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Religion and Political Action in Postcommunist Europe

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Patterns of political identification in postcommunist Europe are still weakly formed. The churches, however, command high levels of confidence, in sharp contrast to political parties. Representative surveys in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Ukraine in late 1997 and early 1998 indicate high levels of confidence in the churches in three of these nations, but not in the Czech Republic for reasons that appear connected to its forced conversion to Catholicism. The religious, as in other countries, are disproportionately female, but attenders in postcommunist Europe are not more likely to be elderly or resident in the countryside. There was little difference between church attenders and national populations in attitudes to the market, NATO membership, or the current government; there were rather larger differences between the countries, with Bulgarians the most favourable to the market, NATO and pro-market parties, and Ukrainians the least favourable. A multiple regression analysis found that church attendance of itself had little effect on attitudes or party preferences in either the Czech Republic or Slovakia; it did, however, increase support for the market, for joining NATO and for pro-market parties in Bulgaria and Ukraine. The relatively modest effects of overt religiosity are likely to be helpful to the formation of a democratic political culture, although account must also be taken of a strong association between the Muslim minorities in these countries and the political parties that seek to represent their interests.

Communist systems were not atheist. Church and state, formally, were entirely separate; believers could practise if they wished to do so; and there were many more who did so than who joined the ruling party. In Poland, Catholics had their own deputies' groups in parliament, they had their own newspapers, there was a Catholic university at Lublin and the armed forces had Catholic chaplains (Taras, 1986, p. 144). In the German Democratic Republic, one of the least liberal in its cultural policies, the Catholic church ran hospitals and nursing homes, offered religious instruction to children on church premises and broadcast Sunday services on state radio; conscientious objectors, uniquely in the communist world, were allowed an alternative to military service, and the deputy head of state was a publicly declared Christian (Ramet, 1989, p. 27; Beeson, 1974, pp. 177, 179). All of these regimes, however, were committed to the view that religion was a 'survival' of the capitalist period, which would gradually wither away as the social basis for its existence disappeared; and all of them discriminated against religious believers in their official policies, in some cases to the point of repression. Only Albania went so far as to declare itself, under the 1976 constitution, the 'world's first atheist state'. But believers were generally excluded from public office and from positions that involved the care of the young; Jews were often subject to additional forms of disadvantage, as well as popular hostility; and in some cases there were organized campaigns against the churches and believers in general. In the USSR there were campaigns of this kind in the late 1920s, and under Khrushchev; in China there were attacks upon traditional religions and upon Roman Catholic institutions

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during the Cultural Revolution (for an overview see for instance Ramet, 1989; Mojzes, 1992).

Official attitudes were already changing before the end of communist rule. In the USSR, Gorbachev made a gesture of great symbolic importance when he met the Patriarch in 1988, on the occasion of the millennium of the Orthodox Church, and spoke of the 'universal norms and customs' that both sides had in common; the Patriarch gallantly described the Party Programme as 'highly humane' and 'close to the Christian ideal' (*Izvestiya*, 9 April 1988, p. 3). In 1989 the Soviet leader met the Pope, and in 1990 diplomatic relations were established with the Vatican; later the same year a new law on freedom of conscience affirmed the right of believers to practise and of parents to give their children a religious upbringing, and gave churches the right to establish their own schools and to sell their own literature (text in *Vedomosti*, no. 41, 1990, art. 813). In the GDR, a meeting between the Federation of Protestant Churches and the state leadership in 1978 had already marked a 'crucial turning point in church-state relations'; the Bulgarian and Hungarian party leaders both visited the Vatican in the 1970s as part of a growing accommodation in their own countries; and in Hungary, which had been the first to sign an agreement with the Vatican in 1964, the Catholic church was able to reestablish a full hierarchy, send priests to study in Rome, open an Academy of Theology, and, in 1986, establish a new order of nuns. Religious traditions meanwhile merged with national ones as the Bulgarians celebrated Cyril and Methodius, and the East Germans claimed Martin Luther as 'one of the greatest sons of the GDR' (Ramet, 1989, p. 223).

The constitutions that were adopted after the end of communist rule took matters to a new stage by insisting that (as in Ukraine) citizens had the right to 'perform without constraint religious rites and ceremonial observances', and – as in Slovakia – that the churches had the right to 'administer their own affairs', entirely separate from the state authorities. The end of communist rule, however, left some uncertainty about the place the churches, and believers generally, would play in a more competitive political environment. The churches, clearly, were likely to favour a greater freedom of worship, but they were often more interested in rights for themselves than in a more abstract freedom that would allow minority sects and Western evangelists to propagate their views. Equally, they were obviously hostile towards communism as a doctrine, but they shared many of the instincts of the governments that had been formed under its auspices: they favoured a 'responsible' censorship, they took a restrictive view of women's and minority rights, and they were sometimes hostile to Western influence to such an extent that they could form a natural alliance with former Communists and nationalists – some members of the hierarchy, indeed, had worked for the communist security services (Anderson, 1994, pp. 212–13, 184–6, 189–90; Ramet, 1998, p. 281). The churches, at the same time, were generally the most trusted of all social institutions, they had buildings and publications, and they operated in political systems in which the orthodoxies of earlier years had been discredited but in which newer political forms – in some cases, the boundaries of the state itself – had yet to establish themselves.

In this paper we consider the complex interplay between religiosity and political life with particular reference to four of the postcommunist states: the Czech

Republic and Slovakia, both representative of traditionally Catholic East Central Europe (Slovakia particularly so); Bulgaria, a Balkan postcommunist state with an Orthodox tradition as well as a large Muslim minority; and Ukraine, another country with an Orthodox majority and a significant minority, in this case of Catholics, which had also been a Soviet republic. We rely, in the empirical sections of this paper, upon nationally representative surveys of each of these countries conducted in late 1997 and early 1998, drawing where appropriate upon a parallel investigation in postcommunist Russia and upon the wider comparative literature (full details of our survey are provided in the appendix). In a first section we review some of the literature that bears upon party identification and religiosity in early postcommunist Europe; in the following section we set out our findings on the distribution of religiosity across and within the nations that were considered in our own investigation; and in a third section we relate religiosity to social characteristics and political choices. Finally, we use multivariate analysis to identify the extent to which religiosity – defined for these purposes as church or mosque attendance – 'makes a difference' in postcommunist Europe, and explore the implications of our findings.

