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SPECIAL ISSUE: ASPECTS OF RELIGION IN UKRAINE TODAY

Editorial 201

Notes on Contributors 209

Religiosity in Ukraine according to Sociological Surveys
VIKTOR YELENSKY 213

Orthodoxy in Ukrainian Political Life 2004–2009
NIKOLAY MITROKHIN 229

The Visit of Patriarch Kirill to Ukraine in 2009 and its Significance in Ukraine's Political and Religious Life
LYDIA S. TONOYAN & DANIEL P. PAYNE 253

Protestantism in Ukraine: Achievements and Losses
VIKTORIYA LYUBASHCHENKO 265

Islam and Muslims in Contemporary Ukraine: Common Backgrounds, Different Images
MYKHAYLO YAKUBOVYCH 291

Book Reviews 305

A survey conducted in 1970 in the Russian Smolensk *oblast'* showed that about 10 per cent openly manifested their religious convictions (Prokovshchenkov, 1979). However, in the 1970s and 1980s many western observers noted an increasing interest in religion among young people in the Soviet Union, particularly in the large cities, and cast doubt on official statistics, which generally claimed that only 3 per cent of young people were religious (see for example Lane, 1978, pp. 224–25). A young theologian from Paris who had been told that churches in USSR were attended exclusively by grandmothers visited the country and was convinced that approximately one third of these 'grandmothers' were younger than 25 years old (Nikon, 1980). A survey by a western visitor of the involvement of young people in religious practices in 1976 showed that one third of the parishioners of three Orthodox churches in Kiev, Moscow and Tbilisi were young people under 30 (Biddulph, 1979). The Russian intellectual Sergei Averintsev noted that on one occasion in the 1970s his wife was stopped in the street by elderly woman who asked her to give her the date of the beginning of Lent: '"You are young", she explained, "you must know"' (Averintsev, 2000, p. 350). A report on 1984 by the Council for Religious Affairs of the USSR revealed that in that year 178,000 people had been baptised in Ukraine and that the percentage of those who had died during the year who had had a church funeral service was 69.6 per cent in Ivano-Frankivs'k *oblast'*, 65.7 per cent in L'viv *oblast'*, 64.8 per cent in Sumy *oblast'* and 62.9 per cent in Ternopil' *oblast'* (Document, 1985, pp. 299–300, 302). Another report noted that in Khmel'nits'kyi *oblast'* some 20 per cent of adults took part in church services at the main religious festivals (Bazhan and Danyliuk, 2000, p. 273). Secret reports submitted by party officials revealed that in 1985, the first year of Gorbachev's reforms, 26 per cent of newborn babies in Ukraine were baptised, almost 3 per cent of marriages were consecrated in a church, and over 40 per cent of those who died had a church funeral (Yelens'kyi, 2002, p. 183). It is interesting to note that the figures for Ukraine did not essentially differ from the figures for baptisms and funerals performed by the Catholic Church in the Netherlands that same year (see Voye and Dobbelaere, 1993, pp. 83, 92). Undoubtedly the Ukrainian figures are seriously underestimated. They do not include baptisms and funerals conducted by churches in the underground and by clergy in private, which were not registered. In the big cities such practices were common.[1]

Subjective Religiosity in Ukraine Today

Since mid-1988, the thousandth anniversary of the baptism of Kievan Rus', when the new way of thinking in the Kremlin finally affected the sphere of church–state relations, the number of religious communities in Ukraine has increased fivefold, with the opening of over 400 monasteries and convents and almost 200 theological seminaries, colleges and academies and the establishing of over 300 missionary organisations and 12,600 Sunday schools (see Tablitsia, 2003; for the latest statistics see Derzhavna (n.d.)). According to the European Values Study[2] in 1999/2000 the number of individuals declaring themselves as religious reached more than three quarters of the population by the end of the 1990s. Those that reported that they found they got 'comfort and strength from religion' stood at 64.7 per cent and those that said that they prayed to God outside religious services every day was at 23.1 per cent, with 11.7 per cent more than once a week, 6.5 per cent once a week, 8.8 per cent at least once a month, 6.6 per cent several times a year, 4.6 per cent less often and 38.7 per cent never. The figure for those who believed in life after death was 39.8 per cent, while 38.1 per cent believed in hell and 40.3 per cent in Heaven. In 2008 2 per cent of

