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The Politics of Religion in Postcommunist Russia*

STEPHEN WHITE & IAN McALLISTER

Russians lost a state and a ruling party in 1991. But more than this, they lost a belief system that had defined their entire existence. Whether or not they had internalised its values, Marxism–Leninism explained the place that Russians occupied in the world in which they lived: their place in their own society, and the place of the USSR itself in a wider process of global change. It had been the official ideology for more than two generations; and by 1989, when the last Soviet census was conducted, fewer than 10 per cent had been born before the October Revolution and fewer still had any conscious memory of a different society.¹ Official theory suggested that, as time went on, religious superstitions would die out along with other attitudes and values that arose from presocialist socioeconomic formations that were contrary to the principles of communist morality.² Western social scientists, for their part, agreed that a regime was likely to have established itself firmly once it had become the predominant influence upon the political memory of more than half of its adult population, a condition the USSR had satisfied by the 1960s.³

Nor, it seemed, was this a misplaced confidence. Surveys of working-class life, for instance, found that 75 per cent of the heads of families and their wives had attended services before the Revolution, but that only 26 per cent did so in 1924; there had also been a fall in baptisms.⁴ Comparisons of religious behaviour in the late 1960s found that levels of observance had fallen still further, from 80 per cent at the end of the 1920s to 50 per cent by the mid-1930s and to 10–20 per cent by the 1960s. And those who still considered themselves believers were more likely than ever before to have doubts about their faith.⁵ Those who were still believers in the 1960s and 1970s, studies suggested, were disproportionately the old, the less educated and those who lived in the countryside, all of them declining in relative numbers.⁶ By the end of the 1970s levels of observance had fallen still further, to 8–10 per cent; skilled workers, farm staff and the intelligentsia were ‘almost entirely free of religious convictions’, and levels of belief among the population as a whole were falling by about a third in each successive ten-year cohort.⁷ There were certainly variations from year to year, researchers found; but the general tendency was clear, and this was the ‘elimination of religion as a result of socioeconomic and cultural changes’.⁸

The evidence, in fact, was much less clear than these trends suggested. For a start, it had simply become more difficult to practise, as about two-thirds of the churches had been closed (for many Russians, it has been noted, the journey from home to the

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nearest church took many hours, or even days).⁹ Believers who were young and better educated had every reason to conceal their faith if they had career ambitions of any kind. And believers and atheists alike had a remarkably diffuse set of personal philosophies. Believers, for a start, had an almost 100 per cent ignorance of the Scriptures, and were ready to accept that it was possible to lead a good life without a belief in God; many thought religion was positively harmful. At the same time, almost half of the atheists who were questioned in a study in the 1960s thought man could not live without a belief in some kind of God, and the same proportion was unwilling to support a campaign against the remaining influence of religion;¹⁰ other nonbelievers displayed icons in their homes, marked their graves with crosses, and observed church holidays 'out of habit or respect for their elders and relatives'.¹¹

The end of communist rule brought about an end to a situation in which believers had been restricted in their expression of faith, and sometimes penalised. But there had been considerable changes in the public role of religion in the late Soviet years, and there were many respects in which church teaching could find common ground with Marxism–Leninism, including a commitment to family life, to a strong and united Russia, and to peace with other nations and nationalities. The church was bound to favour a greater degree of freedom for religious worship; but it was ambiguous about liberal democracy, and hostile to Western influence including that of other churches. At the same time it was the only institution that commanded public confidence; it offered a belief system that was the only coherent alternative to Marxism–Leninism; it had publications and property; and its commitment to a particular leader, or to a particular set of policies, had enormous potential influence in the unstable circumstances of early postcommunist rule.

This paper addresses three aspects of the complex and changing place of religion in postcommunist Russia. First, we consider some of the developments that had been taking place in the relationship between church and state in the late Soviet period, taking account of sources that have recently become available. Second, we consider the evidence that is available on the nature and level of religiosity in the early postcommunist years, with particular reference to the Orthodox Church to which the great majority of Russian believers were affiliated. And third, we trace the various forms of interaction between religiosity and postcommunist politics. We draw upon several bodies of evidence in the paper, and particularly upon nationally representative surveys conducted in 1993 and 1996 in Russia and several other postcommunist countries.¹²

Religion in Late Communist Russia

There were few indications at the outset that the Gorbachev leadership would be one under which there would be a limited reconciliation between church and state.¹³ The draft Party Programme of October 1985 gave little indication of a change with its call for the elimination of 'religious prejudices' and its condemnation of any attempts to 'use religion in a way that harms the interests of society and the individual'.¹⁴ Gorbachev himself, addressing the 27th Party Congress the following February, attacked the tendency of 'certain literary, artistic and scholarly writings' to 'depict in idyllic tones reactionary nationalist and religious survivals' which were 'contrary to our ideology, the socialist way of life and a scientific world outlook'.¹⁵ Visiting Tashkent in November 1986 he called more directly for a 'decisive and uncompromising struggle with religious phenomena', with particular reference to party officials and managers who campaigned for communist values but took part them-

selves in religious ceremonies.¹⁶

A different line had already begun to emerge by this time, taking its cue from an unsigned article on 'socialism and religion' that appeared in the party's theoretical journal *Kommunist* in March 1988. Ostensibly a consideration of church-state relations in the first years of Soviet rule, the article went on to call for a much more general reassessment of the place of religion in socialist society; it admitted that the party authorities had only a 'superficial' understanding of the position of the churches, and accepted that they had taken a 'suspicious and hostile' attitude towards the humane and loving values of those who made up the church communities. The existence of millions of believers, it pointed out, was 'a reality', and everything must be done to avoid 'primitivism' in dealing with them.¹⁷ The new line became still clearer after a meeting between Gorbachev and the hierarchy in April 1988 on the occasion of the millennium of the Orthodox Church, in which the Soviet leader spoke of the 'universal norms and customs' that both sides had in common. The millennium, Gorbachev declared, was a 'significant milestone' for all Russians, and he spoke of believers and atheists joining together in the 'common great cause of the restructuring and renewal of socialism'.¹⁸ The patriarch, for his part, described the Party Programme as 'highly humane' and 'close to the Christian ideal'.¹⁹

It was clear that there had been significant changes in the position of believers and their churches by the late communist period. Gorbachev, it emerged, had himself been baptised; his mother was a regular worshipper.²⁰ An early gesture of some importance was the return of the Danilov monastery in Moscow to the Orthodox Church; refurbished, it played a central role in the millennium celebrations a few years later. Other property, including the Kremlin cathedrals, had been returned by the end of the decade, and thousands of new churches had opened all over the country.²¹ Another first was the meeting between Gorbachev and the pope, which took place in December 1989; the following year diplomatic relations were formally established between the USSR and the Holy See.²² Religious believers, even priests, began to appear in the print and electronic media; the first religious leaders were elected to the Soviet parliament in 1989; and a religious presence began to establish itself in charitable and educational work. In January 1991, establishing another precedent, Orthodox Christmas was celebrated as a public holiday.²³

The last months of communist rule, in 1990 and 1991, extended the liberties of believers through a series of more formal measures. The Law on Property, approved in 1990, gave the churches full rights of ownership,²⁴ and a Law on Freedom of Conscience, adopted later in the year, affirmed the right of believers to practise and of parents to give their children a religious upbringing. The churches themselves were given the right to take part in public life and to establish their own media outlets, although not political parties; and they gained the right to establish their own schools and higher educational institutions, and to produce and sell their own literature.²⁵ The USSR parliament, in one of its last acts, adopted a 'declaration of the rights and freedoms of the individual' which included a guarantee of religious belief and practice;²⁶ the Russian parliament, in November 1991, adopted a more specific set of 'rights and freedoms of the individual';²⁷ and then in December 1993 the new constitution took matters still further, guaranteeing the 'right to profess individually or jointly with others any religion or to profess none, to freely choose, hold and propagate religious or other beliefs and to act in accordance with them' in an article that could not be amended by parliamentary vote.