Religiosity and Political Identifications in Postcommunist Europe

Patterns of political identification were still vaguely defined in early postcommunist Europe. There were certainly bodies that called themselves parties, and that nominated candidates for public office: 43 of them contested the Russian Duma elections of December 1995, and as many as 112 the Polish elections of 1991. There was considerable variation across the region, with better established party systems in East Central Europe, and weaker, more ephemeral forms of party organization in the Balkans and the former Soviet republics. Equally, there were differences between the 'historical' parties, particularly the former communist parties, and newer parties and movements, many of which had originated in the struggle to displace communist rule with little reason to consider – still less agree upon – a programme of government. But typically, across the region, parties had been 'created from above by small groups of close personal friends'; they were 'not born of wider social movements, nor were they brought into being to represent social interests' (Lomax, 1996, p. 38). Parties of this kind, which had 'originated within parliament or at the elite level, rather than having been built up from the ground', were often focused around an ambitious leader (and known as 'Klaus's party' or 'Meciar's party' for that reason). They rarely held congresses or published accounts; they were less likely than their Western counterparts – or simply less able – to establish a strong organizational presence at the local level; and they had a tendency to split, or even disappear entirely (Mair, 1997, pp. 183–4, and more generally Kitschelt, 1999).

Postcommunist parties, for similar reasons, had relatively few members. Some of the Russian parties had no individual membership at all, like Konstantin Borovoi's Party of Economic Freedom, which favoured a looser, 'American' form of association. Across the region, the largest parties had memberships that were in the tens of thousands, and often much less (Klima, 1998, p. 497); these were much

lower levels as a proportion of the electorate than in the established democracies, and lower than in Spain and Portugal at a comparable stage in their development. There was indeed some suspicion of the very concept of party, for reasons that included the abuse of power by a single ruling party throughout the communist period. The 'great majority of Poles', for instance, 'deeply distrusted any political party', and such anti-party feelings were 'characteristic of all the postcommunist societies of Central and Eastern Europe' (Gebethner, 1996, p. 121). The survey evidence, indeed, suggested not just that parties were distrusted, but that they were the most distrusted of all the institutions of postcommunist society – more than the trade unions, farmers' organizations, the police, or the institutions of central and local government (Rose and Haerpfer, 1998, pp. 59–63). Tellingly, the new parties often avoided the word altogether: in Bulgaria, for instance, there was a Union of Democratic Forces, an Agrarian National Union, a Movement for Rights and Freedoms, a Business Bloc and a Popular Union, and even the Bulgarian Socialist Party ran in 1997 as Democratic Left; in Slovakia there a Movement for Democratic Slovakia, a Democratic Union, a Christian Democratic Movement and a Hungarian Coalition, but few bodies that actually called themselves parties.

Levels of identification with the postcommunist parties, accordingly, were very low in comparative terms. Just 22 percent of Russians felt they were 'close to a political party or movement', compared with 87 percent in the United States and 92 percent in the United Kingdom (White, Rose and McAllister, 1997, p. 135). Levels of identification were somewhat higher in Romania (41 percent) and Hungary (39 percent), but similar or even lower in Slovenia and Poland (22 and 18 percent respectively). At the other extreme, rather higher proportions were negatively partisan, and 'negative partisans', who could name a party they would never vote for but had no positive party identification, represented more than half of all electors – levels far higher than in contemporary democracies like the United States and Germany (Rose and Mishler, 1998, p. 223). And while there were high levels of support for the principle of open and competitive elections, significant numbers – 60 percent in the former Soviet Union, 25 percent in East-Central Europe – were prepared to ban parties towards which they felt 'very unfavourable'; many, indeed, were prepared to ban parties towards which they felt 'neither favourable nor unfavourable' (Miller, White and Heywood, 1998, pp. 64–6). Large proportions of the electorate, particularly in the eastern part of the region, opted for independents rather than party-sponsored candidates (in Ukraine, in the Supreme Council elections of 1994, independents took half the seats and two-thirds of the vote). And there were unusually high levels of volatility: between two and three times as high, on average, as in Western Europe, and substantially higher than in Weimar Germany, Latin America, or the new democracies of Mediterranean Europe (Mair, 1997, pp. 182–3; similarly Toka, 1998).

There were similar ambiguities in the position of the churches and their adherents. Levels of membership of the Orthodox Church in Russia, for instance, were considerably higher than the proportion of the population that reported a belief in God; and there were many 'believers' who accepted the existence of flying saucers, the evil eye and extra-sensory perception but who had difficulty with central tenets of the Christian faith, such as life after death. Conversely, there were atheists who thought religion made a positive contribution to national life, and others who

wished their children to be brought up in a religious faith and who attended services themselves on a regular basis (White and McAllister, 1997, pp. 240–1). Nonbelievers were also very ready to agree that the church contributed to a sense of morality (48 percent) and to the meaning of life (17 percent); a few even thought it could 'save souls', perhaps their own (*Mir mnenii i mneniya o mire*, no. 1, 1992, p. 7). There were equally substantial variations between religious belief and worship. More than half of those who described themselves as Orthodox did not attend church services and about two-thirds did not attend communion, which meant that the overwhelming majority of those who regarded themselves as Orthodox did not satisfy the traditional requirements of church membership (Dubin, 1996, p. 16). At the same time, up to half of all nonbelievers celebrated religious holidays, and about the same proportion thought it was impossible to live without a belief in some kind of god; others displayed icons in their homes, marked their graves with crosses, and observed religious festivals 'out of habit or respect for their elders and relatives' (White and McAllister, 1997, p. 236).

But whatever the nature of their beliefs, there was little doubt that, for believers and nonbelievers alike, the churches could be trusted; they could be trusted, indeed, more than all the other institutions of postcommunist society (Table 1). This was clearest of all in Russia and Ukraine, and strikingly so in the western regions of that country where Ukrainian Orthodoxy and nationalism had formed a close association. There were substantial levels of trust in Hungary and Slovakia, and only in the Czech Republic among the countries that formed part of our

Table 1: Trust in Institutions in Five Postcommunist Countries (percentages who say they 'completely trust' or 'mostly trust')

	Ukraine	Czech Rep.	Slovakia	Hungary	Russia
Mass Media					
Television	44	47	39	35	44
Radio	38	49	48	38	42
Newspapers	27	29	25	29	29
Political Institutions					
President	18	62	51	54	33
Government	14	47	20	19	29
Prime Minister	12	57	28	28	28
Other institutions					
Churches	51	18	38	41	51
Judiciary	25	30	25	46	27
Army	48	34	40	49	55
N	*971*	*973*	*667*	*988*	*2141*

Note: The question was: 'Now I'd like to ask how much you feel you can trust some people and other things. Please could you choose the answer that best represents your opinion.'

Source: Authors' survey, conducted in December 1993 and January 1994 in Russia by ROMIR, Moscow; in Ukraine by the Institute of Sociology, Ukraine Academy of Sciences, Kyiv; in Hungary by MODUS, Budapest; and in Slovakia and the Czech Republic by OPW Opinion Window, Prague.

investigation was there less confidence in the established churches than (for instance) in the government or prime minister, or the trade unions and daily newspapers. Among the ten new democracies surveyed by Rose and Haerpfer, Romania had the highest level of trust in the church, at 77 percent; it was followed by Ukraine and Belarus (with 54 and 53 percent respectively), with the lowest levels of trust in Slovenia and the Czech Republic for reasons that appeared to be largely historical (both had given strong support to the Reformation but had then been forcibly reconverted to the Catholic faith by the Habsburgs, which resulted in a 'sense of alienation from Catholicism' and a 'large-scale drift towards secularization' (Mojzes, 1992, pp. 156–7, 340)). The churches, clearly, were more likely to be trusted in former Soviet republics than in East Central Europe; but across all the new democracies, they were trusted only slightly less than the armed forces (Rose and Haerpfer, 1998, p. 61). Levels of trust were comparable, and in Russia and Ukraine higher, than levels of 'confidence' in the churches in Britain, Ireland or the USA (Greeley, 1992, p. 58).

