedrohung oder andere geringfügige Schikane
Nicht eindeutig (0)	Das Wort deutet weder auf eine Repression noch auf die Befreiung von einer Repression hin Beispiel: Sonntagsausflug
Befreiung von einer geringfügigen Repression (-1)	Beispiel: Erstattung einer geringfügigen Geldstrafe oder Entschuldigung für geringfügige Schikane /Angriffe
Befreiung von einer Repression mittlerer Höhe (-2)	Beispiel: Befreiung von einer Haftstrafe von mehreren Wochen oder einer äquivalenten Geldstrafe oder Entschuldigung für schwerwiegende Bedrohungen/Schikanen
Befreiung von einer schwerwiegenden Repression (-3)	Beispiel: Freispruch von einer Haftstrafe von mehreren Monaten/Jahren oder Aufhebung einer Hinrichtung

In Table A-9 we regress the CSU vote share after the war on the total sentiment score of each municipality. In cases in which more than one priest is repressed, we keep the priest with the highest sentiment score value. Results indicate that higher values of the sentiment score of repression as associated with higher support for the CSU after the war.

Figure A-7: Sentiment Score

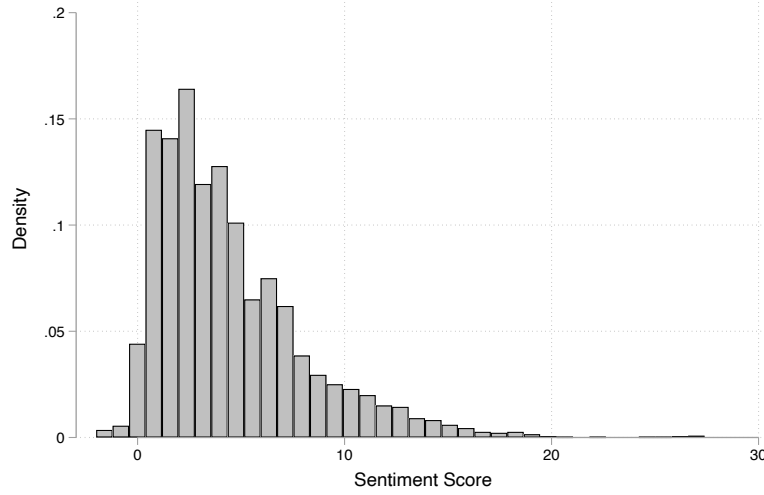


Table A-9: CSU Vote Share, 1949–1969, as a function of Priest Repression measured via the Sentiment Score

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Sentiment score (maximum)	0.16*** (0.04)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.03)
Population (1933, log)	-1.22** (0.56)	-1.31** (0.57)	-1.66*** (0.46)	-1.23*** (0.36)	-1.09*** (0.35)	-1.07*** (0.36)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.13** (0.06)	0.27*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.16*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.30 (0.39)	0.89** (0.34)	0.81*** (0.28)	0.70** (0.28)	0.81*** (0.28)	0.92*** (0.28)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.71 (0.60)	0.66 (0.54)	1.05** (0.53)	0.40 (0.46)	0.23 (0.42)	0.08 (0.42)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.23*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.32*** (0.01)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	5.45 (5.11)	8.82* (5.28)	10.02** (4.81)	8.37** (4.16)	5.14 (3.31)	4.57 (3.34)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.56*** (0.19)	0.69*** (0.15)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.37*** (0.09)	0.37*** (0.10)	0.41*** (0.10)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.68*** (0.14)	0.51*** (0.11)	0.53*** (0.09)	0.64*** (0.08)	0.60*** (0.07)	0.52*** (0.09)
Constant	-38.82*** (13.82)	-12.05 (11.09)	-3.08 (8.68)	-15.73* (8.39)	-6.54 (7.52)	-1.68 (8.64)
district FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.52	0.53	0.61	0.70	0.71	0.64

Notes: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

E.3 Priest Repression and Support of other Political Parties

In this appendix we examine the effect of repression on electoral support of every other party running in Bavaria. For this analysis, we focus on electoral returns at the historical commune. Results suggest that repression of Catholic priest depressed the electoral support of the SPD and the far left, which were perceived anticlerical. Far right parties received little support in Bavaria. In contrast to Haffert (2022), repression of Catholic priests did not translate in higher support for the political successors of the perpetrators. If any, the effect of priest repression would be negative.