Acting within the framework of this legislation, religious groups and believers more generally had come to play a central role in Russian public life by the early

1990s. The patriarch was the first to speak at the inauguration of the newly elected president in July 1991, and Yel'tsin himself made it known that he attended a religious service 'about once a month';²⁸ both he and the Soviet prime minister, Valentin Pavlov, had attended the Easter service in the Epiphany Cathedral earlier in the year, among a 'gaggle of senior officials who stood gamely, if somewhat sheepishly, at the front of the church, occasionally bowing and fiddling with candles in an attempt to show that they were not totally unfamiliar with the Orthodox rites'.²⁹ There were several religious parties, including the Christian Patriotic Union, the Christian Democratic Union, the People's Orthodox Movement, the Russian Christian Democratic Party and the Russian Christian Democratic Movement, all of them founded between 1988 and 1990.³⁰ The first religious services took place in the Kremlin cathedrals in January 1990;³¹ the first Orthodox grammar schools opened the same year;³² and the first religious broadcasts went out over state television.³³ Religious believers, by the early 1990s, had clearly escaped from the marginalisation and even repression of the Soviet period; and yet their views were imperfectly articulated by religious parties or church hierarchies, and there was little satisfactory information about the distribution of religiosity or its association with the policy agendas of a changing society.

Just as the Soviet system reflected a distinctive blend of Marxism and Russian traditions, so too the Russian Orthodox Church combined more general Christian values with a number of particular characteristics. The Orthodox Church had been a state church that was all but identical with citizenship itself in prerevolutionary Russia, and it was more closely associated with the work of government than was the case in the countries that belonged to the Western Christian tradition. There was a fairly loose concept of 'membership', and religious belief was more closely associated with participation in a shared community of believers (*sobornost'*) and taking holy communion once a year than with a set of articles of faith.³⁴

There was ambiguity, too, in the position of the church and its adherents in a Soviet society. Formally, the rights of believers to practise were guaranteed by the constitution, and any form of discrimination was illegal. At the same time it was a society in which a dominant role was taken by a Communist Party that required its members to attack any 'religious prejudices and other views and morals alien to the socialist way of life'.³⁵ But there were reconciliations at moments of national crisis, such as the Second World War; and after 1990, when its rules were changed, believers could join the CPSU, although they were still required to promote the 'communist ideal' as well as 'human values' of a more general kind.³⁶ Apart from this, there were associations of several other kinds: the party leadership, in practice, made nominations to leading positions, some members of the hierarchy regarded it as their patriotic duty to report to the KGB,³⁷ and the Orthodox Church began to enjoy official favour as the 'national' church as compared with unregistered and, still more so, foreign denominations and sects.³⁸

The Party Secretariat summed up its position in a resolution on 'religion in contemporary circumstances' that was adopted in April 1991. Religion, it accepted, contained 'general human, moral and cultural values'; and there could be no basis for the persecution of individuals for their religious beliefs, which had 'nothing in common with Leninist policy on the religious question'. The party's objection was to extremist sections of the various churches that saw themselves as the only legitimate custodians of moral and spiritual values, and which attacked the mistakes that had been made by Lenin and the CPSU in earlier years. Their aim, the Secretariat suggested, was rather to encourage 'dialogue, mutual understanding [and] joint action for the renewal of socialist society': a coalition of believers and nonbelievers

in a struggle to construct a society of social justice, democracy and humanism.³⁹

Religious Behaviour in the Early Postcommunist Period

Clearly, there had been a substantial change in the formal position of the churches even before the end of Soviet rule. But what had been taking place in the wider society? Were there more believers than before, and were they more active in their expression of faith? There was certainly a substantial increase in the proportion of Russians who were willing to describe themselves as believers, from 5 to 10 per cent to about 50 per cent by the end of the 1980s, with a particularly marked increase among the younger age groups.⁴⁰ It was not too much, for some commentators, to speak of an 'explosion' in religiosity.⁴¹ Even higher levels were recorded on special occasions: for instance, 82 per cent of Russians celebrated Easter in 1993, compared with 50 per cent who celebrated May Day.⁴² And after the end of communist rule, it was the clearest of all changes that the new system of government 'allowed everybody to decide whether or not to believe in God'. In the 1993 New Russia Barometer survey 71 per cent agreed with this assessment, with only 2 per cent taking the opposite view; by contrast, 51 per cent thought they were able to live 'without the fear of unlawful arrest', and just 36 per cent thought they were in a better position to 'travel and live wherever they wanted'.⁴³

The church, moreover, was the most trusted of all institutions – or perhaps, more accurately, the least distrusted (see Table 1). In nationally representative surveys covering Russia as well as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine, the church was the most trusted of nine institutions in Ukraine, the second most trusted in Russia (after the army) and the fourth and fifth in Hungary and Slovakia respectively. By contrast, in the Czech Republic the church ranked last, trusted among fewer than one in five of the population, which presumably reflected the more limited role it had played in resisting communist rule and articulating a national identity. In Russia the church was obviously benefiting from the wider moral regeneration that was taking place across the society, including such activities as charity and relief work, concerts to raise funds for the victims of disasters, and a prison chaplain service for the first time since 1917.⁴⁴ 'Never before', commented *Izvestiya* in April 1995, 'was [the church's] participation in the political life of the country so conspicuous'.⁴⁵

Not only the churches but also religious beliefs held a high position in public favour in the early postcommunist years. In the 1992 New Russia Barometer survey, for instance, respondents were asked what feelings were evoked by the word 'Christianity'. A total of 73 per cent were positive, a level surpassed only by the word 'freedom', which was positively endorsed by 78 per cent of the respondents. At the other end of the scale, about one quarter of those interviewed felt positive about capitalism and socialism, and just over one in five about *perestroika*. Positive attitudes towards Christianity, moreover, were distributed evenly across the age and educational groups, and even (though less strikingly) across political persuasions. Those who were current or former Communist Party members, in fact, were more favourable to Christianity than they were to socialism: 67 per cent were favourably inclined towards Christianity, while just 40 per cent were favourable to socialism.

