CULTURE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Riccardo PELIZZO*

Graduate School of Public Policy, Nazarbayev University, Republic of Kazakhstan, Nur-Sultan, riccardo.pelizzo@nu.edu.kz

https://doi.org/10.52123/1994-2370-2021-558
UDC 351.07/.08
CICSTI 82.13.11

Abstract. The purpose of the present paper is to explore the relationship between the level of accountability and political culture. In doing so, we do not simply rely on a conceptualization of (political) culture as religion or religious denominations, but also as civicness, familism, secularism and postmaterialism. The results of our data analyses suggest two broad considerations: first, that culture matters and, second, that some aspects of culture are more important than others. Specifically our data analyses reveal that accountability is more sensitive to civicness, post-materialism, and years of democratic rule than it is to familism or the pervasiveness of Christianity. Finally, our data analyses reveal that these facets of (political) culture have a greater impact on accountability than some institutional factors such as the form of government.
Keywords: accountability, trust, political culture, values.
JEL codes: H1; H83; H5.

Аңдатпа. Мақаланың мақсаты - есеп беру деңгейі мен саяси мәдениеттің өзара байланысын зерттеу. Сонымен қатар, біз тек дін немесе діни конфессия ретінде (саяси) мәдениеттің тұжырымдамаларына ғана емес, сонымен бірге азаматтыққа, отбасына, зайырлылыққа және постматериализмге де сүйенеміз. Деректерді талдау нәтижелері екі жалпы пікірді ұсынады: біріншіден, мәдениеттің маңызы зор, екіншіден, мәдениеттің кейбір аспектілері басқаларына қарағанда маңызды. Атап айтқанда, есеп берушілік отбасылық немесе христиан дінінің таралуына қарағанда азаматтыққа, постматериализмге және демократиялық басқару жылдарына сезімтал екендігі айқындалды. Нәтижесінде, деректерді талдау (саяси) мәдениеттің бұл аспектілері басқару формасы сияқты кейбір институционалды факторларға қарағанда есеп берушілікке көбірек әсер ететінін көрсетеді.
Түйін сөздер: есеп беру, сенім, саяси мәдениет, құндылықтар.
JEL кодтар: H1; H83; H5.

Аннотация. Целью данной статьи является изучение взаимосвязи между уровнем подотчетности и политической культуры. При этом мы не просто полагаемся на концептуализацию (политической) культуры как религии или религиозных конфессий, но также как и гражданственности, семейственности, секуляризма и постматериализма. Результаты анализа данных предполагают два общих мнения: во-первых, культура имеет важное значение и, во-вторых, некоторые аспекты культуры более важны, чем другие. В частности, анализ данных показывает, что подотчетность более чувствительна к гражданственности, постматериализму и годам демократического правления, чем к семейственности или распространенности христианства. В результате анализ данных показывает, что эти аспекты (политической) культуры оказывают большее влияние на подотчетность, чем некоторые институциональные факторы, такие как форма правления.
Ключевые слова: подотчетность, доверие, политическая культура, ценности.
JEL коды: H1; H83; H5.

Introduction

The scholarly literature, in the course of the past decades, has paid considerable attention to the study of culture, to its causes, its correlates, and its consequences. From Frobenius *(1897)* to Levi-Strauss *(1983)* scholars have explored, in different ways, the phenomenon of cultural diffusion. Philosophers, such as Gadamer *(2004)* have discussed the differences and the relationship between culture and civilization; between an understanding of culture as (intellectual) cultivating/cultivation *(Bildung),* and that of culture as the product of historical forces and tradition; and between the culture that comes from pure knowledge and the ones that comes, for example in the political realm, from praxis — a knowledge that comes from experience, from action, and that provide guidance for action. Other scholars, anthropologists *(Geertz, 1973; Douglas, 2004; Douglas, 2007)* and philosophers of religion *(Mbiti, 1990)*, while generally agreeing on the notion that culture is a symbolic system that shapes and reflects attitudes and behavior, proposed different

* *Corresponding author: R. Pelizzo, riccardo.pelizzo@nu.edu.kz*

ways in which such attitudes could be mapped and this line of research has gone on to shape organizational studies *(Hofstede, 1991)*, business studies *(Darley et al, 2008),* as well as political science and public policy debates *(Thompson et al., 2008; Ney et al., 2014)*. Political scientists have analyzed how the presence/absence of a civic culture may affect the functioning or the performance of democratic systems *(Almond et al., 2015)*, economic backwardness *(Bansfield, 1958)*, institutional performance *(Putnam, 1992),* democratization *(Welzel et al., 2005)* and they did so by using a wide range of conceptual constructs such as civicness, (amoral) familism, social capital, and trust. More recently some studies have attempted to explore the relationship between the conceptual constructs or to see which aspects of the conceptual constructs are more important *(Welzel et al., 2005)* — which were or have been often assessed on the basis of survey data. The analyses that we will present in the remainder of this paper build upon this line of inquiry (Norris and Inglehart, 2011; Inglehart, 2021).