Table A-10: Other Parties' Vote Share in 1949

	SPD [Left]	FDP [Center]	BP [Far Right]	WAV [Far Right]	KPD [Far Left]
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	-0.31*** (0.06)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.09 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.06)	-0.03*** (0.01)
R-squared	0.43	0.32	0.41	0.40	0.31
Average Vote Share	13.91	3.184	27.10	14.45	1.465

Note: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. All models include controls (log of population as of 1933, catholic vote in 1928, NSDAP vote as of 1928, percentage of Catholics as of 1933, log of civil servants as of 1939, log of income taxation as of 1939, agricultural population as of 1939, and Jewish victims indicator) plus modern-day district fixed effects. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A-11: Other Parties' Vote Share in 1953

	(1) SPD [Left]	(2) BP [Far Right]	(3) FDP [Center]	(4) DP [Far Right]	(5) DNS [Far Right]	(6) BHE [Far Right]	(7) GVP [Center]	(8) DRP [Far Right]
Repressed priests... ...(1933-1945, count)	-0.30*** (0.06)	-0.09* (0.05)	0.00 (0.02)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.03 (0.06)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00)
R-squared	0.56	0.46	0.37	0.11	0.21	0.36	0.05	0.12
Average Vote Share	11.91	12.90	1.764	0.522	0.349	10.42	0.229	0.479

Note: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. All models include controls (log of population as of 1933, catholic vote in 1928, NSDAP vote as of 1928, percentage of Catholics as of 1933, log of civil servants as of 1939, log of income taxation as of 1939, agricultural population as of 1939, and Jewish victims indicator) plus modern-day district fixed effects. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A-12: Other Parties' Vote Share in 1957

	SPD [Left]	BHE [Far Right]	FDP [Center]	DP [Far Right]	BP [Far Right]
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	-0.35*** (0.06)	-0.05 (0.03)	0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.02)
R-squared	0.60	0.31	0.40	0.35	0.47
Average Vote Share	12.90	6.851	1.307	0.625	5.094

Note: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. All models include controls (log of population as of 1933, catholic vote in 1928, NSDAP vote as of 1928, percentage of Catholics as of 1933, log of civil servants as of 1939, log of income taxation as of 1939, agricultural population as of 1939, and Jewish victims indicator) plus modern-day district fixed effects. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A-13: Other Parties' Vote Share in 1961

	SPD [Left]	FDP [Center]	BHE [Far Right]	DFU [Far Left]	DG [Far Right]	DRP [Far Right]
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	-0.39*** (0.07)	0.03 (0.03)	-0.03* (0.02)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
R-squared	0.62	0.43	0.27	0.18	0.12	0.11
Average Vote Share	14.92	3.843	3.629	0.634	0.125	0.337

Note: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. All models include controls (log of population as of 1933, catholic vote in 1928, NSDAP vote as of 1928, percentage of Catholics as of 1933, log of civil servants as of 1939, log of income taxation as of 1939, agricultural population as of 1939, and Jewish victims indicator) plus modern-day district fixed effects. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A-14: Other Parties' Vote Share in 1965

	SPD [Left]	FDP [Center]	AUD [Far Right]	DFU [Far Left]	NPD [Far Right]
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	-0.37*** (0.07)	0.02 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.01)
R-squared	0.62	0.43	0.10	0.14	0.20
Average Vote Share	17.27	3.284	0.138	0.356	1.174

Note: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. All models include controls (log of population as of 1933, catholic vote in 1928, NSDAP vote as of 1928, percentage of Catholics as of 1933, log of civil servants as of 1939, log of income taxation as of 1939, agricultural population as of 1939, and Jewish victims indicator) plus modern-day district fixed effects. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table A-15: Other Parties' Vote Share in 1969

	SPD [Left]	FDP [Center]	NPD [Far Right]	BP [Far Right]	AUD [Far Right]
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	-0.38*** (0.07)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.05* (0.03)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.01** (0.00)
R-squared	0.60	0.31	0.12	0.40	0.07
Average Vote Share	17.10	1.717	4.247	1.551	0.164