There had, it was clear, been a substantial change in public attitudes towards religion by this time, a change that had started in the late 1980s. Under Brezhnev religion had become fashionable among intellectuals in large cities and nonconformist youth. But the change was of modest dimensions, and there was no evidence

Table 1. Trust in institutions, 1993

	<i>(Percentage who say 'completely trust' or 'mostly trust')</i>				
	<i>Russia</i>	<i>Czech Rep.</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>Slovakia</i>	<i>Ukraine</i>
<i>Mass Media</i>					
Television	44	47	35	39	44
Radio	42	49	38	48	38
Newspapers	29	29	29	25	27
<i>Political Institutions</i>					
President	33	62	54	51	18
Government	29	47	19	20	14
Prime minister	28	57	28	28	12
<i>Other Institutions</i>					
Churches	51	18	41	38	51
Judiciary	27	30	46	25	25
Army	55	34	49	40	48
	(2141)	(973)	(988)	(667)	(971)

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: 1993 Russia and Eastern Europe Survey.

of a more general return to older patterns of faith and observance. In 1988 a joint US–Soviet investigation in Moscow suggested that only about 10 per cent of the population believed in God. Between 1988 and 1990, however, the process developed 'at the speed of an avalanche'. According to a survey conducted in 1990, up to 27 per cent of Moscow's population were believers, as compared with 20 per cent who were atheist; in a comparable survey in 1991 the proportion of atheists was down to just 10 per cent. As Filatov and Furman put it, there had been a swing of the 'religious pendulum': oriented towards atheism from the 1930s to the 1960s, it began a 'slow and barely perceptible' movement towards religion in the 1970s, gained momentum, and 'finally assumed great speed in 1988–90'.⁴⁶

There was a still broader welcome for the idea that religious beliefs should play a greater role in Soviet or post-Soviet society. In October 1991, for instance, a Russia-wide survey found that 64 per cent thought the wider diffusion of religious beliefs would be of benefit to society, and 6 per cent thought it would be harmful; two years earlier only 44 per cent had been positive.⁴⁷ There was wide support for the revival of the Orthodox Church in particular: 68 per cent thought it could play a positive role in Russia's future, with only 19 per cent taking a different view.⁴⁸ And there was widespread agreement that a religious revival could offer a great deal to individual members of society. For more than half it could contribute to 'moral norms', and for another 21 per cent it could help to provide an 'understanding of the meaning of life'. Even nonbelievers thought the church contributed to a sense of morality (48 per cent) and to the meaning of life (17 per cent); a few even thought it could 'save souls', perhaps their own.⁴⁹

The position of religious belief in late communist and early postcommunist Russia was nonetheless a complex and contradictory one. Levels of identification with the Orthodox Church, for a start, were considerably higher than the proportion of the population that reported a belief in God; and there were many 'believers' who were

not prepared to accept central tenets of the Christian faith, such as life after death.⁵⁰ There were many more who had no religious feelings or were even atheist, but who believed religion made a positive contribution to national life;⁵¹ other atheists wished their children to be brought up in a religious faith, and 6 per cent attended services themselves on a regular basis.⁵² Believers, conversely, had an uncertain grasp of the principles of their faith, not surprisingly because the source of their knowledge was most often the mass media: a quarter of them thought St Peter was a Russian,⁵³ and asked to name the most outstanding personality that had ever lived, 13 per cent opted for Lenin and only 5 per cent for Jesus Christ.⁵⁴

There were equally substantial variations between religious belief and regular worship. More than half of those who described themselves as Orthodox did not attend church services, and about two-thirds did not attend communion (a few more attended very rarely); this meant that the overwhelming majority of those who regarded themselves as Orthodox did not satisfy the traditional requirements of church membership.⁵⁵ And if the criterion was not simply attendance, but some attempt to live by Christian principles, barely 2–3 per cent would qualify.⁵⁶ At the same time, up to half of all nonbelievers celebrated religious holidays, and a fifth attended services on at least an occasional basis.⁵⁷ As for a life after death, Muscovites were more inclined to believe that there was such a thing (44 per cent) rather than not (31 per cent); but of those that responded, 21 per cent thought they would go to heaven, 20 per cent thought they would go to hell, and the largest group (59 per cent) had no idea.⁵⁸

Although levels of religious affiliation were higher than in the late communist years it was unclear in the mid-1990s if they were still rising or if the 'religious boom' had come to an end.⁵⁹ On some evidence the steady growth in religious identification that had been recorded up to 1994 had begun to fall back to the levels of the early years of the decade.⁶⁰ But trust in the Orthodox Church, which had fallen after 1994, had begun to increase again a year later;⁶¹ and others found in 1996 that the process of religious revival was 'continuing', with the greatest increases in belief among the younger and better educated.⁶² While different survey methodologies and changes in question wording make over-time comparisons difficult, our own data tend to support the second of these views. As Table 2 suggests, religious affiliation declined in 1992 and 1993 after registering the support of 57 per cent of the population in 1991; and adherents of the Orthodox Church were only slightly more numerous at this time than those who said they were atheists. The 1996 survey suggests a second increase in religious affiliation, with three quarters claiming to be Orthodox and just 17 per cent saying they were atheists.⁶³ These variations are too large to be explained by technical factors alone, and they suggest a further increase in the proportions considering themselves religious beyond the levels that had been recorded at the end of communist rule.

An increase in the level of religious affiliation, admittedly, was not the same as an increase in the salience of religion in public and private life. Many saw the revival of the churches as one of the signs that Russia was returning to its 'spiritual sources'; but very few (just 7 per cent in a 1996 survey) thought the church could help Russians to 'revive their national spirit', and by far the largest proportion (including most believers) associated their hopes with the establishment of a powerful Russian state.⁶⁴ Rather more (23 per cent) thought religion was a force that could help the country to recover from its continuing difficulties, but 41 per cent took a very different view. And was religion, at least, one of the values that was needed for a happy and fulfilling life? Only 2 per cent thought so, in the mid-1990s; far more (75

Table 2. Religious affiliation, 1991–96

	1991	1992	1993	1996
Russian Orthodox	57	43	45	75
Believer, no church	3	6	6	1
Other affiliation	1	2	3	5
Atheist	38	21	42	17
Difficult to answer	1	28	4	2
Total	100 (2806)	100 (2095)	100 (2141)	100 (1581)

Note: Question wordings and code vary between surveys.