For instance, the fact that Protestantism, unlike Catholicism, does not affect accountability could be explained by the fact that in spite of all the differences that one could detect within the Catholic world, the Catholic church has, both in organizational and doctrinal terms, a much greater unity than the one could detect among the Protestant churches — after all, for centuries and with various denominations, the Catholic Church has had what is now known as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith whose task is that of protecting and ensuring the doctrinal consistency within the Catholic church. But while organizational and doctrinal factors may account for the fact that accountability is affected by the presence and pervasiveness of a Catholic culture but not by those of the Protestant ethic, they do not explain variation in the level of accountability that one may detect between countries where a Catholic culture is equally pervasive. Such difference, in some cases, is or can be accounted for by the fact that some countries have a longer tradition of democratic governance than others. But how could one explain that countries, with a similar democratic history and similar rooting in the Catholic culture, display at times significant differences in terms of government accountability?

To answer these questions, in an effort to more fully understand the impact of cultural factors on accountability, it is necessary to go beyond an understanding of culture as religion or religious denomination. This is precisely what we attempt to do in the remainder of this paper. We plan to do so by investigating whether and to what extent government accountability is influenced, promoted or constrained, by other facets of (political) culture such as civicness, familism, secularism/secularization, and the rise (and the uneven distribution) of post material values around the world.

The organization of this paper is fairly straightforward. In the first section we will provide an overview of the cultural approach or, rather, the cultural approaches to the study of political phenomena. In the second section, we will present the results of our analyses. In doing so, we will explore for each aspect of political culture (familism, civicness, secularism and post-materialism) whether and how it relates to other facets of (political) culture, and we will proceed then to show whether and to what extent it exercises any influence on the level of government accountability. In the third and final section, as usual, we will formulate some tentative conclusions.

Literature review

In the wake of WWII, in the middle of a process of decolonialization that freed many countries from colonial rule, in the course of what Huntington *(1991)* eventually defined as the second wave of democratization, humanities and social sciences in different ways to various extents developed a true fascination with culture.

Historians and philosophers, in the humanities, and anthropologists, in the social sciences, had long been interested in culture, its meaning, its forms, its development, and its consequences. But, in the aftermath of the second world conflict and with the beginning of the Cold War which came to be fought also, if not predominantly, in cultural terms, the study of culture became a crucial area of inquiry for scholars working in various disciplines — as evidenced by the fact that these years witnessed the emergence of cultural anthropology, cultural studies, the semiotics of culture and so on.

Political science, in its turn, became interested in (political) culture. Banfield *(1958)* explained the socio-economic backwardness of a village in Southern Italy as the unfortunate byproduct of the population's amoral familism. Lipset *(1959)*, in an article that is best known for formulating what Przeworski and Limongi *(1997)* call the Lipset's thesis - democracy and economic development go hand in hand - suggested that the consolidation and the survival of democratic regimes was primarily due to cultural factors, that is to whether elites and masses had pro- democratic values. Using a large N survey data analysis Almond and Verba *(2015)* identified different political cultures and showed the importance of having a civic culture for the well functioning and stability of democratic regimes. A few years later, Sartori *(1970)* went on to say that culture is not simply an important element for the proper functioning of political regimes, but is also an important analytical tool as it affects our ability to study political phenomena since the political concepts that we wish to employ in our analytical efforts are culture-bound and do not travel well (and that when they do travel, they do so at the cost of the loss of precision). While the previous studies treated culture as a fixed variable, Inglehart *(1971)* looked at cultural change understood in terms of value change or change in the value systems — such as the one associated with or caused by the rise of post materialism and post-material values.

While these studies represent a small sample of a much larger body of research, they are nonetheless indicative of a common trend, that is to countries as the units of analysis and to assume them to be —a view that was initially disputed by Wildavsky *(1987)* on theoretical grounds and was then refuted on empirical grounds when that Putnam *(1993)* presented his data on the different levels of social capital in Northern and Southern Italy. Wildavsky *(1987)* suggested that a better approach for mapping cultural preferences and capturing differences, not only between groups but also within group, consisted in tracking individual preferences along two dimensions -strength of group boundaries and number/variety of prescription - that captured what Douglas had called grid and group. In the years following the publication of Wildavsky *(1987)*, several other efforts have been made to map cultural preferences. The data collected by the World Values Survey, that can also be used to perform micro-level analyses, were employed by Welzel and Inglehart *(2005)* to map preferences aggregated at the country level to capture cross-national variation in terms of the continuum that spans from materialism to post-materialism and also in terms of traditional v secular-rational values.

Wildavsky's observation that countries are not always nor necessarily culturally homogeneous is not the only criticism that could be leveled against the cultural approach to the study of politics and political phenomena. In the post-war years scholars working on mass media, cultural studies, semiotics had paid considerable attention to popular or mass culture. Adorno and Horkheimer had lamented that mass culture was instrument of social domination. Though aware of the fact that myths and culture could transform -as new myths or as the meaning of old myths could change - Barthes *(1957)* was also persuaded of the fact that culture was an instrument, if not of social domination, at least of the preservation of a status quo. A similar view echoed in the words of Eco *(1964)*, who also noted that mass or popular culture, in its various manifestations, could be instrumental in proposing and promoting specific values, ideas and ideologies, and that such values/ideologies would be predominantly conservative in orientation. The analysis of culture hence recognized, not so implicitly, the political implications of culture *(Bouchard, 2009).* And in contrast to the kind of research that political scientists performed, mostly with survey data, cultural studies carried out in these other lines of inquiry relied upon a much wider range of data and methodologies. Cultural studies, such as the one that Eco *(1964)* produced, made clear that in order to properly appreciate culture one should investigate not only high culture but also that popular or mass culture that had grabbed the attention to Adorno, Barthes, Eco and several other scholars working in this line of inquiry.