polled Ukrainians described themselves as extremely religious (*nadzvychaino relihiini*), 9 per cent as very religious (*duzhe relihiini*), 56 per cent as somewhat religious (*pomirno relihiini*), 17 per cent as neither religious nor non-religious (*naskil'ky relihiini, naskil'ky zh i ne relihiini*), 8 per cent as somewhat non-religious (*pomirno nerelihiini*), 2.6 per cent as very non-religious (*duzhe nerelihiini*) and 2.4 per cent as extremely non-religious (*nadzvychaino nerelihiini*) (with 3 per cent 'don't knows') (Paraschevin, 2009, p. 26). According to the *Aufbruch* Survey[3] 15.4 cent of all those polled described themselves as 'believers according to the teachings of the church' (*viruiuchyi za vchenniam Tserkvy*), 47.9 per cent as 'believers in their own way' (*viruiuchyi po-svoiemu*), 20.0 per cent as unable to decide whether they were believers or not (*ne mozhu vyznachytys', viruiuchyi ya chy ni*), 13.0 per cent as 'unbeliever: religion does not interest me' (*ya neviruiuchyi, mene relihiia ne tsikavyt'*), and 3.7 per cent as 'unbeliever: I regard religion as self-delusion' (*ya neviruiuchyi i vvazhaiu relihiiu samoobmanom*). The highest level of religiosity continues to be recorded in western Ukraine, where religious believers are in the majority; the lowest level is still in eastern Ukraine (all the surveys without exception show this result). The average western Ukrainian attends church 22–23 times a year; the average central Ukrainian 11–12 times a year; the average eastern/southern Ukrainian 7–8 times per year[4] (see Tomka, 2004, p. 59).

The survey used as the basis for Table 1 was conducted in 1999. Results from the 2007 Razumkov Centre survey[5] show that the level of religiosity in Ukrainian society generally remained stable during the 2000s.

Table 1. Self-identification as religious and frequency of attendance at religious services in postcommunist European countries (arranged in descending percentages of attendance) in 1999

	Identifies himself/herself as a religious person (%)	Attends a religious service at least once an month (%)
Poland	94.4	78.2
Croatia	85.2	52.8
Slovakia	81.5	49.8
Romania	84.8	46.5
Bosnia	69.7	45.2
Macedonia	84.1	32.8
Lithuania	84.4	31.5
Slovenia	70.2	30.7
Albania	45.1	29.4
Moldova	90.8	29.1
Bulgaria	51.7	20.2
Serbia and Montenegro	73.9	18.5
Hungary	59.0	17.6
Ukraine	75.4	16.8
Latvia	76.9	15.1
Belarus'	27.5	14.5
Eastern Germany	28.6	12.4
Czech Republic	43.2	11.7
Estonia	41.7	11.2
Russia	65.7	9.1

Source: Halman (2001).

Several features of religiosity in Ukraine are common to most European societies today. According to all surveys women are typically more religious than men. Religiosity declines as educational levels rise. According to the Razumkov 2007 survey results the highest percentage of believers (68.9 per cent) is found in the group of citizens with the lowest living standard (who can 'hardly make ends meet', for whom 'money is insufficient to buy even necessary foodstuffs'), the lowest (51.1 per cent) in the group 'there is enough to live on, but acquisition of durables causes difficulties'.

One distinctive feature of religiosity in Ukraine in comparison with that of most European countries is its generational profile. Sociological surveys conducted in Ukraine during the early 1990s by the Ukrainian Research Institute on Youth Problems (*Ukrains'kyi naukovo-doslidnyi instytut problem molodi*)[6] showed the highest proportion of believers to be amongst young people under 28 years old and older people aged 60 and over. The percentage of respondents who declared they believed in God was roughly the same in all the other age groups. Among young people, the younger subgroups (16–18 and 19–21 years old) demonstrated higher levels of religious self-identification than the older subgroups (22–25 and 23–28). The percentage of convinced atheists in the 15–29 age group was the lowest among all age groups (see Table 2). This is an interesting finding in view of the fact that in other countries in Europe (except for some postsoviet countries) this group tends to be more atheistic than the oldest age group.

The high levels of religious self-identification and confidence in the church among Ukrainian young people immediately after the collapse of communism paralleled a similar phenomenon in other postcommunist countries. During the 1990s the 'generational gap' in terms of religious self-identification in Ukraine was shrinking, however, and the differences among the generations remained much less marked in Ukraine than in many other postcommunist countries (see Table 3).