There were indications, moreover, that religiosity, and church attendance in particular, was an important source of political loyalties throughout the postcommunist countries. Studies suggested, for instance, that church attenders in Eastern Europe had distinctive attitudes on many issues that were part of the postcommunist political agenda. Attenders, typically, were more 'conservative' than their counterparts outside the church: more favourable to law and order, and more likely to believe children should be taught respect for authority; positive towards Nicholas II, but also Stalin; more prepared than others to ban 'harmful' books, and to isolate AIDS victims; and less favourable to the market, and to multiparty politics (see for instance Rhodes, 1992, pp. 60–64). Believers, as studies in postcommunist Russia suggested, were also more likely to favour order above democracy, they were less committed to the rule of law and human rights, they were less friendly towards Jews, Chechens and gypsies, and more positive towards a single Slavic state incorporating Russia, Ukraine and Belarus (White and McAllister, 1997, p. 247). The most religious, across the region, were more likely than others to say that 'the new rich should be jailed', or that a woman's place was in the home. They were also more likely to report that they had experienced oppression under the communist regime, and less likely to say they had 'ever believed' in communist ideals; equally, they were less committed to freedom of speech and the rights of protest (Miller, White and Heywood, 1998, pp. 260–3). More generally, there were 'striking similarities' across postcommunist and other countries in the relationship between religiosity and moral issues, with regular church-goers the most 'traditional' in their attitudes to social and moral issues regardless of denomination or nationality (Heath, Taylor and Toka, 1993, pp. 57–8).

The comparative literature also suggested that religion was likely to be one of the most important ways in which political preferences were shaped, although again it was active participation rather than denomination (outside Northern Ireland) that had the greatest influence on vote choice, and was the most predictable in direction (ibid., p. 65). This was certainly true of an older literature in terms of which 'religious divisions, not class, [were] the main social bases of parties in the Western world today' (Rose and Urwin, 1969, p. 12). Across the developed world, church attendances were generally falling and conflicts between denominations about

social and moral issues were moderating; the churches themselves were less central to social activities, including sport, youth culture and the administration of charity and welfare. At the same time it was clear that religious differences in voting behaviour had not followed the same dramatic downward trend as the class cleavage (on the contrary, some argued, there had been a 'worldwide resurgence of religion in politics', particularly of various forms of fundamentalism and evangelical Christianity: Westlund, 1996); and in postcommunist Europe particularly class differences appeared to provide only a 'weak source of partisanship' as compared with religiosity, which was of the 'greatest relevance to voting choices' across the region (Whitefield and Evans, 1998, pp. 238–9). Indeed, the thesis of 'decline' appeared itself to have been used without sufficient discrimination; church attendance in Britain in the 1980s, for instance, was actually above the levels recorded in the Victorian years, which had supposedly been the heyday of 'traditional values' (Greeley, 1992, p. 52).

'Religion', however, found different forms of expression in national politics, even in an overwhelmingly Christian Europe. There was a clerical versus anticlerical cleavage in Catholic countries like France and Italy, or Lithuania and Poland, often expressed in disputes about schooling, abortion or divorce. There was a Protestant versus Catholic cleavage in mixed countries like the Netherlands and Northern Ireland, where it overlapped with questions of citizenship and identity; and there was a 'morally traditional' versus 'permissive' cleavage in Protestant countries like Norway, where it was expressed in disputes about alcohol, unconventional life styles and the status of Biblical accounts of the origins of the species (see for instance Crewe, 1994, p. 60). Religiosity, moreover, was just as ambiguous in the West as in the formerly communist nations. In the UK, for instance, substantial proportions of those who professed no religion claimed to believe in God (28 percent) or in life after death (35 percent); some atheists prayed and attended church services, and one in six felt 'close to God'; and, as elsewhere, the relationship between religion and political values was 'very complex and difficult (perhaps impossible) to disentangle' (Greeley, 1992, p. 60; Heath, Taylor and Toka, 1993, pp. 65–6). It was likely, in the postcommunist countries, that there would be a diversity reflecting the extent to which belief and practice reinforced or cut across ethnic cleavages; whether the church had compromised itself by an association with the former regime, or led the process of democratization (the repositioning of the Catholic Church as a 'force for change' appeared to have a particularly close association with the 'third wave of democracy': Huntington, 1991, p. 77); and whether there were parties that sought to mobilize religious identities in the competition for the votes of a postcommunist electorate.

Patterns of Religiosity in Postcommunist Europe

Our evidence relates, first of all, to patterns of affiliation: that is, the denomination to which respondents chose to assign themselves (Table 2). The most striking individual finding is the proportion of Czechs who regard themselves as without any affiliation at all (56 percent, with a further 2 percent who declined to respond): a level much higher than elsewhere in Eastern Europe, including postcommunist Russia and Ukraine, where the state had been committed to secularizing policies

Table 2: Religious Afiliation in Six Postcommunist Countries (percentages)

Affiliation	Ukraine	Bulgaria	Czech Rep.	Slovakia	Hungary	Russia
Orthodox	64*	55**	0	1	1	48
Catholic	4	0	37	72	54	0
Muslim	0	10	0	0	0	2
Protestant/Other Christian	5	17	4	10	22	6
Other, including Jewish	1	1	2	1	1	2
No religion/Refused to say	26	17	58	17	22	44
N	*1200*	*1519*	*1003*	*1056*	*988*	*2141*

Note: The question was 'To which religion do you belong, if any'; in Hungary and Russia, 'do you consider yourself as belonging to a particular religion? If so, to which?'

**Of which Ukrainian Orthodox accounted for 28 percent, Russian Orthodox for 22 percent, and undifferentiated Orthodox for 13 percent.*

***Of which Bulgarian Orthodox accounted for 35 percent and undifferentiated Orthodox for 20 percent.*

Source: Authors' survey, conducted in late 1997 and early 1998; for fuller details see the Appendix. For Hungary and Russia, as in Table 1.

for more than two generations. The explanation appears to be almost entirely historical. The Czech Reformation associated with Jan Hus had been among the first to distinguish itself from the official church, and there was strong resistance to the forcible reimposition of Catholicism by the Habsburgs after the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. This led to a perception in Bohemia and Moravia that Catholicism was hostile to the national interest because the Counter-Reformation had been imposed by a foreign power whose authority only the Czech aristocracy had originally accepted; the result was an 'alienation' from the Roman Catholic Church, although it was formally the affiliation of the vast majority of the population, and a 'tradition of anticlericalism'. Slovakia, by contrast, had an 'almost entirely different experience' due to the fact that the country had been under Hungarian rather than Habsburg domination, which meant that Roman Catholicism 'never became perceived as anti-Slovak' (in Poland, for similarly historical reasons, the association between Catholicism and nationalism was even stronger, establishing an 'equation of being Polish with being Roman Catholic') (Mojzes, 1992, pp. 156–7, 272; Ramet, 1998, p. 120).