Note: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. All models include controls (log of population as of 1933, catholic vote in 1928, NSDAP vote as of 1928, percentage of Catholics as of 1933, log of civil servants as of 1939, log of income taxation as of 1939, agricultural population as of 1939, and Jewish victims indicator) plus modern-day district fixed effects. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

F Addressing Selection

F.1 Difference-in-Difference Analyses

This appendix provides more information on the difference-in-difference analyses. These analyses are only possible at historical district levels because that is the lowest level at which the interwar electoral data survived. All 127 rural counties had at least one priest repressed, and therefore we compare counties that are below the sample average in terms of the number of priests repressed per capita and those that are above it. For parallel trends analyses this becomes a binary variable equal to 0 for counties below the average and 1 for those above it. Mirroring the main model, we also construct a continuous variable that measures the dose of priest repression at the historical district level. The electoral data for the interwar years is vote share of Catholic parties in eight free or partially free elections prior to the Nazi seizure of power. These are the elections in 1920, two in 1924, 1928, 1930, two in 1932, and 1933. The election data are reported at four different levels within each district depending on urban/rural context and municipality size. To create a representative value for each district we compute a population weighted sum of support for CSU for rural sections of every landkreis and election. Post-war, we have the usual six elections from 1949 to 1969. The models include historical district and year fixed effects. If support for political Catholicism is due to some unobservable then the difference between counties below and above the sample repression mean should be zero as both sets of municipalities lived through the same set of historical experiences other than priest repression. If, on the other hand, priest repression heightens the support for Catholic parties then we should observe a positive difference across the two sets of counties in favor of areas where more priests had been repressed.

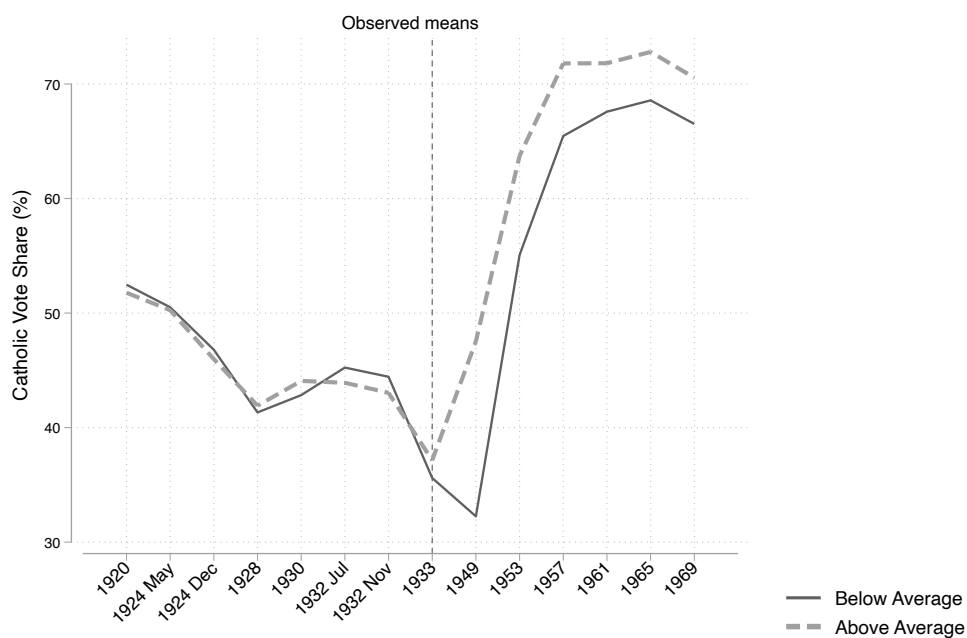
The results are reported in Table A-16. We find positive and statistically significant effect in the continuous measure of repressed priest per capita and between historical counties above and below the sample repression mean. Based on columns 2 and 3, historical counties that saw high repression (i.e. above the sample average) had voters support the CSU by an additional seven percentage-points in post-war elections relative to counties with low Nazi-era repression. In Figure A-8 we examine the parallel trends between counties below and above the repression mean. The difference-in-difference analyses are premised on the assumption that the variable of interest—here, the level of support for Catholic parties—was the same in the initial period and then diverged after the treatment. This assumption is not rejected in our data: the parallel slope trends test yields $F(1, 126)=0.06$; $\text{Prob}>F=0.81$. In the interwar elections’ voting trends for Catholic parties were almost identical in the control and treatment counties, and they diverged after the war.