Source: 1991 World Values Survey, Russian sample; 1992 New Russia Barometer Survey; 1993 Russia and Eastern Europe Survey, Russian sample; 1996 Russia Survey.

per cent) put good health in first place, followed by material prosperity and their family.⁶⁵ This left levels of religiosity at a higher level than in the late communist years, but lower than in other European countries (just 46 per cent, in a 1991 survey, 'never doubted' the existence of God, compared with 87 per cent in the United States and 58 per cent in Britain).⁶⁶

An increasing interest in the spiritual, moreover, was by no means confined to orthodox religions. Russians were certainly prepared to believe in miracles, the Devil, and a life after death, all of which are amongst the basic tenets of the Christian faith (see Table 3). The 1993 New Russia Barometer found that about half or more were also prepared to accept four central religious beliefs, including predestination (58 per cent) and the resurrection (57 per cent). The belief that attracted the lowest level of support was the veracity of Biblical miracles, but even here, 48 per cent were prepared to accept a literal version of the church's teaching.

Along with religious beliefs, however, Russians were also willing to believe in astrological forecasts and UFOs.⁶⁷ Levels of belief in the paranormal were particularly high among the better educated: of those with university degrees, 73 per cent believed in telepathy and 42 per cent in astrology, and for 27 per cent Oriental wisdom played an 'important part' in their life. Only 15 per cent, by contrast, believed in God. The result was a category of people who were 'believers and non-believers at the same time, combining their formal membership in a Christian church

Table 3. The extent of religious beliefs, 1993

	<i>Definitely agree</i>	<i>Generally agree</i>	<i>Generally disagree</i>	<i>Definitely disagree</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>(N)</i>
Miracles described in the Bible really happened	15	33	38	14	100	(1807)
There is a devil	16	36	29	18	99	(1792)
There is life after death	17	40	26	16	99	(1973)
Everything that happens must be accepted as God's will	20	38	27	15	100	(1833)

Source: 1993 New Russia Barometer Survey.

with rapidly changing passions for Hasidism, the Bhagavad Gita, Buddhism, or anything else'.⁶⁸ By the same token, believers were more likely than nonbelievers to place their faith in the evil eye, telepathy, flying saucers and the abominable snowman.⁶⁹

Alternative ideologies, including supernatural ones, had certainly become well established by the late communist period. The main television services had begun to incorporate an 'astrological forecast' for the following day, and many newspapers – including the popular trade union daily *Trud* – contained a regular column of advice on such matters. Bookstalls in underground stations reflected the same emphases: there was Nostradamus and Madame Blavatskaya, L. Ron Hubbard and the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* as well as *Emmanuelle* and the Marquis de Sade. A large majority (64 per cent), according to the polls, were pleased that newspapers and journals had begun to give a greater degree of attention to mysticism, unorthodox medicine and extrasensory perception. More than half thought those with a special gift could foretell the future (50 per cent) and cure the sick by television psychotherapy (57 per cent); and substantial minorities believed in witchcraft (35 per cent) or communication with the dead (11 per cent).⁷⁰ If this was a Christian society, it was also one that incorporated many older and more diverse beliefs and values.

The Social Bases of Religious Behaviour and Belief

Who, in this changing society, were the believers? The literature has identified as many as nine different dimensions of religiosity; but of these, church attendance is the most fundamental.⁷¹ Table 4 suggests that, notwithstanding the fluctuations that were taking place among the proportions who claimed an affiliation, patterns of church attendance in the early postcommunist years were reasonably stable. In 1993 just under six out of every ten believers said that they attended church once a year or not at all, and a further 31 per cent said that they attended only a few times a year. In all, just one in every ten believers attended church at least once a month, a low level by West European standards.

Low levels of religious behaviour in Russia are in turn related to the nature of the Orthodox Church itself. As other research suggests, religious groups that emphasise voluntary membership, accept secularisation and demand relatively low commitment, such as some Protestant churches, are the most likely to lose participants. This is at

Table 4. Frequency of church attendance, 1991–93

	1991	1992	1993
Once a week	17	2	3
Once a month	11	6	7
Few times a year	28	23	31
Very rarely/never	44	69	59
Total	100	100	100
(N)	(1702)	(1003)	(1319)

Note: Question wordings and code vary between surveys. Estimates exclude atheists and 'difficult to answer'.

Sources: 1991 World Values Survey, Russian sample; 1992 New Russia Barometer Survey; 1993 Russia and Eastern Europe Survey, Russian sample.

least partly because they have to compete with other organisations that perform similar functions, such as neighbourhood groups or social clubs or, in the context of communist Russia, the CPSU.⁷² On the other hand, denominations are more likely to retain a strong following if they demand a high level of commitment from their members and institutionalise them in a series of overlapping and reinforcing sub-groups, such as a separate educational system and social activities. In the United States the conservative Protestant churches have been able to withstand secularising trends among young people more successfully than liberal Protestant churches, and this can be attributed primarily to organisational factors of this kind.⁷³ Low levels of attendance among Russian believers may also be a consequence of these mainly organisational factors.

A multivariate analysis of the social bases of affiliation, atheism and attendance is shown in Table 5. Since the two affiliation variables are dichotomous, logistic regression methods are used; church attendance is an ordinal variable, so in this case OLS regression is used. The independent variables reflect a variety of aspects concerned with social background and economic status, broadly divided into those two categories. The major factors influencing affiliation and attendance, it emerges, are related to social background rather than economic status. As in other societies, women and the elderly are more likely to have a religious affiliation than men, as are those with less education and those who live in rural rather than urban areas. However, although rural residents are more likely to have a religious affiliation they

Table 5. The social bases of religious affiliation and attendance, 1993

	<i>Orthodox</i>		<i>Atheist</i>		<i>Attendance</i>	
	<i>Est</i>	<i>(SE)</i>	<i>Est</i>	<i>(SE)</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>(beta)</i>
<i>Social background</i>						
Gender (male)	-0.87*	(0.09)	0.91*	(0.09)	-0.54*	(-0.23)
Age	0.01*	(0.00)	-0.01*	(0.09)	0.00	(0.04)
Russian	0.61*	(0.19)	-0.01	(0.13)	0.18*	(0.06)
Rural resident	0.37*	(0.11)	-0.24*	(0.11)	-0.38*	-0.16
<i>Education (secondary)</i>						
Technical college	-0.25	(0.11)	0.23	(0.11)	-0.03	(-0.04)
University	-0.43*	(0.13)	0.39*	(0.13)	-0.10	-0.04
<i>Economic status</i>						
<i>Employment (non-labour force)</i>						
Employed, state	0.07	(0.21)	0.24	(0.21)	0.00	(0.00)
Employed, private	0.06	(0.23)	0.26	(0.23)	0.21	(0.08)
Consumer goods	-0.04	(0.04)	0.02	(0.04)	-0.05	(-0.05)
Constant	-0.98		-0.73		2.4	
Pseudo/Adj R-squared	0.06		0.05		0.08	
(N)	(2141)		(2141)		(1241)	

* Statistically significant at $P < 0.01$, two-tailed.

Note: The first two equations are logistic regression results showing parameter estimates and (in parentheses) standard errors. The third equation is an ordinary least squares regression equation showing partial (*b*) and standardised (*beta*, in parentheses) regression coefficients.