Our findings, equally, suggest variety. The Orthodoxy with which our respondents identified in Russia, Ukraine and Bulgarian was in each case a distinct national church. And although a majority of Ukrainians identified with the Orthodox church in that country, there were marked regional and ethnic differences: members of the Russian Orthodox Church were more numerous in Russified eastern Ukraine, members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Greek-rite or Uniate Catholics more numerous in the nationalist west. There were comparable differences in the proportion who claimed to have no affiliation at all, who were 44 percent of those who responded to this question in the east – the same proportion as in Russia – but

just 9 percent in the more Ukrainian west (Miller, White and Heywood, 1998, p. 130; similarly Krindac, 1997, p. 1074). Only in Bulgaria, among the states we considered, was there a substantial Muslim minority, corresponding in practice to the Turkish minority in that country. Slovakia was overwhelmingly the most Catholic of the countries, in terms of affiliation – a level of affiliation, indeed, that placed it in the same category as Ireland, Spain and Poland; and it was the most devout, with the lowest proportion who had no affiliation at all. In none of the countries, except Hungary, was there a substantial Protestant minority, although there were substantial numbers in Slovakia, and in Bulgaria there were still larger numbers who identified themselves as 'Christians' without indicating a denomination.

Affiliation, clearly, is a census category, with few obvious implications for belief or behaviour (Bouma, 1992, p. 89). We asked, accordingly, about observance: whether our respondents attended religious services at all, and if so, how often they did so (Table 3). Again, there were marked variations. The Czech Republic, the most secular in terms of affiliation, was also the most secular in terms of attendance: fewer attended frequently, or indeed at any time, than in all the other countries we considered. Russians were also less likely to attend a service on a regular basis. At the other extreme, Slovaks, who also were the most likely to declare an affiliation of some kind (generally a Catholic one), were the most frequent attenders, with 40 percent attending a service at least once a month and only 18 percent who did not attend at all or who professed no religion. Clearly, as other inquiries have found, there is 'no shared legacy of communism' in such matters, but rather a variety of patterns of belief and behaviour shaped by historical as well as other factors (Heath, Taylor and Toka, 1993, p. 66). In a broader comparative context, the Slovaks are more devout than the British, but less so than Americans; only the

Table 3: Crossnational Patterns of Religious Observance (percentages)

Observance	Ukraine	Bulgaria	Czech Rep.	Slovakia	Russia	UK	US
More than once a month	11	8	7	40	7	19	48
More than once a year	28	30	13	19	19	14	27
Once a year or less	27	28	24	21	21	4	8
Never/No religion	33	32	55	18	51	62	16
Refused to say	2	2	3	3	2	1	2
N	*1200*	*1519*	*1003*	*1056*	*2141*	*3654*	*2945*

Source: For Ukraine, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Slovakia, as Table 2. For Russia, as Table 1. For the United Kingdom, Social Trends, *no. 28 London: Stationery Office, 1998, p. 228, reporting a 1996 survey. For the United States, derived from the General Social Survey, National Public Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, reporting a 1994 survey.*

Czechs and Russians, by contrast, were as secular as the British, with a majority reporting that they 'never' or 'practically never' attended a religious service.

Who, across postcommunist Europe, were the religious – defined as those who attended church or mosque on at least an occasional basis? As Table 4 suggests, they had much in common. In all cases, for a start, the religious were disproportionately women – most disproportionately of all in Slovakia and in Russia, where the question wording was slightly different, but not much less so in Bulgaria and Ukraine. This accords with the wider comparative evidence, in terms of which women – whether or not they are in employment – are more likely to believe in God, in life after death and in miracles; more likely to have a religious affiliation, to attend services and to pray; and also more likely to 'feel close to God' (Greeley, 1992, p. 63). Age was another common characteristic – apart from the Czech Republic, where relatively small numbers were involved. Church attendance, in all other cases, was relatively evenly distributed across the age-groups, with younger respondents if anything more like to attend than their older counterparts. In Britain and the US, by contrast, seniority has more significance, at least in terms of 'belief in God' and whether religion is 'very important' in respondents' lives; it makes less difference to church membership or more formal patterns of association (Greeley, 1992, p. 63; Gallup, 1998, pp. 41–2). It has been hypothesized that two types of religiosity are involved in the postcommunist countries: a more traditional and 'ritual' commitment on the part of older agegroups, and a more 'emotional', expressive commitment for younger, better educated and more urban agegroups, and this would help to explain the limited differences between the generations in

Table 4: Socioeconomic Characteristics of those who Attend Church Once a Year or More (percentages)

Demographic Group	Ukraine	Bulgaria	Czech Rep.	Slovakia	Russia
Men	56	58	37	76	47
Women	72	73	48	82	75
Under 30	64	66	37	82	66
60 or older	61	63	50	76	69
Feel income is inadequate	64	65	42	77	n.d.
Feel income is adequate or better	67	66	43	80	n.d.
Retired	63	64	53	83	70
Unemployed	66	65	44	76	59
Live in capital or other big city	55	73	40	72	67
Live in village	75	57	41	88	66
Overall	*65*	*66*	*43*	*79*	*63*

Source: As Table 2. Respondents in Russia were asked 'are you religious?' in a survey conducted for the present authors in January–February 1996 by ROMIR (n=1,581).

their propensity to attend services and indeed the slight youthful predominance (Dubin, 1996, pp. 15–16).

Attendance related less clearly to other social characteristics. In particular, it made very little difference if respondents thought their income was adequate or not, although there was a closer association in Russia between income and whether respondents regarded themselves as 'religious', with the poorest the most 'religious' and the richest the least so. In most of the postcommunist countries, and particularly in Russia, attendance is obviously constrained by the physical availability of churches. Residential effects, perhaps for this reason, are relatively modest and far from consistent: villagers were more likely than their urban counterparts to attend services in Ukraine and Slovakia, but in the Czech Republic there was no difference, in Bulgaria attendance levels were higher in the capital and other large cities, and in Russia those who lived in Moscow and St Petersburg were the most likely of all to attend services and to do so frequently (Dubin, 1996, p. 16). Those who had retired were particularly likely to attend services in the Czech Republic, but those who were unemployed were in every case no more and no less likely to do so. Summing up: affiliation and attendance covary; both are highest in Slovakia and Ukraine; there is a looser relationship between attendance and trust, with Ukraine high and the Czech Republic low on both measures, Slovakia high on attendance but not on trust, and Russia high on trust but low on attendance; attendance itself is strongly influenced by gender but relatively little influenced by age-group or perceived standard of living and can be influenced in either direction by residential location.