Table A-16: Difference-in-Difference Test: Catholic Vote Share at Historical District Level Before and After Repression

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Repressed Priests per Capita (continuous)	3.96* (2.33)		
Repressed Priests per Capita (high/low)		7.27** (3.29)	7.26** (3.23)
Constant	52.17*** (0.91)	52.17*** (0.92)	50.46*** (1.00)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Historical District FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Δ Number of Voters	No	No	Yes
Observations	1,778	1,778	1,651

Note: Both Repressed Priests per Capita (continuous) and Repressed Priest per Capita (high/low) are zero before 1933. Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Figure A-8: District-Level Catholic Vote (%) before/after WW2 by Repression Intensity: Treatment = above sample average; Control = below sample average.



F.2 Comparison Along the Intensive Margin of Repression

In this test we drop all municipalities which had no priest repressed, hence focus on the intensive margin of repression among the municipalities that had at least one priest repressed.

Table A-17: CSU Vote Share and Intensive Margin of Repression (only treated municipalities)

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.36*** (0.08)	0.36*** (0.06)	0.27*** (0.07)	0.30*** (0.08)	0.28** (0.11)	0.35*** (0.09)
Population (1933, log)	-1.74** (0.73)	-2.23*** (0.63)	-3.09*** (0.62)	-2.27*** (0.53)	-2.00*** (0.57)	-1.90*** (0.53)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.17** (0.06)	0.27*** (0.04)	0.22*** (0.03)	0.19*** (0.02)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.02)
State Officials (1939, log)	-0.17 (0.55)	0.87* (0.47)	1.17*** (0.45)	1.20*** (0.40)	1.53*** (0.39)	1.33*** (0.34)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	8.11 (4.97)	6.86 (4.73)	9.24** (4.34)	6.51 (3.94)	-1.49 (3.32)	-0.95 (3.21)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	1.05 (0.73)	0.72 (0.68)	0.78 (0.62)	0.67 (0.57)	0.49 (0.52)	0.44 (0.48)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.13*** (0.02)	0.19*** (0.02)	0.30*** (0.02)	0.37*** (0.02)	0.36*** (0.02)	0.31*** (0.02)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.37* (0.22)	0.67*** (0.15)	0.59*** (0.11)	0.43*** (0.08)	0.37*** (0.09)	0.41*** (0.09)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.90*** (0.18)	0.59*** (0.17)	0.57*** (0.14)	0.71*** (0.12)	0.52*** (0.11)	0.48*** (0.12)
Constant	-53.59*** (19.04)	-11.63 (16.62)	2.45 (13.18)	-17.21 (11.63)	4.97 (10.82)	8.02 (11.46)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	1,962	1,958	1,960	1,959	1,957	1,942
R-squared	0.60	0.59	0.65	0.75	0.75	0.71

Note: All municipalities in this table had at least one priest repressed. After dropping all zeros, *Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)* has mean of 1.80 and st.dev. of 2.11. Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

F.3 Appointment Dates

Table A-18: Vote Share of the CSU in 1949-1969 in Augsburg's towns accounting for the appointment date of priests