Other surveys, however, suggest that in Ukraine those who are now between 55 and 60 are less religious than those who are older or younger. The socialisation of this generation took place during the years of significant breakthroughs in Soviet technology, science and space exploration, when such achievements as Yuri Gagarin's space flight were followed with great enthusiasm and there was great confidence in the omnipotence of scientific progress.

Denominational Structure

One immediately striking finding from polls over the period 2006–2009 (see for example Table 4) is that while between 25 and 32 per cent of those surveyed by various opinion poll institutions declared that they belonged to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP), only between 15 and 23 per cent declared that they belonged to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP). This may seem strange, given that the UOC-MP has (very approximately) three

Table 2. Percentages of non-religious people and convinced atheists by age group

	Age 15–29 (%)	Age 30–49 (%)	Age 50 and over (%)
Not religious	20.4	25.3	19.4
Convinced atheist	2.2	3.4	2.5

Source: Halman (2001).

Table 3. Percentages of those self-identifying as religious in groups according to years of birth

	Born before 1941 (%)	Born 1941–1960 (%)	Born after 1960 (%)
Czech Republic	62.5	39.5	33.9
Eastern Germany	48.0	21.9	25.8
Hungary	73.8	50.3	51.8
Lithuania	92.8	85.2	78.5
Poland	97.0	92.3	93.2
Romania	92.1	86.4	77.6
Slovakia	92.8	81.2	76.1
Slovenia	79.7	67.8	67.0
Ukraine	76.8	78.3	75.9

Source: Tomka (2004, p. 57).

Table 4. Denominational self-identification by percentages and number of congregations of the various denominations

	Denominational self-identification (%)	Number of congregations
Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP)	29.4	11,539
Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP)	39.8	4128
Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC)	2.8	1184
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC)	14.1	3570
Protestants and Evangelicals	2.4	8500
Roman Catholics	1.7	907
Muslims	0.6	1135
Jews	0.2	268
Others	2.0	1584

Sources: The percentages are from the Razumkov poll of 2006. This poll focused on political rather than religious issues and this is the reason I have not listed it in note 5. However, with over 11,000 respondents the poll was very representative and it included a question on denominational self-identification. For the responses to the latter see http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll_id=300 (last accessed 23 May 2010).
The numbers of congregations are from Tablitsia (2003); for the latest statistics see Derzhavna (n.d.)

times as many parishes and priests as the UOC-KP. For those who are acquainted with the realities of Ukrainian religious life, however, there can only be one explanation for these results. By declaring that he or she belongs to the Kiev and not to the Moscow Patriarchate a person declares his or her identity with the Ukrainian nation. This conclusion is supported by the fact that most Orthodox respondents appear to be nominal Christians: 'non-practising' and sometimes even 'non-believing'. For instance, according to the International Social Survey Program[7] in 2008 38.8 per cent of all questioned believers (those who said they believed in God regardless of their religious behaviour) declared that they belonged to particular Orthodox churches, while 43.6 per cent identified themselves as 'simply Orthodox' who did not belong to

any particular church (Paraschevin, 2009, p. 22). For a perspective on these findings we might consider the fact that a poll in 1995[8] indicated that 12.2 per cent of the population of Donets'k city and 35.3 per cent of the population of Simferopol' city belonged to the 'Russian Orthodox Church'. Yet in Donets'k, at least officially, there is no such church and in Simferopol' fewer than ten such churches exist as opposed to 400 congregations of the UOC-MP. Clearly these results are a demonstration of Russian identity in these regions.

It is worth mentioning that by the beginning of the 2000s Ukraine had become the country with the largest Baptist, Pentecostal and charismatic communities in Central and Eastern Europe. Their evolution since the end of communism involves consistent institutionalisation, further diversification of the denominational picture, more precise definition of doctrinal teaching, the formulation of a 'doctrinal minimum', the formation of a national theology, and the raising of the social status of the faithful and their active engagement in the socio-political and economic life of the country.

As far as Roman Catholics are concerned, despite their small numbers they have made tremendous gains since Soviet times (from about 100 communities in 1985 to more than 900 in 2009). Their parishes in general have a distinctly ethnic character. Two thirds of them are in the regions where most of the Ukrainian Poles live; Hungarians and Slovaks also traditionally belong to Roman Catholic communities.