Patterns of religiosity and politics

We asked, further, about the broad principles that have framed the postcommunist political agenda across the region. Were there differences between attenders and others, for instance, in their attitudes towards the market economy? Or membership of NATO? Or in their support for firm, even authoritarian government? Equally, were there differences between countries on these dimensions, or in the extent to which those who attended church in each of them differed in their views from the society as a whole? Our findings on these matters are set out in Table 5. Attenders, it emerged, defined as those who attended a religious service at least once a year, were not always more supportive of a market economy. There was, in fact, little difference of opinion between them and nonattenders; the 'market economy' had slightly more support in Ukraine among attenders but no more support in Slovakia, and among those who attended services at least once a month the market economy was often less popular than among the population as a whole. The same pattern emerged in relation to membership of NATO, an immediate prospect for the Czech Republic among the countries that we considered. Attenders in Ukraine and Bulgaria were somewhat more likely to favour membership than the population at large. Frequent attenders in Bulgaria, however, took a different view, and it made little difference in the Czech Republic or in Slovakia; but differences in every case were minor. Across the region as a whole Bulgarians were the most positive about the market, and Czechs the most positive about NATO; Ukrainians were the least positive about both.

Table 5: Attitudes of Church Attenders on Major Political Issues (percentages)

Attitude	Ukraine			Bulgaria			Czech Republic			Slovakia		
	a	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*
Move toward a market economy was right in principle	36	38	41	65	67	59	54	57	49	51	51	50
Country should join NATO	38	42	47	49	54	40	57	57	59	50	52	50
People need more order and discipline	79	79	72	88	88	89	75	78	75	71	72	74
A strong leader with free hand could solve problems of our country	46	46	42	37	38	38	21	22	19	26	27	27
Thinks of self as supporter of any political party	13	11	12	47	47	48	29	29	32	22	21	21
Supports the present government and its policies	17	16	22	52	57	55	20	21	12	20	21	19
N	*1200*	*781*	*127*	*1519*	*1000*	*124*	*1003*	*432*	*65*	*1056*	*838*	*420*

Note: a = country average; b = those who attend services at least once a year; c = those who attend services at least once a month.
Source: As Table 2.

There was much stronger support, not confined to those who attended a church or mosque, for authoritarian forms of government. Across the region, close to or more than three-quarters of attenders of all kinds as well as the population at large favoured 'more order and discipline'. There were very similar responses when postcommunist Russians were asked whether they favoured 'more order' or 'more democracy': the choice was very clearly 'more order' (77 percent) (*Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny*, 1997, p. 56). The demand for public order was almost as strong in the relatively well-ordered Czech Republic and in Slovakia as in Bulgaria and in Ukraine, with higher levels of criminality and corruption (*Transparency*, 1997). There was less overwhelming but still substantial support across the region for the idea that a 'strong leader with a free hand could solve the problems of our country', with church attenders little different in their responses from the population at large. Ukrainians with their post-Soviet background were the most likely to favour a strong leadership and 'western' East Europeans the least likely to do so, with Bulgarians – postcommunist but not post-Soviet – in an intermediate position. The New Democracies Barometer found similarly that Croatians and then Czechs were the most likely to disagree with the proposition that it would be 'best to get rid of parliament and elections and have a strong leader who can decide everything quickly'; the two post-Soviet republics, Ukraine and Belarus, were the most likely to agree (Rose and Haerpfer, 1998, p. 54).

There were greater differences between the countries, but less so between attenders and others, on attitudes towards political parties. Bulgarians were by a considerable margin the most likely to identify with a party, Ukrainians the least so, but in all cases it made very little difference whether respondents attended a service once a year, or more frequently, or not at all. There were relatively few differences between attenders and others, again, in terms of 'support for the present government and its policies', and where there were differences they could operate in both directions, with frequent attenders in Ukraine slightly more positive towards the government of the day but in the Czech Republic less supportive than the population at large. There were much larger differences between countries on this dimension, with Bulgarians by far the most supportive whether they attended or not, and Ukrainians the most disaffected. Our Bulgarian results, in this and other respects, were powerfully affected by the date on which our survey was conducted; the elections in that country in April 1997 had led to an 'extraordinary result' after it had come 'closer to economic and political breakdown than at any time since the end of communism', with a clear victory for the centre-right Union of Democratic Forces and with the formerly ruling Socialist Party reduced to 22 percent of the vote. The new administration was still very popular later in the year, having improved the food supply, reduced the level of inflation and begun a campaign against organized crime (*Annual, 1998, pp. 119–20*).

What about party preferences? We asked for specific responses, with a list of virtually all the political parties currently active in the countries with which we were concerned; but we also asked about types of parties, in order to allow for cross-national comparison. Were church attenders, for instance, more likely to favour a pro-market party, or a nationalist or minority nationalist party, or a party of the Communist left? Were church attenders closer to the 'greens', with their concern for ethics and the environment? Were there any significant differences between

countries, in terms of their support for particular categories of party or in the extent to which church attenders within them differed from nonattenders? And were there differences between those who attended infrequently – perhaps just once a year – and those who attended at least once a month?

There was certainly substantial variation across countries, and there was evidence of patterns of support that bore a loose relationship to the results of the most recent parliamentary elections (see Table 6). Ukraine, clearly, was the most supportive of a communist party, Bulgaria the least. Bulgarians, conversely, were the most supportive of a pro-market party, Ukrainians the least. 'Western' East Europeans, by contrast, were generally the most supportive of a socialist rather than a communist party, as they showed shortly afterwards at the ballot box (the Czech Social Democratic Party won the largest share of the vote at the June 1998 general election, ousting Vaclav Klaus's pro-market government and forming a minority administration). There was also some support for 'greens' across the region, other than in Bulgaria, enough at least for them to have secured representation on a party-list basis under most electoral systems. Only in Slovakia and to a lesser extent in Bulgaria did a 'minority nationalist' party secure a significant level of support; this corresponded to the support that was offered 'if a general election were held this week' to the Hungarian Coalition in Slovakia, and in Bulgaria to the Turkish/Muslim Movement for Rights and Freedoms.

Did church attendance make a difference? It certainly reduced support for a communist party, but only in Ukraine did attendance make an observable difference. Attendance could raise as well as lower support for a socialist party and it could raise or lower support for a pro-market party, although (in Slovakia) it could also leave support unchanged. Those who attended services frequently were more supportive of a minority nationalist party in Bulgaria, where it was very closely related to membership of the Turkish Muslim minority, but it made no difference in Ukraine, the Czech Republic or Slovakia. Attenders, equally, were no more likely to support a 'green' party than the rest of the population; if anything, apart from Bulgaria, they were less likely to do so (although there was general concern about the degradation of the environment). The largest effect, across the region, was in raising support for a pro-market party in Bulgaria, but even in this case the difference was no more than 4 percentage points and it had the opposite effect among those who attended services at least once a month. Generally, attendance had little effect upon the distribution of support by party type, or indeed upon the propensity to vote at all (outside the Czech Republic, which reflected the denominational basis of its larger parties: Novak, 1998; Klima, 1998, p. 498); where it made a difference, its effects could operate in either direction (although not to raise communist support); and differences between countries in their distribution of support by party type were far greater than differences between attenders, frequent attenders, or those who did not attend services at all.