Source: 1993 Russia and Eastern Europe Survey.

are less likely to attend than their urban counterparts, which is probably a consequence of the relative lack of churches in rural areas and hence of the opportunity to attend services. By contrast, economic status is unimportant in explaining either affiliation or attendance, thus underscoring the link between religion and social background rather than achieved characteristics such as economic status.

While religious affiliation and church attendance are outward signs of religious commitment there are other, less visible, dimensions of religiosity, the most important of which is belief. Beliefs are subject to pressure from social change, and the beliefs valued in one generation will not necessarily be valued in another. Beliefs are also important from the perspective of ecumenism. It has been argued, for instance, that urbanisation, social mobility and material affluence have contributed to the dissolution of religious boundaries and to a growing convergence of beliefs across denominations. In this respect, some believe that modernisation may help to restore the unity of the Christian Church and the faith that was destroyed by the sixteenth-century European Reformation.⁷⁴

One explanation for the comparatively high level of religious belief in Russia is the rural and relatively underdeveloped nature of the country. Western studies in the sociology of religion affirm that with urbanisation and occupational change scientific rationalism will tend to weaken more traditional frameworks of explanation.⁷⁵ Western studies also associate levels of belief with the postwar expansion of university education, which has resulted in more questioning of the basic tenets of traditional faiths.⁷⁶ In addition, changing lifestyles have been posited, with larger proportions of working women, fewer children, more divorces and more single-parent families reducing the importance of the family, which is the agency through which religious beliefs have traditionally been transmitted.⁷⁷ Finally, the influence of generational factors has been examined, with the radical youth culture of the late 1960s and early 1970s providing an unfavourable social climate for the inculcation of religious values among the young.⁷⁸

To test the importance of a set of social structural factors on religious belief, as well as religious affiliation and behaviour, we regress a range of independent variables on belief (Table 6). Belief is measured by a multiple item scale, combining the four basic tenets of belief outlined in Table 3 and scored from a low of zero to a high of 10. The first equation is estimated for the population as a whole, so we can meaningfully control for affiliation, but not behaviour. The second equation is restricted to believers only, and includes religious behaviour as an independent variable. At the population level, the major influence is, of course, affiliation, with secularists differing by 2.8 points on the zero to ten belief scale compared with other believers, the excluded category. This difference takes into account the social background and economic status variables included in the equation. Social background factors are of some significance, and women have stronger beliefs than men, as do rural residents, ethnic Russians, those who are older and those without a university education. Persons who are not in state employment are also more religious, presumably because the public sector was more closely associated in the past with communist norms and values.

In the second equation, for believers only, the same variables emerge, although there are some variations. While gender remains consistent in its influence, rurality almost doubles in importance. Church attendance exercises a major influence, as we might expect, and frequent attenders score about 2.5 points more on the scale than nonattenders or infrequent attenders, net of other circumstances. In general, however, the results are, like the first equation, notable for the relative lack of influence

Table 6. The social bases of religious belief, 1993

	<i>All</i>		<i>Believers only</i>	
	<i>b</i>	<i>(beta)</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>(beta)</i>
<i>Social background</i>				
Gender (male)	-0.45*	(0.09)	-0.38*	(0.08)
Age	-0.01*	(0.05)	-0.01	(0.02)
Russian	0.31*	(0.04)	0.17	(0.03)
Rural resident	0.39*	(0.07)	0.67*	(0.13)
Education (secondary)				
Technical college	-0.03	(0.00)	0.01	(0.00)
University	-0.40*	(0.05)	-0.35*	(0.05)
<i>Economic status</i>				
Employment (non-labour force)				
Employed, state	-0.45*	(0.09)	-0.54	(0.12)
Employed, private	-0.12	(0.01)	-0.10	(0.01)
Consumer goods	-0.09	(0.03)	-0.13	(0.05)
<i>Religion</i>				
Affiliation (other believer)				
Orthodox	0.53*	(0.10)	0.27	(0.04)
Undecided	-1.0*	(0.16)	n.a.	n.a.
Church attendance	n.a.	n.a.	2.5*	(0.26)
Constant	6.45		5.72	
Adj R-squared	0.29		0.12	
(N)	(1973)		(1075)	

* Statistically significant at $P < 0.01$, two-tailed.

Note: Ordinary least squares regression equation showing partial (*b*) and standardised (*beta*, in parentheses) regression coefficients predicting religious belief, which is scored from a low of 0 to a high of 10.

Source: 1993 New Russia Barometer.

exerted by socioeconomic variables, such as education, employment, income and the possession of consumer goods. Also notable is the relative weakness of age, representing generational influences. Once again, religious belief is much more closely related to ascribed characteristics such as gender and residence than to achieved characteristics such as education and occupational status.

The results suggest that the social bases of religious behaviour and belief closely follow the patterns found in advanced societies, with women and those with fewer educational attainments displaying greater religiosity than men or those with tertiary education. The main exception is age. In the advanced societies one of the most important predictors of religiosity is age, with older people being significantly more religious than their younger counterparts. The weakness of age as a predictor of religiosity in Russia may reflect the newness of religious freedoms; the novelty of this new freedom has influenced the society as a whole rather than just one section of it. As religious freedom comes to be accepted and regarded as a normal part of everyday life we might expect patterns of religiosity to display more generationally-based patterns.

Religion, Politics and Postcommunism

If communist rule had oppressed believers and their churches, postcommunist rule with its guarantees of freedom of worship should have secured their unqualified support. The position was in fact a good deal more complicated. The churches took an ambiguous position during the attempted coup of August 1991; the patriarch called for Gorbachev's release, but after the coup had begun to collapse; and there was clearly some support within the hierarchy for the conspirators' appeal to ordinary Russians to reject Western values and maintain a 'strong and united Soviet state'.⁷⁹ The church was hostile to communism, as an atheist doctrine; and yet it was not so clearly committed to democracy or pluralism, or to private ownership. 'Icons bob among Soviet and monarchist banners at anti-Yel'tsin marches', the Western press reported in 1994; and those who were the most deeply religious – admittedly, a small proportion of the population – were among the most bitterly opposed to the policies of the Yel'tsin government.⁸⁰

The Orthodox Church, for its own part, favoured a religious monopoly rather than a diversity of teachings, with strict limits upon the rights of foreign churches and evangelists to operate on Russian territory; and at least in some quarters there was support for a 'moral and wise' if not a totalitarian censorship.⁸¹ Believers, for their part, have emerged as more 'conservative' than their counterparts outside the church: more favourable to law and order, and more likely to believe the children should be taught respect for authority; positive towards Nicholas II, but also to Stalin; more prepared than others to ban 'harmful' books, and to isolate AIDS victims; and less favourable to multiparty politics and the market.⁸² Believers, as other studies have shown, are more anticommunist than the population as a whole (they are more hostile towards socialism as a doctrine, and to former party officials in government posts); but they are also more likely to favour order above democracy and to support a planned rather than a market economy, and they are less committed to the rule of law and human rights and less friendly towards Jews.⁸³ Believers are more likely to express hostility towards other groups such as Chechens and gypsies;⁸⁴ they are more likely to favour a single Slavic state incorporating Russia, Ukraine and Belarus', and to believe that Russia should be declared an Orthodox state with particular privileges within it for members of the national church.⁸⁵