Religion and Society

According to the Razumkov poll in August 2002 far more respondents (who included non-believers as well as believers) were positive than were negative about the role of the churches in society (see Table 5). In the 2000s churches and other religious organisations have remained the social institutions enjoying the highest level of trust in society. They are to a greater or lesser extent trusted by nearly 60 per cent of citizens; not trusted by nearly 30 per cent. For comparison, the figures for trust in public organisations (courts, the police, parliament, local councils) during the same period have not exceeded one third of respondents; sometimes more than half of those polled have distrusted them.[9]

On the eve of and just after the collapse of communism many people in the Soviet Union were turning to the churches and other religious organisations as the only institutions existing during the Soviet period which were not directly connected to the regime and which were clearly not responsible for its misdeeds. People expected that the churches would be able to resolve the crisis of values which had been unresolved by communist ideologists and that they would be at the head of the moral renewal of society which was perceived as an urgent need not only by intelligentsia but by part of the ruling strata as well. The public thus had lofty notions about the churches, in which they had high levels of confidence; and these feelings were accompanied,

Table 5. Perceptions of the role of the church in society (percentages)

The churches play a positive role	53.0
The churches play no significant role	31.0
The churches play a negative role	4.0
Other	1.9
Don't know	10.1

Source: Razumkov poll, August 2002 (see Dudar and Shanghina, 2002)

somewhat paradoxically perhaps, by ideas about imperfections and shortcomings in their own religiosity. Soviet societies had aimed to uproot traditional institutional religiosity, and for three generations had reduced to a minimum the participation of religious institutions in the process of socialisation, but ironically this very marginalisation of believers had suggested to their fellow-citizens that religiosity involved high-level standards and requirements. People in general, as well as sociologists of religion, speculated about whether the ideal of the 'true believer' was unachievable for postsoviet societies: an individual who attended church every week, prayed several times a day, had an excellent knowledge of church doctrine and behaved in a moral way in everyday life.

A high level of confidence in the church, which seems to be out of proportion to the level of actual religious practice, is thus to be interpreted in the context of a very specific postsoviet religio-cultural climate. In this new climate 'churchness' (*tserkovnost'*) has met with strong social approval and has become a sort of legitimising behaviour, the mark of a respectable citizen. In Ukraine not only officials, politicians and public figures but also stars from the worlds of pop music and sport who are very popular among young people will emphasise that they belong to a church. There are no prominent public figures in Ukrainian politics or culture who openly manifest religious scepticism (not to mention atheism). Another feature of this climate is the special position of the church as a social institution. Against the background of an undeveloped party system and weak trade unions the church exists as a deeply stratified structure and a reliable system of communication which has been well adjusted over the centuries, possessing the means of transplanting quite sophisticated ideas into the fabric of ordinary consciousness. These features make Ukrainian churches exceptionally attractive for individuals and groups striving to acquire or preserve positions of power. The current climate recalls some aspects of pre-modern Ukrainian rural culture when nobles patronised churches and priests enjoyed particular respect from the peasants. Indicatively, the president of Ukraine, the prime minister, the chief of the presidential administration (one of the highest non-elective state officials), some powerful ministers, members of parliament and the mayors of various cities have sponsored the building of churches in their home villages. Despite the fact that the majority of Ukrainians do not attend church on a regular basis, it is exactly these unchurched people who favour consistent religious behaviour. Grace Davie calls this phenomenon 'vicarious religion': when a large number of nominal believers, with their spasmodic and sometimes hardly visible relationship with the churches, delegate their religious 'duties' to a devotional minority (Davie, 2001, pp. 106–08). A finale feature of this climate is that it creates a type of religious culture that is deprived of strict denominational connotation. It is a faintly articulated set of symbols, signs, holidays, customs, practices and fragments of historical memory rather than a well-composed system of confessional belief.

The data produced by the Razumkov opinion poll of August 2002 (see Table 6) seem to show that society's need for religion is primarily determined by its spiritual and socio-cultural features: its ability to cultivate the morality and spirituality of a human being (this property of religion was mentioned by 77.0 per cent of those polled) and to reanimate national identity and culture (68.2 per cent). At the same time, the socio-political component also appeared to be important for respondents: more than half (51.4 per cent) of those polled agreed with the statement that 'religion is one of the factors in the democratisation of society'. It is noteworthy that those agreeing with this statement comprised 60.0 per cent of believers, 44.8 per cent of those who were

Table 6. Responses to statements about the role of religion in society (percentages)