Except for a reference to the culture of the elite and its importance for the survival of democracy *(Lipset, 1959),* political scientists working in the political culture tradition have not paid sufficient or adequate attention to the question: whose culture? In shaping the

fate and the fortunes of a polity, what matters is the culture of the elites, that of the masses, or some kind of congruence between the two?

This literature on political culture can also be criticized not only for the questions it has asked and the issues it has raised, but also for the issues and the questions if failed to address. The problem seems to be particularly severe with regard to the causes or the determinant of political culture. Most of the scholars, from Banfield to Inglehart, who were concerned with the emergence of certain values and value change, regarded culture as a function or a byproduct of material forces.[1] The case of Banfield is, in this respect, emblematic. Banfield *(1958)* noted that amoral familism was the problematic culture in Montegrano and was characterized by a focus on personal/private interest and by a lack of public spiritedness, which, in turn, prevented any form of association and collective action. This type of culture, Banfield *(1958)* observed, was the reason why it was problematic to get organized and to solve what Olson *(1965)* called collective action problems, there were high levels of corruption (real or perceived), and there was a substantial lack of trust. But in his exploration of the factors that had been responsible for the emergence for such a culture, Banfield *(1958)* suggested that it was a function of material forces such as a high death rate, certain land tenure conditions, and the absence of the institution of the extended family. A political culture, understood in ideational terms, was the result of material forces. Several years later, in explaining why value or cultural change had occurred and post-material values had emerged, Inglehart *(1971, 991)* in the end suggested that these changes were the result of changes in the material conditions "influencing their socialization".

Building on the Maslow's work on the hierarchy of needs, Inglehart *(1971, 991)* contended that as more basic needs are adequately addressed and satisfied higher order needs and new values appear. In other words, what Inglehart suggested was that the transition from material to post-material values was the product of material forces. So, without questioning the importance of Banfield's or Inglehart's contributions to the study of political culture, both scholars treated a culture understood in ideational terms as a function of material forces without taking into any consideration the fact that other ideational forces (culture as cultivating/Bildung, high culture, pop culture, religion, religious denomination) could also be instrumental in shaping values and in accounting for cross-national variation. To explore the possibility that a post-material culture or amoral familism may also be shaped by other ideational forces, in the next section we will explore whether and to what extent amoral familism, civicness, secularization and post materialism relate to one another and, also, to a culture understood as religion and religious denomination.

Before proceeding to present our findings, there is a final issue that needs to be addressed. By focusing on a (political) culture reduced to values and attitudes, the studies produced in the political culture tradition have been somewhat oblivious to the fact that in addition to a culture understood in attitudinal or valorial terms, there is another type of culture -the one that stems, like that of Plato's craftsman, from practice and experience. Learning from doing, knowing what is the appropriate thing to do and the proper course of action, is a type of practical knowledge that is or may be particularly relevant in the political realm and it may some implications as to why some countries are endowed with higher levels of government accountability while in other accountability is conspicuous because of its absence.

In the next section, we will perform some analyses to see whether culture matters, in explaining, government accountability. We will do so by equating culture with familism, as a long tradition of scholarship from Banfield to Fukuyama has shown the pernicious effects of familism in economic, developmental, institutional and political terms. We will perform a second set of analyses to assess whether and to what

[1] *Most but not all. Sartori (1970) in fact, in explaining why concepts are culture-bound, remarked that concepts are the product of extensive philosophical debates-thus recognizing that ideas and culture(s) are not produced exclusively by material forces, as many proponents of the political culture approach suggested, but also by ideational forces.*

extent a civic culture or a culture of civicness, assessed in terms of confidence in the government, is in any way responsible for government accountability. We will then proceed to explore the relationship between accountability and culture understood respectively in terms of post-materialism and secularism. In each of the models, we will also include, years of democratic rule as a control variable because it will allow us to test not only whether a government culture also matters, but also to assess whether the kind of culture that government accountability is responsive to is the ideational one or the practical one.

Data Analysis

Familism and Civicness

The data collected by the seventh wave of the World Values Survey allow us to explore a different side of political culture and to see whether and to what extent, once we change our understanding of what political culture is, we get a different picture as to the nature of the relationship between political culture and accountability.

As we noted earlier on, one of the first seminal works in the political culture tradition was represented by Banfield's analyses of the moral basis of a backward society *(Banfield, 1958).* In this study Bansfield noted that political culture was ultimately responsible for the problems that Montegrano experienced. Specifically socio-economic backwardness and the lack of civicness were consequence of what Banfield *(1958)* called 'amoral familism'.

Hence, in an effort to better understand how cultural factors shape political outcomes, it is necessary to go beyond a reductionist approach that reduces culture to religion or religious denominations. Such an approach in fact fails to account for the cultural and political differences among people and societies where certain religions or religious denominations are predominant. In order to appreciate and, possibly understand such differences, one needs, among other things, to explore the impact of familism, amoral or otherwise, on political outcomes.

The World Values Survey, in the seventh way, collected data from 79 countries. Some of these data pertain to the trust the citizens have for their family as well as to the confidence they have for/in various political institutions. These data hence allows us to explore the political culture-government accountability nexus by changing the focus of our analysis and a different understanding of how political culture should be understood and empirically assessed.

In a first, however crude, approximation, we can equate familism, amoral or otherwise, with the percentage of people reporting in each of the 79 countries for which World Values Survey data were collected, to trust completely their respective families.