Appointment Date	(1) 1949 Any	(2) 1949 pre-nazi	(3) 1953 Any	(4) 1953 pre-nazi	(5) 1957 Any	(6) 1957 pre-nazi	(7) 1961 Any	(8) 1961 pre-nazi	(9) 1965 Any	(10) 1965 pre-nazi	(11) 1969 Any	(12) 1969 pre-nazi
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	1.02*** (0.32)	1.69*** (0.82)	0.22 (0.26)	1.62*** (0.67)	0.57*** (0.25)	1.84*** (0.61)	0.48* (0.26)	1.40*** (0.59)	0.38* (0.21)	1.27*** (0.52)	0.57*** (0.24)	1.47*** (0.57)
Population (1933, log)	0.46 (0.94)	-0.10 (1.20)	0.56 (0.78)	0.49 (1.01)	-0.52 (0.62)	-0.57 (0.79)	-0.73 (0.63)	-0.56 (0.77)	-0.12 (0.55)	-0.19 (0.70)	0.12 (0.59)	0.12 (0.74)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	-0.06 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.09)	0.05 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.07)	0.09** (0.04)	0.07 (0.05)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.10** (0.04)	0.07*** (0.03)	0.07* (0.04)	0.13*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.04)
State Officials (1939, log)	-0.81 (0.73)	-0.68 (0.94)	0.09 (0.60)	0.17 (0.75)	0.55 (0.53)	0.63 (0.66)	0.99* (0.53)	0.84 (0.63)	1.14*** (0.47)	0.91 (0.59)	1.29*** (0.48)	1.02* (0.61)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	-23.04*** (9.72)	-24.29 (14.85)	-18.78** (7.78)	-28.76*** (11.52)	-7.89 (6.76)	-11.55 (9.32)	6.24 (6.49)	6.42 (8.64)	-1.49 (6.02)	-1.64 (7.96)	-6.34 (6.29)	-7.51 (9.16)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	1.14 (1.49)	2.92 (2.27)	0.62 (1.37)	1.02 (2.18)	1.75 (1.19)	3.11* (1.86)	1.12 (1.23)	1.91 (2.02)	0.33 (1.12)	1.71 (1.77)	-0.73 (1.24)	-0.62 (2.04)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.04)	0.14*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.04)	0.26*** (0.03)	0.27*** (0.03)	0.40*** (0.03)	0.41*** (0.03)	0.37*** (0.03)	0.37*** (0.03)	0.34*** (0.03)	0.34*** (0.04)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.92*** (0.24)	1.43*** (0.41)	0.81*** (0.19)	1.18*** (0.31)	0.38*** (0.14)	0.39 (0.25)	0.20 (0.14)	0.27 (0.24)	0.22* (0.13)	0.24 (0.21)	0.22* (0.13)	0.30 (0.23)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.36* (0.21)	0.32 (0.27)	0.34* (0.20)	0.38 (0.25)	0.39** (0.17)	0.36* (0.21)	0.53*** (0.16)	0.48** (0.20)	0.65*** (0.14)	0.58*** (0.17)	0.44*** (0.15)	0.32* (0.19)
Constant	-6.64 (20.85)	1.69 (26.19)	8.61 (19.29)	5.48 (24.42)	11.67 (16.54)	15.48 (21.02)	-9.35 (16.08)	-6.59 (20.04)	-17.46 (13.75)	-10.72 (16.83)	-0.33 (15.17)	10.52 (19.28)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	1,086	792	1,085	791	1,085	791	1,085	791	1,083	790	1,076	784
R-squared	0.33	0.30	0.36	0.33	0.53	0.48	0.68	0.64	0.71	0.68	0.64	0.59

Note: Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election.
Robust standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

F.4 Additional Relevant Controls

F.4.1 Catholic Associations

The results in Table 2 suggest that Nazi-era repression of Catholic parish priests created a sympathy vote for the CSU in the post-war elections. Now we show that our findings are robust to one relevant control, the richness of pre-1933 associational life in the community. Before the war, religious associations of every sort existed: trade unions, youth groups, religious, and press associations—all Catholic. Towns with a rich Catholic associational life could have attracted the most skillful, activist priests as well as the attention of the repressive apparatus of the state. To account for this possible selection issue, in Table A-19 we include two measures of associational life at the municipality level as of 1928: the total number of Catholic associations and a battery of indicator variables for different association types. The main result hold (also when we normalize the total number of associations by local population).