Does Religiosity make a Difference?

In the final part of our analysis we seek to isolate the extent to which, all other things being equal, religiosity affected attitudes and vote choice in the postcommunist countries that were the focus of our investigation. Gender, for instance, had

Table 6: Political Party Preference of Church Attenders and Frequent Attenders (percentages)

Party type	Ukraine			Bulgaria			Czech Republic			Slovakia		
	a	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*	*a*	*b*	*c*
Communist	14	12	5	2	2	2	9	6	8	5	4	3
Socialist	5	5	4	14	11	8	17	16	22	18	17	16
Pro-market	9	10	13	34	38	32	30	31	25	12	12	11
Nationalist	4	5	9	1	1	0	1	1	2	17	18	18
Minority nationalist	1*	0*	0*	4	4	15	0	0	0	7	8	6
Green	6	6	5	2	2	3	6	7	2	6	6	5
Doesn't plan to vote	25	25	31	22	22	25	10	8	3	10	9	9
N	*1200*	*781*	*127*	*1519*	*1000*	*124*	*1003*	*432*	*65*	*1056*	*838*	*420*

Note: a = country average; b = those who attend services at least once a year; c = those who attend services at least once a month.

**Includes those who responded 'Russian minority party'.*

Source: As Table 2. Respondents were asked for which type of party they would vote in the next parliamentary elections in their country.

an effect on attendance, and attendance had a modest negative effect on communist support. But was this because women were women, or because women were disproportionately rural or urban, older or younger, richer or poorer? We used several regression models for each of our four countries to identify the effects of church attendance as such, switching the dependent variable to measure a range of attitudes and party preferences, and using a series of independent variables in the equation including church attendance, female gender, age, educational levels, and perceived standard of living. The dependent variables used in the regression equations were support for a market economy, a desire for more order, approval of a strong leader, support for joining NATO, and support for a political party. In addition, it was possible to use party preference as the dependent variable, although not for all party types for all countries (for example, there was too little support for communists in Slovakia and Bulgaria or socialists in Ukraine to include support for them in the model).

What emerges from the regression analysis is that church attendance of itself appears to have no significant impact on attitudes or party preferences in either the Czech Republic (where regular attenders were relatively few and responses were generally the most 'secular') or Slovakia (where attendance was much more general and it was accordingly more difficult to distinguish between attenders and others). On the other hand, church attendance did have observable effects in Ukraine and Bulgaria. In both of these countries church attendance tended to increase support for the market, support for joining NATO, support for pro-market parties and support for the present government, although it was only in Bulgaria that this last association was statistically significant. In addition, church attendance had a negative impact on support for communist or (in Bulgaria) socialist parties. This strengthens our confidence in the survey and regression results, in that it would be counterintuitive for respondents with a higher level of religiosity to favour a political movement that has at least historically been atheist. It also suggests that ruling communist parties were right to regard religion as a threat to their authority, and that postcommunist parties at least in these two countries may find it more difficult to recruit support in regions in which levels of church attendance are higher than average. Church attendance in Bulgaria was also associated with support for minority nationalist parties (in effect, for the Movement for Rights and Freedoms), while there were not enough supporters of minority nationalist parties in the Ukrainian survey to allow us to make this measurement.

Two more general points emerge from the regression analysis. First, church attendance made a difference in terms of attitudes and party support in only two of the four countries that we considered. This validates our initial assumption that there was likely to be no single 'postcommunist model' of the relationship between religiosity and politics but rather a variety of effects depending upon other circumstances, including the strength of any association between religious practice and ethnic nationalism. In addition, the impact of church or mosque attendance seems to transcend other differences between Ukraine and Bulgaria – in particular, it appears to have very similar implications for political values and party support in both countries. This suggests the existence of crossnational effects of church attendance and not simply nationally specific effects, given their existence in postcommunist countries that are in other ways quite different (for instance, in the length of time they spent under communist rule).

Table 7: Regression Analysis: Ukraine

Independent variables	Move toward market economy right	People need more order and discipline	Strong leader could solve problems	Country should join NATO	Supports political party	Supports government and its policies	Communist party supporter	Pro-market party supporter
R-square	.078	.061	.012	.027	.036	.015	.051	.031
Church or mosque attendance								
b (slope)	.118	–.036	.044	.118	.012	.029	–.031	.018
Beta	.129	–.050	.050	.136	.016	.038	–.087	.064
T-score	4.48*	–1.74	1.67	4.61*	0.56	1.29	–3.00*	2.16*
Female gender								
b (slope)	–.270	.139	–.064	–.008	–.141	.008	.005	–.014
Beta	–.149	.099	–.037	–.005	–.101	.005	.007	–.024
T-score	–5.22*	3.44*	–1.25	–0.17	–3.46*	0.19	0.23	–0.83
Age								
b (slope)	–.008	.007	.003	–.003	.005	–.004	.004	–.002
Beta	–.143	.155	.052	–.064	.122	–.084	.201	–.094
T-score	–5.03*	5.42*	1.77	–2.19*	4.21*	–2.86*	6.99*	–3.22*
Education								
b (slope)	–.012	.037	–.045	.039	.013	–.007	.007	.021
Beta	–.013	.051	–.049	.043	.018	–.010	.019	.070
T-score	–0.46	1.78	–1.69	1.49	0.62	–0.33	0.67	2.44*
Urbanicity								
b (slope)	.077	–.088	.026	–.028	.081	.035	.022	.022
Beta	.082	–.121	.029	–.031	.112	.045	.059	.075
T-score	2.86*	–4.21*	0.99	–1.07	3.84*	1.53	2.05*	2.55*
Income								
b (slope)	.162	–.093	–.068	.019	.052	.059	.025	.026
Beta	.119	–.089	–.052	.015	.050	.053	.046	.060
T-score	4.22*	–3.11*	–1.78	0.51	1.73	1.82	1.62	2.07*