The World Values Survey questionnaire was administered to 127596 respondents from 79 countries. Respondents were asked

Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely, somewhat, not very much or not at all?

When the family was the group the respondents were asked about, 0,1 per cent of the respondents responded that they did not know, about 0.2 per cent of the respondents did not answer. This means that the remaining 99.7 per cent of the global sample provided valid responses. In the course of our analyses we have focused on this 99.7 per cent of valid responses and treated the remaining 0,3 per cent, as is customary in such cases, as system missing.

Table 1 – Complete Trust in the Family

Number of observations	Mean	Min	Max	St. Deviation
79	81.1	56.6	98.5	9.80

The descriptive statistics, reported in table 1, indicate that 81.1 per cent of the respondents in the sample reported to trust their families completely. This fairly high average should not make us overlook the fact that there is considerable variation in the sample. The percentage of respondents trusting completely their family varies from a minimum of 56.6 per cent in Bolivia to a maximum of 98.5 per cent recorded in

Bangladesh, with a standard deviation of 9.80. The second point worth noting is that there is considerable variation both within regions and between regions. In Latin America, for example, the percentage of respondents who trust their family completely varies from a minimum of 56.6 per cent in Bolivia to 87.1 per cent in Argentina — but with the exception of Argentina, that records a value above the global average, the other Latin American countries -all predominantly Catholic - report much lower levels of complete trust in the family than are recorded in any other region of the world. In fact, the percentage of respondents reporting complete trust in the family is of 56.6 per cent in Bolivia, 57.3 per cent in Brazil, 59.6 per cent in Nicaragua, 62.3 per cent in Ecuador, 68.4 per cent in Colombia, 69.3 per cent in Chile and 72.9 per cent in Peru. Similarly low values can be found in the USA (59.4%), Nigeria (60.2%), Portugal (65.5%), Poland (65.8%), Lithuania (68.6%) and Puerto Rico (68.7%). Except for Nigeria and the USA, where the percentage of Catholics in the population is fairly low - 12.6 and 24 per cent respectively - all the countries in which there are comparatively lower levels of complete trust in the family are predominantly Catholic—in Latin America and elsewhere. The percentage of Catholics is in fact 92.3 per cent in Portugal, 92.2 per cent in Poland, 83.4 per cent in Ecuador. 83.2 per cent in Lithuania, 82.3 per cent in Colombia, 79 per cent in Bolivia, 71.8 per cent in Chile, 69.9 per cent in Puerto Rico, 68.6 per cent in Brazil, 58.5 per cent in Nicaragua and 58.2 per cent in Guatemala.

The fact that in so many countries in which a sizeable portion of the population is Catholic a relatively small percentage of people has complete trust in their family compels one to explore the relationship between religion and/or religious denomination with the level of trust in the family. By doing so we are able to assess whether there is any relationship between a political culture understood in terms of religion and religious denomination and a political culture understood in terms of familism.

Table 2 – Correlations

	Percentage Christian population	Percentage Catholic Population	Percentage Protestant Population	Years of democratic rule
Percentage of respondents who trust completely their family	-.29 (.010)	-.49 (.000)	-.03 (.761)	-.24 (.038)

To test whether complete trust in the family is related to religion and religious denomination, we un three sets of correlations. Specifically we correlate the percentage of respondents with complete trust in the family, with the percentage of Christian population, the percentage of Catholic population and the percentage of Protestant population. The analysis reveals that in countries that have a higher percentage of Christians in the population, there is a lower percentage of respondents who trust their family completely. The correlation analysis in fact yields a negative and statistically significant coefficient (r = -.29, sig. = .010). The correlation analyses also reveal that while there is no detectable association between the percentage of Protestants in a population and the percentage of respondents who trust their family completely, there is instead a strong, negative, and statistically significant relationship between the percentage of Catholics in a country's population and the percentage of respondents who trust their family completely (r =-. 49, sig.= 000).

This evidence thus sustains the claim that there is indeed a relationship between culture, understood as religion and/or religious denomination, and the level of trust in the family. With regard to the relationship between culture as religion and trust in the family, the evidence makes it clear that countries with a more pervasive Christian culture have lower levels of trust in the family than countries in which Christianity is less pervasive. With regard to the relationship between culture as religious denomination and trust in the family, the evidence is mixed because while countries that have a more

pervasive Catholic culture have less trust in the family than those polities in which Catholicism is less widespread - one would be tempted to say less hegemonic - the pervasiveness of Protestantism and the presence of a Protestant ethics does not make much of a difference.

In contrast to Banfield *(1958)*, who used (amoral) familism as his proxy for (political) culture, other scholars, such as Putnam *(1993)* have assessed (political culture) in terms of civicness - which in many ways can be regarded as the opposite side of familism. Familists, as Banfield made clear, are those who trust the family, are in no way public spirited and have little trust for politics and institutions, while the civicness discussed by Putnam was found among individuals, groups and societies that has a great deal of trust for political institutions.

The data collected by the seventh wave of the World Values Survey provides the analyst with valuable information as to how much confidence respondents from various countries have for political institutions. In this respect, we estimate the confidence in political institutions by computing the percentage of respondents who reported to have a great deal of confidence in the government.

