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olic minority had two apostolic administrators without formal dioceses, sixty-three parishes, and fifty-four (mostly foreign) priests.⁴² Did Orthodox charges of Catholic proselytism reflect genuine fears of a Catholic takeover, or were they merely a disguise for the Orthodox Church's own lack of self-confidence? Whatever the truth, they clearly reflected an excessively administrative conception of the church, measured in terms of membership, territory, power, and influence, rather than in the dignity and subjectivity of bodies and souls. It will open the door to grave injustices if the preferences of larger churches are allowed to determine the rights of smaller ones, if legal curbs and cultural pretexts are applied as a substitute for evolutionary solutions, and if arbitrary, inexact criteria are used to restrict fundamental human rights.

For now, we must continue living with the myths and counter-myths of a changing world, their durability well summed up by Poland's only Catholic daily, at a time when Russian Orthodox leaders in Russia were being criticized for their talk of "canonical rights":

We Catholics can state without shyness that contemporary Catholic churches have largely Polish roots, not just those east of the River Bug, but also those west of the Oder or across the Baltic, reaching to Sakhalin and the Japanese islands. . . . Catholicism spread to the Protestant lands of western Pomerania and Brandenburg, and to the Orthodox territory of Russia, where Polish Catholics gave the salt of pluralism to hitherto confessionally closed societies. The Polish metric is visible from St. Hedwig's cathedral in Berlin to Moscow's Immaculate Conception Church, from Vilnius Cathedral to the churches in Harbin, Vladivostok, and Irkutsk. . . . Everywhere in the east, and often in Germany and Scandinavia, Polish is used in the liturgy. It is possible to speak in Polish in curia, seminaries, and parish houses not only in Lviv, Grodno, and Minsk, but also in Riga, Karaganda, Novosibirsk, Prague, and Bratislava.⁴³

In both "Orthodox Russia" and "Catholic Poland," quantitative criteria have prevailed over qualitative ones, allowing religious believers to be treated as commodities subject to the property rights of predominant churches. Here, as elsewhere, the rights to belong or not belong are formally enshrined and recognized. If a theology of proselytism is needed, it is one that will ask the right questions — not which church people belong to, but what people actually claim to believe and why they have chosen to change or to maintain those beliefs. It must also be a theology that takes account of grace and the presence of God.

In reality, the fault for today's disputes lies both with those who see proselytism as a threat and with those who scorn their accusations, since both have mistakenly defined what is at stake. The real issue is the contemporary passion with new forms and manifestations of the sacred, which has left all

⁴²Jonathan Lixmoore, "In Russia, Signs of Orthodox-Catholic Dente," *National Catholic Register*, January 8, 1995. Also see figures cited by Jonathan Lixmoore in *The Tablet*, December

churches wondering how to preserve their own spiritual legacies — by incorporating or rejecting, applauding or condemning. These, rather than how to combat proselytism, are the questions all churches will be facing in the twenty-first century.

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FAITH AND (IN)TOLERANCE OF MINORITY RELIGIONS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ROMANIA, UKRAINE, AND POLAND

Julie Mertus and Kathryn Minyard Frost

Introduction

Places of worship have recently become revitalized in Central and Eastern Europe, bringing back worshippers committed to explore their faith. Where under communism one's relationship to religion was often private and even secretive, today the public identity of an increasing number of Eastern Europeans is closely tied to religion. In many areas, religion and national identity go hand-in-hand, and thus the project of reconstructing religious identity becomes synonymous with the revitalization of the nation.¹ Religion, like language, culture, and story-telling, may be an important component of the "imagined communities"² that are attempting to carve out a space for themselves as borders and powers shift in the new Eastern European geography. In this sense, religion becomes "publicized."

Both majority and minority nations find religion a useful tool in their quest to reshape their identities and gain power. These new "ethnarchies," to use the term coined by G. M. Tamas, demand that states "be reshaped at will, . . . regardless of ancient ties between different linguistic, religious, or other groups through centuries. Only natural identity counts, an identity based on a 'nature' that cannot be approached rationally."³ A person's religion is a matter of "natural identity." That is, Romanians are said to be "naturally" Orthodox; Ukrainians, also "naturally" Orthodox but of a Ukrainian Orthodox variety; and Poles, "naturally" Roman Catholic. In other words, authentic Romanians and Ukrainians are Orthodox, and an authentic Pole is Catholic. Those who step outside their natural designations — for example, those who chose a new religion or minority religion — are deemed traitors to their group. Those who have long been outside the majority "natural" designation are

¹See John Anderson, "Towards a Theory of Nationalism," in Sukumar Pertiwal, ed., *Notions of Nationalism* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 1995), pp. 36-37. ²Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nation-*

is most often linked to faith itself, to individual belief, and to the sometimes communal and shared expression of that faith at the core of which is a transcendent power.⁸ The public appropriation of religion by competing nations dilutes the message of faith and places at its core a corporate entity that is more concerned with power consolidation than with any religious doctrine. As such, publicization of religion in Central and Eastern Europe can be conceptualized as a form of civil religion, the purpose of which is "to sanctify modern pluralistic states — which are characterized by increased differentiation and the separation of religious institutions from significant economic, political, and cultural ones — by supplying some common goals and visions to their citizens."⁹