Table A-19: CSU Support controlling for Associational Life

	(1) 1949	(2) 1949	(3) 1953	(4) 1953	(5) 1957	(6) 1957	(7) 1961	(8) 1961	(9) 1965	(10) 1965	(11) 1969	(12) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.39*** (0.08)	0.40*** (0.08)	0.38*** (0.07)	0.39*** (0.07)	0.35*** (0.06)	0.35*** (0.06)	0.34*** (0.07)	0.33*** (0.07)	0.37*** (0.07)	0.36*** (0.07)	0.41*** (0.07)	0.41*** (0.07)
Total associations types (1928)	1.31*** (0.33)		0.43 (0.32)		0.35 (0.25)		0.31 (0.23)		0.17 (0.21)		0.23 (0.22)	
Catholic boy associations (1928)		1.22 (1.21)		-0.40 (1.21)		0.54 (1.04)		1.24 (0.91)		1.57** (0.78)		0.80 (0.74)
Catholic girl association (1928)		0.09 (1.20)		-0.06 (1.06)		-0.71 (0.97)		-0.95 (0.87)		-1.17 (0.80)		-0.91 (0.78)
Catholic en worker association (1928)		1.50* (0.78)		0.94 (0.63)		0.09 (0.59)		0.00 (0.59)		-0.44 (0.64)		0.03 (0.59)
Catholic women worker association (1928)		0.58 (1.39)		-0.72 (1.40)		0.99 (1.27)		0.98 (1.26)		0.62 (1.22)		1.14 (1.21)
Catholic press association (1928)		2.38*** (0.54)		0.89 (0.62)		1.17** (0.55)		1.06** (0.53)		0.88* (0.50)		0.88* (0.47)
Population (1933, log)	-1.02 (0.63)	-0.96 (0.63)	-0.99 (0.63)	-0.99 (0.62)	-1.55*** (0.49)	-1.51*** (0.48)	-1.33*** (0.40)	-1.27*** (0.39)	-1.26*** (0.40)	-1.19*** (0.38)	-1.12*** (0.41)	-1.06*** (0.40)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.14** (0.06)	0.14** (0.06)	0.27*** (0.05)	0.27*** (0.05)	0.18*** (0.03)	0.18*** (0.03)	0.14*** (0.03)	0.14*** (0.03)	0.10*** (0.03)	0.10*** (0.03)	0.16*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.10 (0.43)	0.02 (0.43)	0.79** (0.39)	0.76* (0.39)	0.84*** (0.32)	0.78** (0.31)	0.79** (0.31)	0.72** (0.31)	0.89*** (0.32)	0.82*** (0.31)	1.06*** (0.29)	1.00*** (0.29)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.32 (0.75)	0.38 (0.75)	0.26 (0.63)	0.27 (0.64)	0.58 (0.61)	0.63 (0.61)	0.21 (0.56)	0.26 (0.56)	0.05 (0.50)	0.11 (0.51)	-0.07 (0.52)	-0.03 (0.52)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.19*** (0.02)	0.20*** (0.02)	0.26*** (0.02)	0.26*** (0.02)	0.35*** (0.02)	0.35*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.02)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.33*** (0.01)	0.33*** (0.01)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	-9.65 (8.59)	-6.80 (9.14)	-2.90 (7.60)	0.20 (8.37)	-2.93 (6.30)	-1.84 (6.93)	0.26 (5.84)	0.23 (6.57)	1.08 (5.00)	1.12 (5.60)	-3.74 (4.34)	-3.73 (4.83)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.55** (0.21)	0.55** (0.22)	0.70*** (0.16)	0.70*** (0.16)	0.46*** (0.12)	0.45*** (0.12)	0.35*** (0.10)	0.34*** (0.10)	0.35*** (0.11)	0.34*** (0.11)	0.40*** (0.11)	0.39*** (0.11)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.64*** (0.16)	0.62*** (0.16)	0.47*** (0.12)	0.46*** (0.12)	0.47*** (0.09)	0.46*** (0.09)	0.60*** (0.09)	0.59*** (0.09)	0.57*** (0.08)	0.56*** (0.08)	0.49*** (0.09)	0.48*** (0.09)
Constant	-35.43** (15.49)	-34.54** (15.35)	-8.90 (11.51)	-8.59 (11.44)	3.96 (8.73)	4.53 (8.73)	-9.69 (8.97)	-9.01 (9.03)	-1.67 (8.38)	-0.93 (8.47)	2.64 (9.16)	3.07 (9.22)
Modern District FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	3,792	3,792	3,774	3,774	3,772	3,772	3,770	3,770	3,760	3,760	3,727	3,727
R-squared	0.48	0.48	0.49	0.49	0.58	0.58	0.68	0.68	0.69	0.69	0.62	0.62

Note: Catholic Clubs are the excluded category in models with types of Catholic association controls. Association data exist for all diocese except Munich-Freising. Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