Table 3 – Descriptive Statistics. Percentage of respondents with a great deal of confidence in the government

Number of observations	Mean	Min	Max	St. Deviation
78	10.93	0.8	54.2	11.92

The descriptive statistics presented in table 3 are rater informative in this respect. First they show that responses were collected from 78 countries, as no responses were collected from respondents in Egypt. The second indication that the descriptive statistics provide is that the percentage of respondents that have a great deal of confidence is considerably lower than the percentage of respondents who trust completely their family. In fact, only 10.93 per cent of the respondents report to have a great deal of confidence. The third element that the data highlight is the fact that there is a considerable cross-national variation. In this regard, the data show that the percentage of respondents with a great deal of confidence in the government varies from a minimum of 0.80 per cent (in Croatia) to a maximum of 54.2 per cent (in Tajikistan) with a standard deviation of 11.92.

In contrast to the data on the trust in the family, the data on confidence in the government do not reveal any strong regional trend. A closer inspection of the data, however, reveals that confidence in the government is considerably lower than the global average in many of the countries that were formerly under communist rule (0.8 % in Croatia, 1% in Lithuania, 1.7% in Slovenia, 2.1% in Czech republic, 2.2% in Armenia, 2.8 % in Ukraine) and it is considerably higher than the global average in developing countries/emerging economies with a low democratic quality -43.2 in Azerbaijan, 33.3. per cent in Bangladesh, 36.2 per cent in Burma/Myanmar, 47.8 per cent in China, 37.2 per cent in Indonesia, Iran 19.1 per cent, 22.6 per cent in Kazakhstan, 16.7 per cent in Jordan, 27.5 per cent in Pakistan, 36.1 per cent in Vietnam, 13.2 pe cent in Thailand, 24.4 per cent in Turkey and 18.5 per cent in Zimbabwe. While the strong economic performance that some of these countries have experienced in recent years (and decades) and the ensuing progress along the developmental path may explain why the government may enjoy high levels of confidence in some of these countries (China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan), it is much less clear what makes government enjoy such a remarkably high levels of confidence/legitimacy in countries that have experienced, on an ongoing basis, either economic (Zimbabwe) or political woes (Thailand).

A final point that is worth exploring is whether and to what extent confidence in the government, which is a way in which civicness and subordinately political culture can be operationalized and conceptualized, relates to other conceptualizations of political culture-religion, religious denomination and familism. The relationship between

confidence in government and trust in the family is of particular interest because, as we have previously recalled, Banfield (1958) made clear that (amoral) familists are those individuals and groups that have considerable, almost exclusive , trust in the family and no confidence in political institutions.

Table 4 – Correlations. Confidence in Government and its cultural correlates (sig.)

	Percentage Christian population	Percentage Catholic Population	Percentage Protestant Population	Percentage of respondents who trust completely their family	Years of democratic rule
Percentage of respondents who have a great deal of confidence in the government	-.56 (.000)	-.34 (.002)	-.17 (.144)	.21 (.060)	-.36 (.002)

The correlation analyses reveal that the level of civicness, measured on the basis of a great deal of confidence in the government, is associated with the cultural dimensions that were previously identified. With regard to civicness and religion, the correlation analysis shows that countries that have a larger Christian population have lower levels of civicness as suggested by the fact that the correlation between these two variables yields a strong, negative and statistically significant coefficient (r = -.56, sig. =.000). The correlation analysis also makes clear that the relationship between religious denomination and civicness is mixed in the sense that while there is a strong, negative and statistically significant relation between the percentage of respondents with a great deal of confidence in the government and the percentage of the Catholic population (r =-. 34, sig. =.002), there is not detectable relationship between civicness and the percentage of Protestants. While these findings are generally in line with the findings presented thus far in this study, a more perplexing finding is represented by the fact that there is a strong, negative and statistically significant relationship between the years of democratic rule and the percentage of respondents who have a great deal of confidence in the government. While having a proper (and properly democratic) culture of government goes hand in hand with higher levels of government accountability, the legitimacy of the government is actually weaker in those countries that have, if not a better, at least a longer experience with democratic governance. The only way in which we can make sense of this, rather odd finding, is that, as Pasquino *(1997)* once explained, democracy is demanding—which is why citizens and voters in democratic settings are never (fully) satisfied with the performance of the government and the political system. Our analysis of the cultural correlates of civicness would not be completed, if we did not explore the relationship between trust in the family and confidence in the government. The tradition of scholarship that, ideally, goes from Banfield *(1958)* to Putnam *(1992)* and Fukuyama viewed familism and civicness as being converse to one another. Individuals and groups (and societies one may add) that display high levels of (amoral) familism are characterized by low levels of civicness, while societies where there are high levels of civicness are characterized by low levels of familism. Concretely this means that, given the way in which we have measured familism and civicness thus far, we should find that the percentage of respondents who trust their family completely is negatively or inversely related to the percentage of voters who have a great deal of confidence in the government. Yet, once we perform such an analysis, we find that that is not the case—the correlation analysis in fact yields a positive albeit insignificant correlation coefficient.

Inspection of the data allows to understand why, in contrast to what an important literature had long theorized, civicness and familism are not strongly, negatively and significantly related to one another. The reason is that, if we use the mean response as the cut off point on each

dimension, we can easily identify four types of countries. Those with high trust in the family and high confidence in the government, those with high trust in the family and low confidence in the government (familist), those with low trust in the family and high trust in the government (civic) and those with low trust in the family and low confidence in the government (skeptics).