The connection between religion and political choice is in fact a complex one. In the December 1995 Duma elections, for instance, religion exerted a negligible influence (Table 7). The most 'religious' of the four parties that cleared the 5 per cent threshold was Yabloko, 80 per cent of whose voters were Orthodox and just 6 per cent secular. The least religious of the parties was, not surprisingly, the Communists, followed by Our Home is Russia. But overall, the variation in the religious outlooks of supporters of the major parties was small. Evidence on the relationship between religion and party support also comes from the characteristics of electorates in the first round of the presidential election in 1996: the most religious electorates were those that supported the radical nationalist Zhirinovskiy and, at the opposite extreme, the liberal reformer Grigori Yavlinskii; in the second round the two candidates, Boris Yel'tsin and the Communist candidate Zyuganov, were equally successful in attracting the religious vote, although Yel'tsin did slightly better among 'believers' and Zyuganov among regular attenders.⁸⁶

One of the reasons for the modest influence of religion on voting is undoubtedly the absence of explicitly religious or confessional parties in the emerging Russian party system. Believers, the evidence suggests, are hostile to the idea of parties of

Table 7. Religion and party support in the 1995 Duma elections

	Affiliation			Religiosity		(N)
	Orthodox	None	Other	Yes	No	
Communist Party	75	17	8	63	37	(404)
Liberal Democrats	78	19	3	60	41	(126)
Our Home is Russia	75	15	10	58	43	(153)
Yabloko	80	14	6	64	36	(132)
Total electorate	75	17	8	63	37	(1581)

Note: Estimates are for supporters of the four parties that cleared the 5 per cent threshold in the elections.

Source: 1996 Russia Survey.

this kind, almost as much as atheists or those without clear convictions, although a substantial proportion of each of them found it difficult to offer a response of any kind; and the few religious parties that contested them performed badly in the 1993 and 1995 parliamentary elections.⁸⁷ Similarly, there is strong resistance to the idea that priests should be active in politics, with believers more hostile than others. Attitudes to religion, it emerges, have 'practically no influence' on sociopolitical opinions, which tend to be defined 'not by belief or otherwise in God, but by the general social atmosphere'.⁸⁸

Religion, accordingly, plays a very limited role in structuring Russian politics in the late 1990s. Relatively large and increasing numbers are willing to identify themselves in denominational terms, but levels of attendance are low. Levels of belief are rather higher, but believers are more likely than others to accept the supernatural in all its forms, while atheists are positively disposed towards the influence of religion, and sometimes participate in church activities. Religious believers are more likely than others to support broadly authoritarian forms of government, including a larger Slavic state and a religious monopoly; but they are no more likely to take part in political life, and there are relatively modest associations between religious belief and support or otherwise for parties and presidential candidates, particularly Boris Yel'tsin. Religious cleavages in other competitive polities are mobilised by parties that compete for the support of believers;⁸⁹ but there is some hostility towards parties of this kind in Russia, and there was none that sought to gather the support of Orthodox believers on a confessional basis in the postcommunist 1990s.⁹⁰ On this evidence, there will be no early 'clericalisation' of Russian politics.

Notes and References

- ¹ See *Itogi Vsesoyuznoi perepisi naseleniya 1989 goda* (EastView, Minneapolis, 1992), vol. 2, part 1.
- ² V. T. Syzrantsev (ed.), *Kratki slovar'-spravochnik agitatora i politinformatora* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1977), p. 225.
- ³ Richard Rose, *Governing without Consensus* (Faber, London, 1971), p. 35.
- ⁴ E. O. Kabo, *Ocherki rabochego byta. Opyt monograficheskogo issledovaniya* (Izdaniye VTsSPS, Moscow, 1928), p. 200 (contributions had meanwhile fallen to a tenth of the 1908 level: *ibid.*, p. 238). A fall in contributions was also noted by A. M. Bol'shakov, *Sovetskaya derevnya (1917-1925 gg.)*. *Ekonomika i byt*, 2nd edition (Priboy, Leningrad,

- 1925), p. 199. The time spent by peasants or collective farmers in religious ceremonies fell from 407 hours a year in 1913 to 4.1 hours in 1934 (V. D. Kobetsky, *Sotsiologicheskoye izucheniye religioznosti i ateizma* (Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta, Leningrad, 1978), p. 15.
- ⁵ V. D. Kobetsky, 'Issledovaniye dinamiki religioznosti naseleniya v SSSR', in V. D. Sherdakov (ed.), *Ateizm. Religiya. Sovremennost'* (Nauka, Leningrad, 1973), pp. 116–30, at pp. 126–27, 129. According to the census that was conducted in 1937 but whose results were suppressed at the time, 42.9 per cent of the population aged over 16 were atheist, 42.3 per cent were Orthodox and 14.8 per cent subscribed to other faiths (calculated from Yu. A. Polyakov (ed.), *Vsesoyuznaya perepis' naseleniya 1937 g.: kratkiye itogi* (Institut istorii AN SSSR, Moscow, 1991), pp. 106–7.
- ⁶ For a full review of the evidence on these points see David E. Powell, *Antireligious Propaganda in the Soviet Union: A Study of Mass Persuasion* (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1975), and Christel Lane, *Christian Religion in the Soviet Union* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1978).
- ⁷ *Pravda*, 30 March 1979, pp. 2–3.
- ⁸ Sherdakov (ed.), *Ateizm ...*, p. 129.
- ⁹ *Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny: monitoring obshchestvennogo mneniya*, no. 8, 1993, p. 5.
- ¹⁰ *Materialy mezhdvuzovskoi nauchnoi konferentsii po probleme vozrastaniya aktivnosti obshchestvennogo soznaniya v period stroitel'stva kommunizma* (Kursky gosudarstvennyy pedagogichesky institut, Kursk, 1968), pp. 361–62.
- ¹¹ S. I. Tereshchenko *et al.*, *Gor'kaya balka. (Kompleksnoye sotsiologicheskoye issledovaniye kolkhoza imeni V. I. Lenina)* (Stavropol'skoye knizhnoye izdatel'stvo, Stavropol', 1972), pp. 114–16.
- ¹² This paper draws upon surveys carried out in Russia, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia in 1993 and again in Russia in 1996 by Russian Public Opinion and Market Research (ROMIR). The surveys were conducted by William Miller, Stephen White and Paul Heywood with the financial support of the UK Economic and Social Research Council. For a full report see William L. Miller, Stephen White and Paul Heywood, *Values and Political Change in Postcommunist Europe* (Macmillan, London, 1997). We have also drawn on the World Values Survey 1990–91 and on the New Russia Barometer at the Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, directed by Richard Rose. For some earlier findings by the present authors see Stephen White, Ian McAllister and Ol'ga Kryshstanovskaya, 'Religion and politics in postcommunist Russia', *Religion, State and Society*, vol. 22, no. 1 (1994), pp. 73–88.
- ¹³ See for instance the two-page article on 'increasing the effectiveness of atheistic propaganda' in *Pravda*, 13 September 1985, pp. 2–3. There are several studies of the changing place of religion in Soviet and post-Soviet society: see for instance Sabrina Petra Ramet (ed.), *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983); John Anderson, *Religion, State and Politics in the Soviet Union and Successor States* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994); Nathaniel Davis, *A Long Walk to Church: A Contemporary History of Russian Orthodoxy* (Westview, Boulder, CO, 1995); Felix Corley (ed.), *Religion in the Soviet Union: An Archival Reader* (Macmillan, London, 1996); and Jane Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church: Triumphalism and Defensiveness* (Macmillan, London, 1996).
- ¹⁴ *Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuzha (novaya redaktsiya). Proyekt* (Pravda, Moscow, 1985), p. 63; an identical passage appears in the final version: *Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuzha. Novaya redaktsiya* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1986), p. 54.
- ¹⁵ M. S. Gorbachev, *Izbrannyye rechi i stat'i* (7 vols) (Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, Moscow, 1987–90), vol. 3, p. 234.
- ¹⁶ *Pravda Vostoka*, 25 November 1986, p. 1.
- ¹⁷ *Kommunist*, no. 4, 1988, pp. 115–23, at pp. 121–22.