F.4.2 Kulturkampf

Table A-20: CSU Support controlling for Kulturkampf Repression

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	1949	1953	1957	1961	1965	1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.47*** (0.10)	0.42*** (0.07)	0.39*** (0.06)	0.37*** (0.06)	0.35*** (0.07)	0.44*** (0.07)
Kulturkampf Repression (1875/6)	-0.59 (0.60)	-0.07 (0.69)	-0.07 (0.58)	-0.17 (0.52)	0.35 (0.37)	0.50 (0.49)
Population (1933, log)	-1.11* (0.56)	-1.26** (0.56)	-1.61*** (0.46)	-1.15*** (0.36)	-1.02*** (0.35)	-1.00*** (0.36)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.13** (0.06)	0.26*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.16*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.40 (0.38)	0.95*** (0.34)	0.87*** (0.28)	0.77*** (0.28)	0.88*** (0.28)	1.00*** (0.27)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	1.47 (5.28)	5.58 (5.25)	7.02 (4.63)	5.38 (3.99)	2.52 (3.25)	1.29 (3.14)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.69 (0.59)	0.63 (0.55)	1.03* (0.53)	0.38 (0.47)	0.21 (0.42)	0.05 (0.42)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.32*** (0.01)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.57*** (0.19)	0.70*** (0.14)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.38*** (0.09)	0.36*** (0.10)	0.40*** (0.10)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.68*** (0.14)	0.51*** (0.11)	0.53*** (0.09)	0.64*** (0.08)	0.60*** (0.07)	0.52*** (0.09)
Constant	-39.27*** (13.45)	-12.38 (11.07)	-3.48 (8.54)	-16.34* (8.40)	-7.54 (7.54)	-2.85 (8.56)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.52	0.53	0.61	0.70	0.71	0.64

Note: Data for Kulturkampf Repression is drawn from Haffert (2022). Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

F.4.3 Brown Priests

Table A-21: CSU Support controlling for presence of Brown Priests in Town

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) 1961	(5) 1965	(6) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.47*** (0.09)	0.42*** (0.07)	0.39*** (0.06)	0.37*** (0.06)	0.35*** (0.07)	0.45*** (0.07)
Brown priest presence	-0.14 (0.96)	-0.70 (1.02)	-0.26 (1.00)	-0.67 (1.04)	-1.59* (0.87)	-1.33 (1.03)
Population (1933, log)	-1.12* (0.56)	-1.26** (0.57)	-1.61*** (0.45)	-1.15*** (0.36)	-1.02*** (0.35)	-1.00*** (0.36)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.13** (0.06)	0.26*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.03)	0.16*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.17*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.40 (0.38)	0.96*** (0.34)	0.87*** (0.28)	0.78*** (0.28)	0.89*** (0.28)	1.01*** (0.27)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.69 (0.59)	0.63 (0.55)	1.03* (0.53)	0.38 (0.47)	0.22 (0.42)	0.05 (0.43)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.32*** (0.01)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	1.74 (5.26)	5.65 (5.25)	7.07 (4.63)	5.49 (4.01)	2.46 (3.28)	1.14 (3.15)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.56*** (0.19)	0.69*** (0.14)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.37*** (0.09)	0.36*** (0.10)	0.41*** (0.10)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.68*** (0.14)	0.51*** (0.11)	0.53*** (0.09)	0.64*** (0.08)	0.60*** (0.07)	0.52*** (0.09)
Constant	-39.81*** (13.48)	-12.46 (10.95)	-3.55 (8.51)	-16.51** (8.30)	-7.25 (7.49)	-2.39 (8.53)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.52	0.53	0.61	0.70	0.71	0.64

Note: Data for Brown Priests are drawn from Spicer (2008). Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