Fifteen countries belong to the first group (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, China, Ethiopia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Philippines, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand and Vietnam); twenty-nine countries fall in the second group (Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Armenia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Italy, Lebanon, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, Slovenia, North Macedonia, Spain, Sweden and the UK); nine countries belong to the third group (Burma/Myanmar, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Macao, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and twenty-Four countries belong to the group of the skeptics (Australia, Brazil, Chile, Taiwan, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Japan, South Korea, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Slovakia, Tunisia, Ukraine, Switzerland and USA).

This two-dimensional mapping reveals that consolidated democracies in the West (Europe and North America) do not appear in the first and in the third group, that is in those settings in which the percentage of respondents who have a great deal of confidence is above the global average. This result is consistent with what was previously reported with regard to the relationship between confidence in the government and years of democratic rule. Countries that are more democratic, in which democracy has become consolidated or in which democracy has (had) a longer history have lower levels of confidence in the government than those countries which are less democratic or in which democracy has (had) a shorter history. While the data at our disposal do not allow us to provide a compelling explanation for such a possibly surprising finding, it is possible nonetheless to formulate some educated guesses. First of all, that while respondents in democratic countries are free to indicate how much confidence they actually have for the government, respondents in less democratic/more autocratic settings may be less inclined to do so for fear of possible retaliation. A second, possible, explanation, is that the data in the non-democratic settings are collected by think tanks and research institutes, affiliated with the government/ruling party, that have every interest to show how much support and legitimacy their respective governments enjoy. A third explanation is that voters in democratic countries are more demanding than voters living in non-democratic settings. Precisely because they are never fully satisfied with the policy responses with which their governments attempt to address their demands, they place always new demands on a political system from which they expect more, and that, by doing so, they contribute to improving the quality of their respective political regimes.

The data at our disposal, as we have already noted, do not allow us to see which of these three educated guesses comes closer to providing the correct explanation, but they do allow us to test whether and to what extent trust in the family and confidence in the government affect the level of government accountability. We plan to do so by regressing the level of government accountability with several variables that capture several different facets of political culture. We will regress accountability against the percentage of respondents who trust their family completely because this will give us an indication of whether and in what ways accountability is related to familism. We will regress accountability against the percentage of respondents who have a great deal of confidence in the government because this analysis will allow us to understand whether and how accountability relates to civicness. We will then run three models, that in addition of using our proxies for family and civicness as independent variables, will also include years of democratic rule, the percentage of Christian, Catholic and Protestant population as control variables.

Table 5 – Regression analyses (sig.)

intercept	Trust family completely	A great deal of confidence in the government	Years of democrat i c rule	Percentage of Christian population	Percentage of Catholic Population	Percentage of Protestant Population	R-squared
1.37 (.130)	-.01 (.195)						.02
.82 (.000)		-.05 (.000)					.47
-.73 (-259)	.01 (.182)	-.04 (.000)	.01 (.000)	.00 (.592)			.67
-1.08 (.120)	.01 (.085)	-.04 (.000)	.01 (.000)		.00 (.188)		.68
-.53 (.371)	.01 (.242)	-.04 (.000)	.01 (.000)			.00 (.241)	.67

The results of our regression analyses, presented in table 5, present a fairly interesting picture. They show, first of all, that political culture matters in some ways but not in others. When we associate political culture with religion, religious denomination and familism, culture does not have a statistically significant impact on the level of accountability. By contrast, when we associate political culture with (our proxy for) civicness and culture of democratic governance that countries and governments have the opportunity to acquire under democratic rule, we find that culture does have a statistically significant impact on the level of accountability. The data analysis also reveals that civicness and culture of government have different, opposite effects, on the level of government accountability. The longer the experience that a country has with democratic rule, the higher is the level of government accountability. By contrast, the larger the portion of respondents/citizens with a great deal of confidence in the government, the lower the level of government accountability.

Secularism and Post-Materialism

In the course of this study we have equated political culture with religion, religious affiliation, familism and civicness. While each of these variables captures an aspect, however important, of political culture, the literature has shown over the years that there are also other ways in which political culture can be understood. In 1971, building on the work of Maslow *(1943)*, Inglehart *(1971)*, proposed a new typology of value priorities, showed how the satisfaction of more basic needs had created the conditions for both the rise of new, post-material values, and the emergence of the parties of the so called New Left.

Following Inglehart, one can conceive political culture in terms of the dichotomy of material vs post-material values, can assess the relationship of (a material/post- material culture) culture with the other conceptualizations of political culture discussed so far, and, more importantly explore the relationship between post-materialism and government accountability. The data on post-material values were collected, in the course of the seventh wave of the World Values Survey in 79 countries. To assess the presence/absence and/or pervasiveness of postmaterialism in a given country, we compute the percentage of respondents who report to have post-material values or that can be identified as post-materialists. The descriptive statistics presented in table 6 reveal that the incidence or pervasiveness of postmaterialism displays considerable cross-national variation. The percentage of postmaterialists varies from a minimum of 1 per cent in Egypt to 36.3 per cent in Germany with a mean of 12.45 and a standard deviation of 7.54.

Table 6 – Descriptive statistics

	N	mean	Min	max	St. deviation
Post materialism	79	12.45	1	36.3	7.54

Culture, in terms of post-materialism or post-material values, is related to some of the other ways in which culture has been conceptualized. Post-materialism is associated with culture understood in terms of religion as evidenced by the fact that the correlation between the percentage of Christian population and postmaterialism yields a strong, positive and statistically significant coefficients. See table 7.