	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Don't know (%)
Religious activists should defend the poorest strata of the population when the authorities make decisions that lower their standard of living	82.9	8.4	8.7
Religion cultivates people's morality and spirituality	77.0	12.5	10.5
Religion is one of the most important means for reanimating national identity and culture	68.2	17.4	14.4
Religion is one of the factors in the democratisation of society	51.4	24.6	24.0
Religious organisations are not very involved in social activity	44.8	34.3	20.9
Religion is an element of political life	44.6	35.0	20.4
Religion does not influence the life of society	28.8	61.8	9.4
Religion is harmful, because it divides people into different confessions	18.8	63.2	18.0
Religion makes people inactive and indifferent to what is going on in society	17.1	66.2	16.7
Religion is dying away and will disappear with time	6.6	77.1	16.3
Religion is poorly adapted to the needs of a modern individual	29.2	47.6	23.2

Source: Razumkov poll. August 2002 (see Dudar and Shanghina. 2002)

undecided about belief and 33.2 per cent of non-believers. The social and political capital of religion is thus recognised by a significant proportion even of non-believers.

A rather large percentage of respondents (29.2 per cent) agreed with the statement that 'religion is poorly adapted to the needs of a modern individual'. Those agreeing included over one fifth (21.1 per cent) of believers and over a third (36.1 per cent) of those who said they were undecided about belief. This may be evidence of an impetus in some sections of society towards modernisation of church doctrine and practice, as articulated in public debate over such issues as adopting the Julian calendar, what language to use in church services. women priesthood or the need for Orthodox aggiornamento.

Interestingly, an analysis of the database of respondents shows that 86.6 per cent of the religious believers who agreed that religion was poorly adapted to the needs of a modern individual were Orthodox.

The Influence of Religion on the Political Views of Citizens

Studies[10] have revealed that in the late 1990s followers of the UOC-MP were more likely than the rest of the electorate to vote for the left.[11] By contrast, members of churches most closely aligned with Ukrainian nationalist sentiment were more likely to vote against the left. Membership of the UOC-KP, UAOC and UGCC had a particularly striking effect, indicating that affiliation with one of these previously banned churches was a powerful predictor against left-wing voting (Birch, 2000, p. 109). About three-quarters of those polled in the Razumkov poll in October 2002 reported some form of affiliation with a religious organisation. Among these, around one in ten said that their religious organisation exerted some influence on their political convictions (see Table 7). Among UGCC believers the political position of

Table 7. Response by religious believers to the political position of their church (percentages)[a]

	Total of respondents (%)	UGCC (%)	UOC-MP (%)	UOC-KP (%)
The position of my religious organisation does not influence my political convictions at all	13.4	14.4	18.5	15.9
The position of my religious organisation to some extent influences my political choice	4.9	9.8	3.0	6.9
Yes. I take into consideration (*pryslukhatysia*) the political views and ideas spread in my religious organisation	4.8	14.4	6.5	5.4

Source: Razumkov poll, August 2002 (see Dudar and Shanghina, 2002).
[a] None of these percentages total 100 because the poll included five more options: 'I form my political views by myself' (all respondents 48.3%, UGCC 37.1%, UOC-MP 42.9%, UOC-KP [illegible]); 'My political convictions are most of all influenced by the television, press, etc.' (14.0%, [illegible], 14.3%, 10.5%); 'Political issues are not touched on or discussed in my religious organisation' (9.1%, 9.1%,11.9%, 7.2%), 'Other' (0.5%, 0.0%, 0.0%, 0.4%) and 'Don't know' (Hard to say') (5.0%, 5.4%, 2.9%, 5.0%).

their church is taken into account by 24.2 per cent. Among the Orthodox the figure is perceptibly lower: 9.5 per cent among believers in the UOC-MP and 12.3 per cent among believers in the UOC-KP.[12]

As far as the correlation between the religiosity and the foreign policy preferences of Ukrainians is concerned, in the early 2000s the percentage of believers inclined towards the European Union (28.6 per cent) was much higher than the percentage of non-believers (15.4 per cent). By contrast, an orientation towards Russia was preferred by 31.0 per cent of believers and 43.9 per cent of non-believers. These differences correlate with regional differences in the level of religiosity and in confessional affiliation: the percentage of believers is higher in the west of the country, where the pro-western UGCC holds the dominant position; by contrast, the largely non-believing population of the east and south gravitates towards Russia (Razumkov poll, August 2002 (see Dudar and Shanghina, 2002)). According to the European Values Study surveys in 1999/2000 confidence in NATO among religious believers is higher than among the non-religious (36.0 per cent as against 21.2 per cent) and the level of distrust lower (64.0 per cent as against 78.8 per cent) (Halman, 2001).