Table 8: Regression analysis: Bulgaria

Independent variables	Move toward market economy right	People need more order and discipline	Strong leader could solve problems	Country should join NATO	Supports political party	Supports government and its policies	Socialist party supporter	Pro-market party supporter
R-square	.182	.019	.010	.103	.027	.074	.085	.119
Church or mosque attendance								
b (slope)	.060	–.022	.004	.084	.040	.103	–.062	.042
Beta	.064	–.033	.003	.084	.033	.109	–.141	.070
T-score	2.70*	–1.27	0.13	3.39*	1.28	4.32*	–5.65*	2.88*
Female gender								
b (slope)	–.094	.036	.019	–.094	–.188	–.117	.016	–.052
Beta	–.063	.034	.011	–.058	–.096	–.077	.022	–.055
T-score	–2.64*	1.30	0.42	–2.34*	–3.72*	–3.05*	0.89	–2.21*
Age								
b (slope)	–.010	.004	1.35	–.009	.006	–.006	.005	–.004
Beta	–.234	.122	.003	–.200	.108	–.153	.230	–.132
T-score	–9.59*	4.56*	0.11	–7.83*	4.05*	–5.88*	8.92*	–5.24*
Education								
b (slope)	.084	4.05	–.056	.032	.041	.029	–.007	.057
Beta	.116	7.82	–.068	.042	.044	.039	–.021	.124
T-score	4.58*	0.03	–2.43*	1.57	1.58	1.45	–0.77	4.72*
Urbanicity								
b (slope)	.111	.013	–.021	.079	.031	.043	–.017	.070
Beta	.157	.026	–.026	.105	.033	.061	–.052	.158
T-score	6.35*	0.94	–0.94	4.06*	1.24	2.32*	–1.99	6.15*
Income								
b (slope)	.136	–.025	–.048	.120	.101	.110	–.015	.065
Beta	.129	–.033	–.039	.106	.074	.103	–.030	.098
T-score	5.19*	–1.21	–1.44	4.08*	2.72*	3.89*	–1.14	3.80*

On the other hand, it is clear that attendance is not the only variable that is significant in the model: other patterns are evident as well, and indeed are usually more important. In Ukraine, for example, attendance was more important than education, gender or income, but it was less significant than urban residence or (most of all) age. In Bulgaria, attendance was also more important than education, but age was once again the best predictor of support for political values or parties. Women, in both countries, were more hostile towards a market economy, more inclined (in Ukraine) towards order and discipline, less enthusiastic (especially in Bulgaria) about NATO, less likely to support a political party, less likely (in Bulgaria) to support the government or a pro-market party, but in neither case did gender as such have a significant bearing upon support for a communist or socialist party. Education, in both cases, increased support for a pro-market party (and in Bulgaria for the market itself); so did urbanicity. Income – at least, as respondents reported it – increased support for the market and for pro-market parties, and (in Bulgaria) for the present government and NATO membership, while at the same time it reduced support for order and discipline in Ukraine.

Age, in both cases, emerged as the most important predictor of all; and it was the most consistent in its effects. In both countries it reduced support for the market and pro-market parties, and for NATO membership and the present government; but it raised support for public order, and for parties of the left, and for party membership of any kind. Clearly, the election victories that were won by the Socialist Party in Bulgaria in 1990 and 1994, and in Ukraine in 1994 and 1998, had firm roots in their respective electorates, and especially among older voters. Older voters, all other things being equal, were more hostile towards the market and the parties that supported it, as well as NATO, but more favourable towards public order and the parties that were most closely associated with the centralized methods of the communist past (an authoritarian individual leader, however, attracted little support in either country). Age, in fact, was significant in all four countries. Older people, in every case, were less likely to support the market economy, pro-market parties and NATO membership, but more likely to support 'order and discipline' and to support a communist or socialist party (only on support for the current government was there a difference of view). Age, indeed, was positively associated with support for *any* political party, which may reflect the older population's residual allegiances and the experience of more inclusive recruitment that was adopted in the communist period.

Religiosity and Postcommunist Politics

Postcommunist politics, it has sometimes been suggested, are a politics of fluidity. Social organizations, interest groups, trade unions and parties are weak, and so too are the links between group memberships of the kind that 'define a civil society, structure political participation, and link government with the governed' (Bunce and Csanadi, 1993, pp. 241, 254). New states are emerging, boundaries are moving and international alliances have been changing. Old officials reflect the values of the past, but new officials lack experience. Politics, in these circumstances, are not 'anchored in the social and economic structure'; rather, there is a 'strange vacuum', a period of 'no system [and] no identity', a 'post-Communist anarchy where neither old nor new rules are at work'. The normal bases for political action, such as class

Table 9: Regression Analysis: Czech Republic

Independent variables	Move toward market economy right	People need more order and discipline	Strong leader could solve problems	Country should join NATO	Supports political party	Supports government and its policies	Socialist party supporter	Pro-market party supporter
R-square	.103	.052	.018	.058	.091	.070	.015	.048
Church or mosque attendance								
b (slope)	.035	–.018	.025	.021	.047	.015	–.006	.010
Beta	.037	–.025	.029	.022	.048	.017	–.014	.021
T-score	1.20	–0.78	0.90	0.71	1.57	0.56	–0.45	0.67
Female gender								
b (slope)	–.064	–.023	–.040	.044	–.272	.027	–.044	–.013
Beta	–.036	–.018	–.025	.025	–.151	.017	–.059	–.015
T-score	–1.17	–0.56	–0.77	0.80	–4.88*	0.54	–1.82	–0.46
Age								
b (slope)	–.009	.009	2.20	–.005	.011	.001	.003	–.003
Beta	–.148	.210	.004	–.090	.187	.023	.106	–.102
T-score	–4.86*	6.71*	0.13	–2.90*	6.09*	0.73	3.34*	–3.27*
Education								
b (slope)	.091	–8.03	–.067	.044	.058	.059	–.006	.017
Beta	.135	–.002	–.109	.066	.085	.097	–.020	.048
T-score	4.36*	–0.05	–3.38*	2.09*	2.74*	3.07*	–0.61	1.50
Urbanicity								
b (slope)	.040	–.034	–.003	.010	.058	.105	–.008	.035
Beta	.039	–.044	–.004	.010	.055	.112	–.017	.065
T-score	1.28	–1.40	–0.11	0.32	1.80	3.61*	–0.54	2.06*
Income								
b (slope)	.228	.074	–.061	.217	.107	.184	–.006	.086
Beta	.211	.092	–.062	.201	.097	.189	–.012	.154
T-score	6.89*	2.91*	–1.9	6.42*	3.15*	6.06*	–0.39	4.89*

Table 10: Regression Analysis: Slovakia

Independent variables	Move toward market economy right	People need more order and discipline	Strong leader could solve problems	Country should join NATO	Supports political party	Supports government and its policies	Socialist party supporter	Pro-market party supporter	Nationalist party supporter
R-square	.056	.017	.039	.023	.073	.039	.017	.041	.007
Church or mosque attendance									
b (slope)	.042	.018	.008	.042	–.009	.003	–.012	.006	.020
Beta	.054	.027	.011	.052	–.012	.005	–.037	.022	.063
T-score	1.73	0.86	0.35	1.64	–0.40	0.15	–1.13	0.69	1.95
Female gender									
b (slope)	–.065	.064	.071	.055	–.224	.004	–.010	–.055	–.012
Beta	–.037	.043	.042	.030	–.135	.002	–.013	–.084	–.016
T-score	–1.21	1.37	1.35	0.97	–4.44*	.074	–0.42	–2.72*	–0.50
Age									
b (slope)	–.009	.006	.005	–.003	.012	.008	.002	3.29	1.98
Beta	–.138	.115	.088	–.045	.202	.148	.063	.014	.007
T-score	–4.54	3.71*	2.87*	–1.45	6.71*	4.81*	2.02*	0.46	0.24
Education									
b (slope)	.086	–.026	–.118	.042	.052	–.052	.005	.034	–.014
Beta	.104	–.036	–.145	.048	.066	–.069	.015	.109	–.039
T-score	–3.30*	–1.11	–4.56*	1.51	2.10*	–2.16*	0.47	3.44*	–1.20
Urbanicity									
b (slope)	.006	.014	–.057	.099	–.044	–.040	.024	.025	.006
Beta	.007	.018	–.064	.105	–.051	–.048	.060	.073	.015
T-score	0.22	0.56	–1.99	3.25*	–1.63	–1.51	1.85	2.27*	0.45
Income									
b (slope)	.124	.004	.051	.051	.052	.135	–.039	.037	.025
Beta	.111	.005	.046	.044	.049	.132	–.080	.088	.052
T-score	3.56*	0.14	1.48	1.38	1.60	4.19*	–2.53*	2.82*	1.62