Post-materialism is also associated with culture understood in terms of religious denominations as one could infer from the fact that the correlations between post-materialism on the one hand and the percentage of Protestant and Catholic population on the other hand yield strong, positive and statistically significant coefficients. In this respect it is also worth noting that the relationship between post-materialism and Protestantism is slightly stronger than the relationship between post-materialism and Catholicism. See table 7.

While the correlation between years of democratic rule, our proxy for culture of democratic governance, and post-materialism is strong, positive and statistically significant, the correlation between post-materialism and complete trust in the family is negative (and statistically insignificant). Finally the correlation between post-materialism and the percentage of citizens who have a great deal of confidence in the government is negative and statistically significant. See table 7.

Table 7 – Correlations

	Percentage Christian population	Percentage Catholic Population	Percentage Protestant Population	Years of democratic rule	Percentage of respondents who have a great deal of confidence in the government	Percentage of respondents who trust completely their family
Percentage of the population with Post-material values	.39 (.000)	.41 (.000)	.42 (.000)	.59 (.000)	-.34 (.003)	-.19 (.098)

Building on Inglehart's early work on the causes and the correlates of cultural change, such as the rise of post-materialism, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) went on to explore cultural differences across countries. Their work (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005) concluded that most of these cultural differences are accounted for or explained by two dimensions—one pertaining to the opposition of material and post-material values or, in their words, the opposition between survival and selfexpression values, the other pertaining to the opposition of traditional and secular/rational values. Given the importance that Inglehart and Welzel (2005) attribute to traditionalism-secularism dimension, this section will be devoted to exploring three questions, namely: what is the distribution of secular values across the 79 countries included in our sample? How is secularism related to the other facets of (political) culture such as religion, religion denomination, familism/trust in the family and civicness? What is the relationship between secularism and accountability. And, finally, whether secularism provides a better explanation for the cross-national variation in the level of accountability than the other facets of culture that were discussed above.

Secularism is measured on the basis

on Welzel's Index of Overall Secular Values that is estimated by averaging the skepticism sub-index, the defiance sub-index, the relativism sub-index and the disbelief sub-index. Secularism, as shown in table 8, varies from a minimum of .17 (Egypt, Jordan) to a maximum of .56 (South Korea) with a mean of .37 and a standard deviation of .09.

Table 8 – Descriptive statistics

	n	mean	St.deviation	min	Max
secularism	79	.37	.09	.17	.56

With regard to the second question, that is the relationship between secularism and other facets of political culture, the data reveal three conclusions: first, that secularism is unrelated to religion and religious affiliation as evidence by the fact that the correlations between secularism and, respectively, the percentage of Christian population, the percentage of Catholic population, the percentage of Protestant population and the percentage of respondents who trust their family completely yield statistically insignificant coefficients. Second, the data also show that secularism is related to and possibly affected by the pervasiveness of post material values, years of democratic rule and confidence in the government. Third the analyses, however, reveal that while the association between secularism on the one hand and post-materialism and years of democratic rule on the other hand is positive, the association between secularism and confidence in the government is negative. See table 9.

Table 9 – Correlation

	Percentage of responden ts with Post-material values	Percentage of respondents with a great deal of confidence in the governme nt	Percentage of respondents who trust completely their family	Years of democrat i c rule	Percentage of Christian populatio n	Percentage of Catholic populatio n	Percentage of protesta nt populati on
secularism	.27 (.016)	-.33 (.003)	-.02 (.833)	.24 (.036)	.19 (.188)	.16 (.147)	.12 (.185)

The statistical analyses presented in table 10 show that the level of government accountability is affected by secularism - when it (accountability) is regressed against secularism or secularism and post-materialism. However, as the other models reveal, once additional control variables are included in the model specification, the influence that secularism exercises on the level of accountability becomes weaker and statistical insignificant. The regression coefficients for religion and religion affiliation are also statistically insignificant and the level of accountability is a function of three different facets of political culture.

First, accountability and the level thereof is explained by practice (years of democratic rule) and ideas. Second, the evidence presented in table 7 sustains the claim that religion appears to be a significant ideational factor. Third, the evidence presented here (table 10) sustains the claim that other facets of political culture, postmaterialism and civicness, play a much larger and more significant role in promoting/hindering government accountability.

Table 10 – Regressions

intercept	secularism	postmaterialism	civicness	familism	Years of democratic rule	Christian population	r-squared
-1.64 (.001)	4.94 (.000)						.18
-1.84 (.000)	3.26 (.003)	.07 (.000)					.44
-.90 (.178)	1.44 (.121)	.05 (.000)	-.04 (.000)	.01 (-474)			.63
-1.31 (.056)	1.42 (.126)	.02 (.023)	-.04 (.000)	.01 (-244)	.01 (.000)	.00 (.863)	.70
-.10 (.554)		.03 (.013)	-.04 (.000)			.01 (.000)	69

Conclusions

The evidence presented in paper allows us to formulate two conclusions: first, that culture matters and, second that some aspects of culture are more important than others. The culture of government is an important determinant of accountability—the level of accountability is higher in countries with a longer experience with democratic rule than in countries where democratic rule was never introduced or was short-lived. This evidence also suggests that culture should not be regarded exclusively in ideational terms to refer to religion, religious affiliation, familism, civicness, secularism and post-materialism, but also in practical terms. There is a culture that reflects ideas and values, but there is also a culture that can emerge, and in the case of accountability emerges, from practice itself.