Religious Freedom Issues

Generally Ukraine enjoys rather a high level of religious tolerance (see Yelensky, [illegible]). A recent opinion poll shows that this level did not change much during the 2000s (Razumkov poll, 2007, compared with earlier Razumkov polls; see Shanghina, 2007). Public opinion continued to hold that 'any religion proclaiming ideals of virtue, i.e. mercy, respect for the life of other people has a right to exist' (43.1 per cent) and that 'all religions have a right to exist as different roads to God' (24.8 per cent).[13] In 2007 as in 2000, two-thirds of respondents were sure that 'Ukraine shows absolute freedom of conscience and equality of confessions before the law'; meanwhile the number of those agreeing that 'freedom of conscience and equality of confessions in Ukraine are declared but not guaranteed' somewhat declined – from 38.7 per cent in

2000 to 31.1 per cent in 2007. It is noteworthy that specifically amongst those who identified themselves as believers the percentage of those who agreed that 'Ukraine shows absolute freedom of conscience and equality of confessions before the law' increased from 66.7 to 72.8 per cent, while the number of those who agreed that 'freedom of conscience and equality of confessions in Ukraine are declared but not guaranteed' fell from 41.2 to 31.3 per cent. Of those questioned in 2007, 53 per cent believed that the state should treat all religious organisations equally, whether they were 'traditional' or 'untraditional' for Ukraine, and whether or not they had played a special role in the history and culture of the Ukrainian people. In 2003, different treatment of religious organisations by the Ukrainian state was demanded by 29.4 per cent of those polled; in 2007, the percentage fell to 16.9 per cent (for more detail see Shanghina, 2007).

Reflections

The patterns of religious practice in Ukraine are starting to resemble those in Western and Central Europe. The typical resident of western Ukraine attends church as frequently as the Italians, Portuguese and Slovaks, the average Kievite as frequently as Slovenes, Swiss and western Germans; the average resident of the south and east as frequently as French and Latvians but more frequently than Russians, eastern Germans or Czechs. As in all postcommunist countries, however, the future role of religion in Ukraine is becoming ever harder to predict since more and more variables need to be considered. In Ukraine religion plays an important public role. Individual conversions to particular religions are frequently motivated by a desire to affirm national and cultural identity; they also reflect political affiliations and social aspirations and concerns. At the same time, there is no direct correlation between increasing religiosity in society and an improvement in public morality: in Ukraine the crime rate is growing, as is the number of abandoned children and uncared-for elderly; business is increasingly characterised by corruption. (These facts continue to undermine the high hopes placed in religion after the end of communism in Ukraine (as in other postcommunist countries) and contribute to the sense amongst Ukrainians, noted above, that their religiosity is somehow inferior.) A sort of anticipatory interpretation of this phenomenon can be found in the theories of Pitirim Sorokin[14] on positive/negative moral and religious polarisation. Sorokin suggests that the main consequence of social cataclysms is neither religious revival nor decline of religiosity, but changes within their configuration. The majority in a given society are not generally marked, in normal circumstances, either by religious enthusiasm or by rejection of religion. Social cataclysms and rapid transformations in such a society, however, lead to moral and religious polarisation among this majority between the 'positive' and the 'negative', with some espousing high moral standards and others moving towards cynicism and immorality. Moreover, the latter prevail in the initial stages of the crisis and the polarisation process while the former predominate in the latter stages. Be this as it may, it is clear that the negligible influence of religiosity on moral attitudes in postcommunist Europe (and elsewhere?) which has been identified by various researchers demands further study.

There is a continuing challenge presented to sociologists in the question of correlation between, on the one hand, the high or low religiosity of any given country and, on the other hand, that country's religious, social and political structure. In order to comprehend the specificity of any particular country one needs to deploy as full range of variables as possible. Sometimes the most evident commonality obfuscates

rather than clarifies. For example, studies do not support the logical deduction that the policies of communist regimes towards religion should be the major variable which determines the state of religiosity in postcommunist countries. It might be argued that the level of religiosity in a particular postcommunist country is low because that regime was particularly severe; but the opposite might be true: that the policy of that particular regime was more severe because the level of religiosity and religious participation was already comparatively low. In Albania in 1967 all public manifestation of religion was made illegal. This extreme step, unparalleled in any other communist country in Europe, might be explained (*inter alia*) by the fact that adherence to Islam, Orthodoxy and Catholicism in Albania was relatively superficial, and that inasmuch as they were celebrated respectively in the Arabic, Greek and Latin languages there was no religious institution in Albania perceived by everyone as a safeguard of Albanian identity, culture and language (Prifti, 1975). The Albanian situation is at the opposite pole from that in Poland, where the Catholic Church, as a bulwark of Polish identity, tempered and hardened in opposition to Russian Orthodoxy and German Protestantism in the stateless period after the division of Poland, in the communist era acquired an even more important function as a substitute for civil society, as the most organised, consistent and skilful opponent of the regime.