F.4.4 German Expellees

Table A-22: CSU Support controlling for Expellees

	(1) 1949	(2) 1953	(3) 1957	(4) CSU	(5) CSU	(6) 1969
Repressed priests (1933-1945, count)	0.46*** (0.09)	0.41*** (0.07)	0.38*** (0.05)	0.36*** (0.06)	0.34*** (0.07)	0.43*** (0.06)
East Germany expellees (1950, th.)	-0.31* (0.17)	-0.41** (0.18)	-0.27* (0.14)	-0.23** (0.11)	-0.32*** (0.11)	-0.35*** (0.11)
Population (1933, log)	-1.08* (0.56)	-1.22** (0.56)	-1.58*** (0.45)	-1.12*** (0.36)	-0.98*** (0.35)	-0.96*** (0.36)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.11* (0.06)	0.24*** (0.04)	0.19*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.10*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)
State Officials (1939, log)	0.40 (0.38)	0.95*** (0.34)	0.87*** (0.28)	0.77*** (0.28)	0.88*** (0.28)	1.00*** (0.27)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	0.67 (0.59)	0.60 (0.55)	1.01* (0.53)	0.36 (0.47)	0.19 (0.42)	0.03 (0.43)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.23*** (0.02)	0.34*** (0.02)	0.39*** (0.01)	0.37*** (0.01)	0.32*** (0.01)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	1.39 (5.29)	5.14 (5.27)	6.73 (4.61)	5.17 (3.99)	1.98 (3.32)	0.68 (3.17)
NSDAP Vote Share (1928, %)	0.49** (0.19)	0.61*** (0.14)	0.44*** (0.11)	0.33*** (0.09)	0.30*** (0.10)	0.34*** (0.10)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	0.67*** (0.14)	0.49*** (0.11)	0.52*** (0.09)	0.64*** (0.08)	0.59*** (0.07)	0.51*** (0.08)
Constant	-34.29** (14.45)	-4.98 (11.83)	1.16 (8.78)	-12.48 (8.29)	-1.62 (7.47)	3.71 (8.35)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	4,479	4,458	4,457	4,455	4,445	4,403
R-squared	0.52	0.54	0.61	0.70	0.71	0.64

Note: Data for German expellees are drawn from Braun and Franke (2021). Unit of analysis: historical municipality. Percentage change in the number of voters is relative to the 1949 election. District fixed effects are modern-day districts. Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered at historical district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

G Placebo Test: 2010 Referendum

Table A-23: Smoking Ban Referendum, 2010

Repressed Priests per th. capita as of 1969	-0.03 (0.14)	
Repressed Priests per th. capita as of 1933		0.06 (0.10)
Controls	Yes	Yes
Δ Number of Voters	Yes	Yes
Modern Landkreis FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	1,357	1,357
R-squared	0.52	0.52

Note. The unit of analysis is the modern-day, rural, Catholic village. All models include a full set of covariates aggregated at modern village level: 1933 population (logged), 1928 catholic vote, 1928 NSDAP vote 1939, 1939 state officials (logged), 1933-45 Jewish Persecution, 1939 share of agricultural population, 1939 income tax (logged), and population change between 1949 and election year. Standard errors clustered at historical landkreis level.

H Religious Observance: 1970–2010

Table A-24: Mass attendance and Priest Repression

	(1) 1970	(2) 1980	(3) 1990	(4) 2010
Repressed Priests per th. capita as of 1969	2.71*** (0.74)	1.51** (0.65)	1.28** (0.50)	0.72* (0.42)
Population (1933, log)	4.12 (2.56)	-0.25 (2.62)	2.31 (1.95)	-0.36 (1.76)
Catholic Vote Share (1928, %)	0.23** (0.11)	0.15* (0.09)	0.08 (0.07)	0.08 (0.05)
Agricultural pop. (1939, %)	0.18*** (0.06)	0.24*** (0.05)	0.21*** (0.04)	0.10*** (0.03)
Total Civil Servants (1939, log)	-0.12 (1.10)	1.30 (1.03)	0.85 (0.72)	0.33 (0.55)
Income Tax Revenue (1939, log)	-2.36 (1.97)	-0.12 (1.92)	-1.97 (1.61)	-0.41 (1.28)
NSDAP Vote share (1928, %)	1.41*** (0.46)	0.65 (0.40)	0.36 (0.29)	0.63** (0.29)
Jewish Persecution (1933-1945, binary)	-0.50 (1.50)	-0.72 (1.37)	-0.39 (1.10)	0.01 (0.90)
Catholic Population (1933, %)	1.17*** (0.45)	0.87*** (0.33)	0.17 (0.28)	0.21 (0.23)
Constant	-118.26*** (43.27)	-72.86** (34.18)	-15.98 (27.85)	-11.71 (22.52)
District FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Δ Number of Voters	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	285	284	286	287
R-squared	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.36

Note: Δ Number of Voters measures the percentage growth of voters between 1949 and election year (aggregated at modern-day municipality). Unit of Analysis: Modern-day municipality. District FE refer to modern-day counties. Robust standard Errors. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$