**Significant, where p > .05*

and organized interests, are largely or entirely absent, and uncertainties are even greater than during the transition from authoritarian to democratic rule in Southern Europe and Latin America. 'What this leaves, of course', conclude Bunce and Csanadi, 'is religion and ethnicity' (1993, pp. 254, 261, 264, 266, 267).

Our investigation suggests a rather different conclusion. We accept, of course, that we have been dealing with four postcommunist countries that are relatively homogeneous in their patterns of affiliation: in all of them there is a single denomination to which a majority – or at least a very clear plurality – claims to adhere, and all four are overwhelmingly Christian. Only Bulgaria has a significant non-Christian minority, but its political influence is limited not only by government policies but also by the constitution, which allows citizens to associate freely but at the same time bans the formation of parties on an 'ethnic, racial or religious basis' (Article 11(4)). Some of the postcommunist states that lie outside the scope of our inquiry, however, have shown patterns of religious cleavage that are familiar elsewhere in Europe, particularly in Poland, where the Catholic church has intervened directly in social and educational matters as well as in presidential and parliamentary contests. Equally, where there have been divisions between Christians and Muslims in the formerly communist world they have clearly contributed to divisions, and even (in the former Yugoslavia and Chechnya) to civil war.

Our discussion, moreover, has operated at the level of national electorates, and we have considered only the larger denominations. But 'Orthodox', for instance, can mean Russian, Ukrainian or Bulgarian; 'Catholic' can mean Latin-rite or Greek-rite; there are substantial numbers of undifferentiated 'Christians'; and the distinctiveness of Muslims in Bulgaria is scarcely tapped by the single measure of attendance. In this and perhaps in other cases, affiliation is likely to have at least as much explanatory power. In a preliminary examination at a sub-cultural level, using our boosted samples and taking into account affiliation as well as attendance, we found much closer associations between religiosity and political attitudes. Of all Bulgarians, for instance, 4 percent said they would support a minority nationalist party; but of those who said they were Muslim, 40 percent were minority nationalist supporters. In the 1997 election the Turkish/Muslim Movement for Rights and Freedoms ran as the Union for National Salvation and secured 8 percent of the vote; on our survey evidence it had the support of 9 percent of all Bulgarians, but of 87 percent who defined themselves as Muslims and 79 percent of those who defined themselves as Turks. Similarly, in Ukraine only 0.1 percent supported a minority nationalist party, but 12 percent of those who defined themselves as Muslim – mostly Tatars – did so.

But overall, we find that religiosity has modest effects, and effects that vary considerably across the region. In 'Western' Eastern Europe, including Slovakia as well as Poland, Slovenia and Lithuania, levels of attendance are high by comparison with the Western democracies, and so are levels of trust in the churches as institutions (with the conspicuous exception of the Czech Republic). In 'Far Eastern Europe', on the other hand, levels of trust are often higher than in the West, but attendances are lower. Similarly, the effects of attendance vary considerably from west to east. In Bulgaria, attendance made a difference in some respects: it mattered more than education, and in Ukraine more than gender or income as well. But in

both cases, its effects were much less than age, and similar to those of gender, income and urbanicity. Equally, whatever the contribution made by attendance to responses to individual questions, the pattern of responses as a whole provided little evidence of the effects of religiosity. Differences between attenders and non-attenders, or between occasional and frequent attenders, were consistently low; they were less than the differences between the responses to different questions in the same country, and less than the responses to the same questions in different countries (Bulgaria had consistently the most 'pro-market' and 'pro-Western' responses, Ukraine the least). And in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, attendance had no significant effects of any kind on the pattern of responses.

We can conclude, still more generally, that this may be good news for democracy in postcommunist Europe, if not for the churches as institutions. A well-established tradition in political science has suggested the importance of cross-cutting cleavages: where citizens share their membership of a church with some but their membership of a party with others, and of a local community and a workplace with others still, they find it easier to reach an accommodation than in societies in which these patterns of membership are concentric and mutually reinforcing (see for instance Lipset, 1981, p. 77). Postcommunist societies are already divided between supporters and opponents of the old regime, and between those who work in a chronically underfunded state sector and those who have found a place in commercial structures; these cleavages are superimposed upon much older divisions between Catholic and Orthodox, corresponding roughly to the Habsburg and Romanov empires, with substantial Muslim and Lutheran minorities. Where divisions of this kind are politically salient, as in Chechnya or the former Yugoslavia, the state itself may be vulnerable; but where religiosity has little bearing upon political values or patterns of party support, as in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, differences are more likely to be negotiable and the political system is more likely to be stable. Indeed it may not be too much to say that the less religion matters, in terms of values and electoral support, the more it matters in allowing the development of a framework within which differences can be peacefully resolved in the manner that is characteristic of a democracy.

Appendix

Our findings are based on surveys conducted in the Czech and Slovak republics, Bulgaria and Ukraine. In each country we surveyed a representative sample of the adult population during the winter of 1997–98, with sample sizes ranging from 1003 in the Czech Republic to 1519 in Bulgaria. In three of these countries we commissioned additional interviews in areas where an ethnic minority was concentrated, although interviews in these areas were not restricted to the ethnic minority itself: 325 interviews in 'Hungarian minority' areas of Slovakia, 347 in 'Turkish minority' areas of Bulgaria, 300 in the Crimea and 300 in Transcarpathia. In Slovakia and Bulgaria we surveyed a random sample of the entire adult population within these 'ethnic minority' areas; in the Crimea we surveyed a quote sample of 100 ethnic Tatars, 100 ethnic Russians and 100 ethnic Ukrainians; and in Transcarpathia a quota sample of 100 ethnic Ukrainians, 100 ethnic Ruthenians, and 100 ethnic Hungarians. Combining the 'ethnic minority' samples with our

country-wide samples gives a total of 6050 interviews – 1003 in the Czech Republic, 1381 in Slovakia, 1866 in Bulgaria and 1800 in Ukraine.

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