Turning to Ukraine, we see that in the end, though unofficially, Moscow admitted that it was unrealistic to pursue in western Ukraine, and particularly in Galicia, the same religious policy it had pursued in eastern Ukraine. In the end the central authorities admitted their inability to change the way of life determined by Greek Catholicism in its strong resistance both to Russian Orthodoxy and to Polish Latin-rite Catholicism. During the years of Khrushchev's antireligious campaign almost half of all Orthodox churches in Ukraine were closed, but if in Crimea 70 per cent of all churches were closed, or in eastern Zaporizhzhia *oblast'* 91 per cent, in Zakarpattia *oblast'* the local authorities managed to close only 17 per cent and in Ternopil' *oblast'* 36 per cent (Tablitsa, 1964). In the Soviet Union antireligious policy was theoretically centralised, but was in fact to a very large extent determined by the character of religious culture of nations formed over centuries.

Postcommunist societies are returning to the natural patterns of their own religious cultures: patterns shaped through the centuries by their historical development, distinctive socio-psychological features and sense of belonging to a certain culture and civilisation. It is only by weighing all these complex factors that one can see why, for example, Poland's socio-religious profile today is closer to that of Ireland than to that of the Czech Republic, with which it shares a frontier; why eastern Germany is closer in this respect to Denmark than to western Germany; or why Slovakia is closer to Austria than to the Czech Republic, with which it previously formed a single state. There are some commonalities and regularities. Catholic countries tend to be less receptive of secular influences than Lutheran countries, for example (Tomka, 2006, 2009a; Pollack, 2003). However, we can safely say that every country in Europe is a special case.

Notes

1 I discuss this issue in detail in a paper I presented at a conference in March this year (Yelensky, 2010). There is a lot of evidence in this paper that official data on funerals, church weddings and, especially, baptisms were deliberately heavily underestimated by local authorities. I interviewed dozens of clergymen, Party and Soviet officials and propagandists

who had been active in these capacities in the early 1980s and they confirmed that this was the case. A large number of these interviews are still unpublished, but some have been published. Mikhail Koltun, now a bishop in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and an underground priest in the 1980s, recollects his experiences at that time: 'How many children I baptised secretly! I baptised the children of Party members, military men and other officials. They too were seeking spiritual support' (Ya vyris, 1998).

2 The European Values Study is a large-scale cross-national survey research programme on basic human values. It publishes the results of its surveys (for example Halman, 2001), but such publications cannot contain all the data, which are available online. I filed an application at http://www.jdsurvey.net/evs/EVSData.jsp and after that was able to download appropriate data.

3 The *Aufbruch* Survey was conducted after long preparation and testing in ten countries of Central and Eastern Europe in 1997–98. For Ukraine the sample was 1237 adults between the ages of 18 and 65. For a description with special focus on Ukraine see Tomka (2009b).

4 The Ukrainian regions comprise the following *oblasti*. Western region: L'viv, Ternopil', Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia), Ivano-Frankivs'k, Rivne, Volynia, Chernivtsi. Central region: Kiev, Cherkasy, Vinnytsa, Khmel'nits'kyi, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kirovohrad, Zhytomir, Poltava. Eastern region: Donets'k, Luhans'k, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovs'k. Southern region: Crimea, Odesa, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia.