Culture, understood in both practical and ideational terms, is a more important determinant of accountability, than institutions such as the form of government. The statistics presented in table 10 have shown that once we control for postmaterialism and civicness, the parliamentary form of government ceases to have any detectable impact on how accountable governments are. This seems to suggest that having the practical knowledge of how governments should respond and account for how they conduct has a significant impact on the level of accountability. In other words, accountability is not simply a function of institutional settings and culture understood in ideational terms but also and more importantly of practice.

The fact that a given institutional setting, such as the parliamentary form of government, is expected to do a betterjob in securing government accountability than, for example, the presidential form of government does not mean or does not necessarily imply that government accountability will be higher under parliamentarism than under presidentialism. Parliamentary settings may provide a greater potential for accountability, but, as our data analyses reveal, do not necessarily provide more accountability. Translating something potential into something real, a possibility into reality, is a practical problem that constitutional lawyers, in discussing the differences between formal and material constitutions or the differences between *de iure* and *de facto,* have long been aware of. Bridging the gap between theory and practice, between formal dispositions and their application, between *de iure* and *de facto,* between principles and practice, between oversight potential and actual (or even effective) oversight is a practical problem, in the sense of being a problem of action. And the action is informed by that type of knowledge that philosophers, from Plato to Gadamer *(2004, 313-314)*, have identified in the *techne* and that, more modestly, in the previous pages, we have identified with the culture of government—a practical culture because it stems from the practice and guides action.

REFERENCES

Adorno, T.W., Horkheimer, M. (1997). *Dialectic of enlightenment.* London: Verso.
Almond, G.A., Verba, S. (2015). The civic culture: Political attitudes and democracy in five nations. Princeton university press.
Banfield, E. (1958). *Moral Basis of a Backward Society.* New York: Free Press
Barthes, R. (2015). *Mythologies.* Media Diffusion.
Bouchard, N. (2009). Eco and Popular Culture, in Peter Bondanella (ed.), New Essays on Umberto Eco, Cambridge University Press, 1-16.
Darley, W.K., Charles, B. (2008). African culture and business markets: implications for marketing practices. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 23 (6), 374-383.
Douglas, M. (2004). *Natural symbols: Explorations in cosmology.* Routledge.
Douglas, M. (2007). A history of grid and group cultural theory. *Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto*.
Eco, U. (1994). *Apocalittici e integrati.* 1964. Milano: Bompiani. Partial English translation available in Eco, Umberto. *Apocalypse postponed.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Frobenius, L. (1987). Der westafrikanische Kulturkreis. Petermanns. geogr. Mitt, 43, 225-236.
Fukuyama, F. (1996). *Trust: human nature and the reconstitution of social order.* Simon and Schuster.
Gadamer, H.-G. (2004). Truth and Method. London: Continuum.
Haerpfer, C., Inglehart, R., Moreno, A., Welzel, C., Kizilova, K., Diez-Medrano J., M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin & B. Puranen et al. (eds.). (2020). World Values Survey: Round Seven - Country-Pooled Datafile. Madrid, Spain & Vienna, Austria: JD Systems Institute & WVSA Secretariat. doi.org/10.14281/18241.1
Inglehart, R. (1971). The silent revolution in Europe: Intergenerational change in post-industrial societies. *The American political science review* 65, (4), 991-1017.
Inglehart, R. F. (2021). *Religion's sudden decline: what's causing it, and what comes next?.* Oxford University Press, USA.
Inglehart, R., Welzel, C. (2005). Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence. New York: Cambridge University Press
Levi-Strauss, C. (1983). *The Raw and the Cooked: Mythologiques, Volume 1.* Vol. 1. University of Chicago Press.
Maslow, A.H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological review,* 50 (4), 370-396.
Ney, S., Verweij, M. (2014). Exploring the contributions of cultural theory for improving public deliberation about complex policy problems. *Policy Studies Journal,* 42.4, 620-643.
Norris, P., Inglehart, R. (2011). *Sacred and secular: Religion and politics worldwide.* Cambridge University Press.
Olson, M. (1965). The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Pasquino, G. (1997). La democrazia esigente. Bologna: il Mulino
Przeworski, A., Limongi, F. (1997). Modernization: Theories and facts. World Pol. 49 (2), 155-183.
Putnam, R. (1992). Making democracy work
Sartori, G. (1970). Concept misformation in comparative politics. *The American political science review,* 64.4, 1033-1053.
Thompson, M., Richard, E., Wildavsky, A. (2018). *Cultural theory.* London: Routledge.
Weber, M. (2002). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit" of capitalism and other writings.* Penguin.
Welzel, C., Inglehart, R. (2005). Liberalism, postmaterialism, and the growth of freedom. *International Review of Sociology* 15.1, 81-108.
Welzel, C., Inglehart, R. Deutsch, F. (2005). Social capital, voluntary associations and collective action: which aspects of social capital have the greatest 'civic'payoff?. *Journal of civil society* 1.2, 121-146.

МӘДЕНИЕТ ЖӘНЕ ЕСЕП БЕРУ

***Рикардо ПЕЛИЦЦО**, Назарбаев Университетінің жоғары мемлекеттік саясат мектебі, Қазақстан Республикасы, Нұр-Сұлтан, riccardo.pelizzo@nu.edu.kz*

КУЛЬТУРА И ПОДОТЧЕТНОСТЬ

***Рикардо ПЕЛИЦЦО**, Высшая школа государственной политики Назарбаев университета, Республика Казахстан, Нур-Султан, riccardo.pelizzo@nu.edu.kz*