- ¹⁸ Gorbachev, *Izbrannyye rechi* ..., vol. 6, pp. 201–3.
- ¹⁹ *Izvestiya*, 9 April 1988, p. 3.
- ²⁰ For Gorbachev's baptism see *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*, no. 8, 1989, p. 66; for his mother's church attendance see Michael Bourdeaux, *Gorbachev, Glasnost and the Gospel* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1990), p. 24. A different account is provided by Davis, *A Long Way* ..., who visited Privol'noye in 1991 and noted that the village church had been destroyed many years earlier (p. 253).
- ²¹ *Pravda*, 29 November 1991, p. 1 (Kremlin cathedrals); and *Izvestiya*, 7 February 1991, p. 3 (return of monasteries). Over 4000 new Orthodox churches were opened between 1985 and 1990: *Otechestvennyye arkhivy*, no. 1, 1995, p. 61.
- ²² *Pravda*, 16 March 1990, p. 6.
- ²³ *Izvestiya*, 7 January 1991, p. 1.
- ²⁴ The text is in *Vedomosti S'yezda narodnykh deputatov SSSR i Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR*, no. 11, 1990, item 164.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 41, 1990, item 813. A corresponding Russian law was adopted on 25 October 1990: *Vedomosti S'yezda narodnykh deputatov Rossiiskoi Federatsii i Verkhovnogo Soveta Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, no. 21, 1990, item 240.
- ²⁶ *Vedomosti* ... SSSR, no. 37, 1991, item 1083.
- ²⁷ *Vedomosti* ... RSFSR, no. 52, 1991, item 1865.
- ²⁸ *Izvestiya*, 10 July 1991, p. 1, and 11 June 1992, p. 3 (Yel'tsin).
- ²⁹ *New York Times*, 8 April 1991, p. A6.
- ³⁰ For a discussion of the establishment and objectives of these parties see V. N. Berezovsky *et al.* (eds.), *Rossiya: partii, assotsiatsii, soyuzy, kluby*, vol. 1, part 1 (RAU Press, Moscow, 1991), pp. 22–23. On the Russian Christian Democratic Movement in particular see Richard Sakwa, 'Christian democracy in Russia', *Religion, State and Society*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1992), pp. 135–68.
- ³¹ *Pravda*, 30 December 1989, p. 3.
- ³² *Uchitel'skaya gazeta*, 23 October 1990, p. 3.
- ³³ *Pravda*, 4 February 1991, p. 6.
- ³⁴ For a presentation of Orthodox teaching, see for instance Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, new edition (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1993).
- ³⁵ *Materialy XXVII s'yezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1986), p. 190, rule 2g.
- ³⁶ *Materialy XXVIII s'yezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1990), pp. 108–9, rule 2.
- ³⁷ According to M. V. Shkarovsky the CPSU was conducting a 'cadres policy' in the Orthodox Church from the 1950s: *Russkaya pravoslavnaya tserkov' i Sovetskoye gosudarstvo v 1943–1964 godakh* (Dean + Adia-M, St Petersburg, 1995), p. 11. Relations between the 'last Soviet patriarch' (Pimen, who died in 1990) and the party and state leadership are examined in the light of archival sources in *Otechestvennyye arkhivy*, no. 1, 1995, pp. 27–66.
- ³⁸ For perceptions of the 'privileged' position of the Orthodox Church see for instance *Sotsiologicheskkiye issledovaniya*, 1994, no. 5, p. 10 (17 per cent of Orthodox believers themselves agreed with this view).
- ³⁹ Centre for the Preservation of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), Moscow, *fond 89, perechen' 20*, document 66.
- ⁴⁰ See L. M. Vorontsova and S. B. Filatov, 'Religioznost' – demokratichnost' – avtoritarnost'', *Polis*, no. 3, 1993, p. 144 (from 5–15 per cent in 1988 to 40 per cent by 1992); Yu. Levada (ed.), *Sovetsky prostoy chelovek* (VTsIOM, Moscow, 1993), who suggests a figure of about 50 per cent (p. 43); and for the younger and better educated see *Sotsiologicheskkiye issledovaniya*, no. 5, 1994, p. 9.
- ⁴¹ *Sovetsky prostoy chelovek*, p. 217.
- ⁴² *Moskovskiy novosti*, 1993, no. 27, p. 9A.
- ⁴³ Richard Rose and Christian Haerpfher, *New Russia Barometer III: the Results* (Centre for