Like traditional religion, civil religion "offers a meaning system comprising symbols, beliefs, myths, values, practices, and rituals; and it evokes the involvement of its adherents by imposing obligations."¹⁰ The civil religion of nationalists found in Central and Eastern Europe "largely extended and modernized (although did not replace) 'religious imaginings,' taking on religion's concerns with death, continuity, and the desire for origins."¹¹ Most important, national myths have come to supplant¹² and/or become suffused with religious myths.¹³ Unlike other types of civil religion witnessed elsewhere, the civil religion of Central and Eastern European states and nations does not seek to accommodate the beliefs and behavioral patterns of nonreligious populations or of less dominant religious patterns but, rather, seeks to support a single set of values and symbols that represent their own goals and interests.¹⁴ Thus, states and nations often find themselves in conflict with those who exercise their new consumer ability to choose an alternative expression of

⁸It should be noted that transcendent power is conceptualized differently according to cultures or, perhaps more accurately, to different modes of thought. See Wolfgang Ickentischer, *Modes of Thought: A Study of the Anthropology of Law and Religion* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995), p. 51.

⁹Rina Neeman and Nissan Rubin, "Ethnic Civil Religion: A Case Study of Immigrants from Rumania in Israel," *Sociology of Religion* 57 (Summer, 1996): 195. See also Michael W. Hughes, *Civil Religion and Moral Order: Theoretical and Historical Dimensions* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983); Robert N. Bellah and Phillip E. Hammond, *Varieties of Civil Religion* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1980); Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," *Daedalus* 96 (Winter, 1967): 1-21. For critiques of the concept of civil religion, cf. Christopher G. A. Bryant, "Civic Nation," *Civil Society*, John A. Hall, ed., and Ronald F. Thiemann, *Religion in Partnership* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 136-157; and John A. Hall, ed., *Civil Society, Theory, History, and Public Life: A Dilemma for Democracy* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1996).

¹⁰Neeman and Rubin, "Ethnic Civil Religion," p. 195.

¹¹Timothy Brennan, "The National Longing for Form," in Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 50 (commenting on nationalism generally and on Benedict Anderson).

¹²See Yael Tamir, "Reconstructing the Landscape of Imagination," in Simon Caney, David George, and Peter Jones, eds., *National Rights, International Obligations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 85-101.

¹³See Michael Anthony Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996).

¹⁴For an analysis of civil religion and the treatment of "others" in Serbia and Croatia, see Syphean Gabriel Mestrovic, *The Road from Paradise: Prospects for Democracy in Eastern Europe* (Human Societies, p. 226).

simply the "other," who may be tolerated but who need not be supported. Religion as imagined and manipulated by leaders and followers becomes a thread strung between those competing nations that remain ever willing to grab it in times of insecurity. The thread wears thin as tension mounts and as political leaders increasingly claim religion as an agent serving their vision of the public sphere.

The publicization of religion has been accompanied by a competing demand for renewed privatization. For many individuals in Central and Eastern Europe, the open expression of religion has become more of a personal matter, anchored in individual consciousness and a growing demand for individual choice. The buzz word of the day being trumpeted by international leaders and Western leaders is "privatization," and it is to be expected that modern societies will be marked by secularization and the "privatization" of religious matters.⁴ According to this reformulation, Robert Hadden reminds us that "religion may become capable of maintaining its traditional function as a mechanism of social control at least in some parts of human societies . . . [but] certainly religion is not to be taken seriously as a [cosmic] earth-moving force."⁵ This thinking opens a small, contested space for minority religions.

It is the youth of Central and Eastern Europe who have most quickly adopted a consumer orientation, as new ideas, products, and peoples have flooded their once limited marketplaces. The youth experiment in constructing their identities is based on the widening choices before them. "The consumer orientation . . . is not limited to economic products but characterizes the relation of the individual to the entire culture."⁶ The consumer's preferences toward religions "still remain a function of the consumer's social biography,"⁷ but within these limitations consumers have great latitude within which they may choose to experiment with their families' faith and with the choices offered by others. Within this context one can understand why the clash between majority faiths and those brought by outsiders may as likely appear to be a struggle between older traditionalists and youthful nonconformists or a fight between the older members of a traditional religion and its more vocal youthful members who wish to redefine the contours of their faith and the actions it takes in society.

This privatization of religion, appropriated especially by youthful consumers, is experienced by many as an entirely different phenomenon, one related to faith and the other to politics. It is the private choice of religion that

⁴Cf. Göran Therborn, "Routes to/through Modernity," in Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson, eds., *Global Modernities*, Theory, Culture, & Society (London: Thousand Oaks, CA, and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1995), p. 134.

⁵See David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press; Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 36; and Jeffrey K. Hadden, "Challenging Secularization Theory," in Anthony Giddens, ed., *Human Societies: An Introductory Reader in Sociology* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 1992), p. 236 (critiquing this thesis).

⁶Thomas Luckmann, "Religion and Personal Identity in Modern Society," in Giddens,