5 The Razumkov Centre in Kiev has been conducting surveys in the area of church and religious life in Ukraine since 2000. The first poll was conducted in August 2000 in all regions of Ukraine and 2017 respondents aged 18 and over were polled. The theoretical sample error was 2.3 per cent. There were two Razumkov polls on religion in 2002. The first was conducted between 7 and 16 August in all of Ukraine's regions and 2004 respondents aged 18 and over were polled. The sample error was 2.3 per cent. For a description and the results of this poll see Dudar and Shanghina (2002). The second was conducted between 8 and 28 October and 2000 respondents aged 18 and over were polled. The sample was selected to be representative of each geographical location and represented a cross-section of socio-demographic groups. Given that the reliability level was 95 per cent and that the ratio between variables ranged from 0.1:0.9 to 0.5:0.5, the standard deviation was within the range 1.34–2.24 per cent. For a description and the results of this poll see Bychenko and Dudar (2002). Polls were also conducted in 2003 (15–21 October, 2013 respondents polled in all regions of Ukraine; 14–20 November, 2023 respondents polled; 10–17 December; 2019 respondents polled) and 2004 (18–25 June, 2020 respondents aged 18 and over polled in all regions of Ukraine). In 2007 a poll was conducted between 2 and 9 February in all regions of Ukraine and 2011 respondents aged 18 and over were polled. The theoretical sample error was 2.3 per cent. For a description and the results of this poll see Shanghina (2007).

6 Surveys conducted by the Ukrainian Research Institute on Youth Problems in 1992 (1300 respondents aged 15–19), 1993 (1300 respondents aged 15–29) and 1994 (1500 respondents aged 15–29) showed that only 1.7 per cent of all polled considered themselves as unbelievers and 0.4 per cent as atheists. The percentages of those who considered religion important for their life were 37 per cent in the 25–29 age-group, 43 per cent in the 21–24 age group, 39 per cent in the 18–20 age group and 60 per cent in the 15–17 age group. For a description of the surveys see Yelens'kyi and Perebenesiuk (1996).

7 The International Social Survey Program is an ongoing annual programme of cross-national collaboration. It brings together pre-existing social science projects and coordinates research goals, thereby adding a cross-national perspective to the individual national studies. Ukraine joined this programme in 2008. The field survey for the 'religion' module was conducted in autumn 2008 by the Kiev International Sociological Institute (*Kyivs'kyi Mizhnarodnyi Instytut Sotsiolohii*). 2036 adults were polled. For a description of the survey see Paraschevin (2009).

8 The poll was conducted by the Democratic Initiatives research centre (*Demokratychni initsiatyvy*) between 25 April and 10 May 1995, and 397 people in Lv'iv, 427 in Kiev, 402 in

Donets'k and 399 in Simferopol' were questioned. See the table '*Nalezhnist' do relihiinoi konfesii*' in Prava (1995, p. 14).

9 For instance, a survey conducted in July 2006 by the Institute of Social and Political Psychology of the Academy of Pedagogical Science of Ukraine showed that the following institutions were trusted (completely or to some extent) by the following percentages: churches, 62.3 per cent; the National Bank of Ukraine, 30.5 per cent; local authorities, 29.9 per cent; the security service, 23.3 per cent; parliament, 20.7 per cent; the police, 20 per cent; the government, 19.4 per cent; the courts, 17.5 per cent. Local authorities were distrusted by 50.2 per cent and the police by 64.3 per cent (see Kisel'ov and Burkovs'kyi, 2007, p. 8).

10 Birch (2000) detects the link between denominational affiliation and voting choice in Ukraine. During election campaigns in Ukraine (including the 2004 and 2009–2010 presidential elections) the contending teams produced a large number of confidential surveys. I have been able to see the results of some of them. They confirm that the main trend is as Birch ascertained it.

11 By the 'left' I mean those political parties that support social change with a view towards creating a more egalitarian society, with relatively little priority placed on private property, individual rights or free enterprise. In Ukraine such political parties include the communists and the Progressive Socialists (*Prohresyvno-Sotsialistychna partiia Ukraini*). The parties of the left in Ukraine are almost without exception pro-Russian and anti-western. (The only exception among relatively influential left parties is the Socialist Party of Ukraine.)

12 Normally churches avoid indicating their stances over particular political issues. There are some exceptions, however. The hierarchies of the UOC-KP, the UAOC and the UGCC insist they cannot support politicians who question Ukrainian independence. The UGCC takes the most strong and consistent position. After the legalisation of the UGCC its hierarchs revived the practice of issuing letters to the faithful in which they explain the church's positions on the most pressing social and political issues as well as on church–state relations. Within the UOC-MP there is a range of political opinions on the main political issues (for instance about whether to support Yanukovych or Yuschenko during the Orange Revolution). This range of opinion means that the UOC-MP has a weaker influence on the political preferences of believers.

13 The percentages agreeing with the statements 'only religions traditional to this country have the right to exist' and 'only the religion in which I believe has the right to exist' were 12.6 and 6.9 per cent respectively.

14 The Russian-born sociologist Pitirim Sorokin (1889–1968) founded the Department of Sociology at Harvard University.

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