- the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, 1994), pp. 31–33.
- ⁴⁴ *Izvestiya*, 7 June 1994, p. 5. On charity work see Anne White, 'Charity, self-help and politics in Russia, 1985–91', *Europe–Asia Studies*, vol. 45, no. 5 (1993), pp. 787–810.
- ⁴⁵ *Izvestiya*, 4 April 1995, p. 5.
- ⁴⁶ S. B. Filatov and D. E. Furman, 'Religiya i politika v massovom soznanii', *Sotsiologicheskiye issledovaniya*, no. 7, 1992, pp. 3–12, at pp. 3–4.
- ⁴⁷ *Mir mnenii i mneniya o mire*, no. 1, 1992, p. 7; for the earlier findings see *Obshchestvennoye mneniye v tsifrah*, vyp. 5 (October 1989), p. 11.
- ⁴⁸ *Mir mnenii i mneniya o mire*, nos. 83 and 84, October 1993.
- ⁴⁹ *ibid.*, 1992, no. 1, p. 7.
- ⁵⁰ In 1995 Orthodox believers were estimated at 46 per cent and atheists at 32 per cent, but 'practising believers' were only 10–15 per cent (*Religiya, tserkov' v Rossii i za rubezhom. Informatsionny byulleten'*, no. 6 (Rossiiskaya akademiya gosudarstvennoi sluzhby pri Prezidente Rossiiskoi Federatsii, Moscow, 1995), pp. 35–36). In a 1991 survey 48 per cent identified themselves with a particular denomination, but fewer believed in life after death (32 per cent) or the existence of heaven (19 per cent). *Moskovskiy novosti*, 11 August 1991, cited in Matthew Wyman, *Public Opinion in Postcommunist Russia* (Macmillan, London, 1997), p. 81.
- ⁵¹ Filatov and Furman, 'Religiya i politika ...', pp. 4–5.
- ⁵² *Sovetsky prostoy chelovek*, p. 218 (children); *Svobodnaya mysl'*, 1996, no. 8, p. 116 (attendance).
- ⁵³ *Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny*, no. 8, 1993, p. 6.
- ⁵⁴ *Mir mnenii i mneniya o mire*, no. 12, 1992, p. 8. On sources of information see *Sotsiologicheskiye issledovaniya*, 1995, no. 11, p. 84.
- ⁵⁵ *Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny*, 1996, no. 6, p. 16; similarly Vorontsova and Filatov, 'Religioznost' ..., pp. 145–46.
- ⁵⁶ *Segodnya*, 7 May 1994, p. 11.
- ⁵⁷ *Svobodnaya mysl'*, 1996, no. 8, p. 116.
- ⁵⁸ *Izvestiya*, 19 October 1992, p. 3.
- ⁵⁹ Filatov and Furman, 'Religiya i politika ...', p. 5.
- ⁶⁰ *Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny*, 1996, no. 6, p. 15.
- ⁶¹ A fall in confidence in the church was recorded in 1995, from 57 per cent in 1992–94 to 33 per cent, with 42 per cent distrusting it (*Religiya, tserkov' ...*, p. 37); the long-term trends collected by the National Opinion Research Centre show that levels of trust peaked in 1994, but that they had begun to increase again in 1995 (*Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny*, no. 5, 1996, p. 6).
- ⁶² *Svobodnaya mysl'*, no. 8, 1996, p. 115; similarly *Nauka i religiya*, 1997, no. 1, p. 33.
- ⁶³ Our results are very close to those reported in *Svobodnaya mysl'*, no. 8, 1996: 74 per cent identified themselves as Orthodox, 49.6 per cent as believers, 18.4 per cent as agnostics, 5.6 per cent as believers in the supernatural, 7.8 per cent as indifferent, and 18.3 per cent as atheists (pp. 114–15).
- ⁶⁴ *Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny*, 1996, no. 5, pp. 84, 85.
- ⁶⁵ *Religiya, tserkov' ...*, pp. 37–38.
- ⁶⁶ See *The Pulse of Europe* (Los Angeles Times-Mirror, mimeo., Los Angeles, 1991).
- ⁶⁷ *Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny*, 1993, no. 8, p. 6.
- ⁶⁸ Filatov and Furman, 'Religiya i politika ...', pp. 6–7.
- ⁶⁹ Lyudmila Vorontsova and Sergei Filatov, 'The changing pattern of religious belief: *perestroika* and beyond', *Religion, State and Society*, vol. 22, no. 1 (1994), pp. 89–90 (78 per cent of believers had faith in the evil eye, and 68 per cent in telepathy; 37 per cent of the whole sample believed in the abominable snowman); and *Sotsiologicheskiye issledovaniya*, 1995, no. 11, p. 87 (for belief in Eastern religion, extrasensory perception, telepathy, astrology, and flying saucers).
- ⁷⁰ *Obshchestvennoye mneniye v tsifrah*, no. 10, 1990, pp. 6–7.
- ⁷¹ Gary Bouma, *Religion: Meaning, Transcendence and Community in Australia* (Longman

Cheshire, Melbourne, 1992), p. 89.

- ⁷² Hart M. Nelsen, 'Religious conformity in an age of disbelief: contextual effects of time, denomination and family processes upon church decline and apostasy', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 46, no. 5, October 1981, pp. 632–40.
- ⁷³ Reginald W. Bibby, 'Why conservative churches really are growing: Kelley revisited', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 17, no. 2, June 1978, pp. 133–34.
- ⁷⁴ David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularisation* (Harper and Row, New York, 1979).
- ⁷⁵ Stephen Harding, David Phillips and Michael Fogarty, *Contrasting Values in Western Europe* (Macmillan, London, 1986), pp. 29 ff.
- ⁷⁶ See Dean R. Hoge and David A. Roozen, 'Research on factors influencing church commitment', in Hoge and Roozen (eds.), *Understanding Church Growth and Decline* (Pilgrim, New York, 1979); and Kirk Hadaway and Wade Clark Roof, 'Apostasy in American churches: evidence from national survey data', in David G. Bromley (ed.), *Falling from the Faith: Causes and Consequences of Religious Apostasy* (Sage, Beverly Hills, 1988).
- ⁷⁷ See Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney, *American Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape and Future* (3rd ed.) (Rutgers University Press, Rutgers, NJ, 1989); and Martin, *A General Theory ...*
- ⁷⁸ Sharon Sandomirsky and John Wilson, 'Processes of disaffiliation: religious mobility among men and women', *Social Forces*, vol. 68, no. 4, June 1990, pp. 1211–29; Hadaway and Roof, 'Apostasy ...'.
- ⁷⁹ Anderson, *Religion ...*, p. 206. The Orthodox Church's position was strengthened in these respects by the new law on freedom of conscience and religious bodies that was adopted in September 1997: for the text see *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 1 October 1997, pp. 3–4.
- ⁸⁰ *The Guardian* (London), 14 June 1994, p. 17.
- ⁸¹ Anderson, *Religion ...*, p. 196.
- ⁸² Mark Rhodes, 'Religious believers in Russia', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 3 April 1992, pp. 60–64.
- ⁸³ Vorontsova and Filatov, 'Religioznost' ...', pp. 144–45.
- ⁸⁴ *Ekonomicheskiye i sotsial'nyye peremeny*, 1996, no. 6, p. 17.
- ⁸⁵ *Nauka i religiya*, 1997, no. 1, p. 34.
- ⁸⁶ *Svobodnaya mysl'*, 1996, no. 8, p. 118 (41.5 per cent of believers were opposed to confessional parties, with 48.8 per cent indifferent; 52.4 per cent of nonbelievers were opposed).
- ⁸⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 118–19 (56.5 per cent of believers were opposed to the involvement of priests in politics, as compared with 54.9 per cent of unbelievers).
- ⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 123.
- ⁸⁹ See for instance Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds.), *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in Global Perspective* (Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1996), esp. pp. 325–28.
- ⁹⁰ A new sociopolitical movement, 'Orthodox Russia' ('Rossiya Pravoslavnaya'), was established in February 1997, which appeared to have the potential to develop into a force of this kind. For its foundation see *Rus' pravoslavnaya*, no. 3 (35), 1997.