

Authoritarian Institutional Infiltration: Causes and Consequences

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Abstract Covert forms of authoritarian repression, such as Infiltration of religious organizations with secret collaborators of the authoritarian regime, remain an understudied strategy of authoritarian survival, in contrast to overt forms of repression. This paper uses the historic case of Poland to study the drivers and consequences of such infiltration. To do so, we analyze seven surveys from late communist Poland, which highlight the uneven effects of Catholic Church attendance on anti-communist attitudes. We theorize that subnational variation in anti-regime attitudes is driven by the uneven degree of infiltration with so-called Patriot Priests, which, in turn, can be attributed to patterns of migration following WWII. We test the theory of causes of infiltration against competing explanations, including modernization, selection mechanisms and endurance of imperial legacies. Next, show that the communists' strategy of church infiltration was more effective in areas with the greatest population resettlements and that the effect of this infiltration is consistent with patterns of covert, as opposed to overt repression.

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1. Introduction

Overt forms of authoritarian repression have received considerable attention from scholars studying authoritarian survival (Svolik 2013, Geddes et.al 2014). Although direct violence meted out by uniformed authoritarian forces silences opposition, it does not eradicate it. Opposition to the regime, though stifled may easily resurface once the repressive constraints weaken or subside, as has been documented by recent work (Bautista et. al. 2019, Peisakhin 2014, Lupu and Peisakhin 2015, Rozenas et. al. 2015). More subtle ways of facilitating authoritarian survival include cooptation (Gandhi 2008, Magaloni 2006)---which refers to including members of the opposition in authoritarian institutions---or the distribution of selective benefits (Blaydes 2012), which refers to buying off elites who could pose a threat to the authoritarian regime (Gandhi and Reuter 2013, Howard and Roessler 2006, Levitsky and Way 2010).

Yet aside from open violence directed towards the opposition and pulling into authoritarian institutions members of that opposition as participants, autocrats can also use infiltration of opposition organizations themselves. In this paper we understand infiltration as penetrating non-state institutions such as religious organizations, trade unions (Collier 1999) and opposition movements with participants who sympathize with the authoritarian regime's mission and represent these interests. The ideological leanings of these infiltrators are typically unknown to the non-state organization itself and thus infiltrators can influence the hearts and minds of organization members without these members knowing they are being influenced. If the identities of such infiltrators remain covert, their influence may persist and even be transmitted across generations (Charnysh and Finkel 2016, Darden and Grzymala-Busse 2006, Peisakhin 2014, Lupu and Peisakhin 2015).

Specifically, infiltration has two goals. First, the regime can use infiltrators to collect information about opposition activity. Infiltrating a trade union can be useful because pro-regime union members can alert the authoritarian regime about upcoming strike activity that could evolve into a more general anti-regime protest. Infiltration of church organizations can give the agents of the authoritarian regime access to private details of citizens' lives, which can then be used against them. Thus, collecting information is one goal of infiltration. The second is effecting change within the organization itself. This happens through agents of the regime who go beyond collecting information and actually take action that decreases the threat posed by the organization. This can happen through persuasion of members or through fomenting discord within the organization itself.

Such covert forms of authoritarian repression have received less attention from scholars, until recently. Greitens (2016) explains the causes for engaging in covert rather than overt forms of repression. Investing in a secret police apparatus that is tasked with infiltration of authoritarian civil society, provides the regime with more robust sources of information and requires less violence than ruling with the help of uniformed enforcement agencies. It is associated, however with a risk: a centralized agency concentrating information may eventually present a challenge to the autocrat itself. Thus, if coup proofing as opposed to preventing unrest from below is the central concern of the autocrat, she will invest in multiple overlapping agencies resorting to overt forms of repression rather than a unified secret police.

Though extremely insightful at a macro level—predicting which autocrats will develop a secret police---Greitens (2016) has less to say about how the secret police will organize its infiltration efforts on the ground or which geographic areas and which organizations will be targeted and whether infiltration will concentrate on informers or on agents attempting to change

an organization from within. Nor does she provide answers about the effectiveness of these strategies.

This paper takes advantage of a unique data opportunity and a suitable context---communist Poland---to test a theory about both the drivers of authoritarian infiltration and the consequences of infiltration. We find that communists in Poland found it easier to infiltrate parishes in areas that had undergone massive population shifts and consequently had weakened institutions. Fragile institutions better explain attempted infiltration than imperial legacies or socioeconomic development. On the consequences side, the lasting effects of infiltration are more visible in attitudes to the authoritarian regime than in trust towards infiltrated organizations or participation in infiltrated organizations. This suggests that, for the most part, infiltration remained undetected even after the regimes efforts, as we described below, came to an end.

In the next section we present a theory and hypotheses about the causes and consequences of infiltration. Section three introduces our empirical context---Communist Poland's attempt to infiltrate the Catholic Church in the 1950s and its lasting effects. The fourth section presents our data and methods in more detail. The data includes 7 surveys conducted in the final years of the Communist regime in Poland allowing us to relate church attendance to anti-communist attitudes across Poland as well as an original dataset detailing the number of "red priests" and bishops working in Catholic parishes across Poland in the 1950. The final section discusses our results and draws implications from our findings for authoritarian survival.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this section we first focus on the drivers of infiltration and next on the consequences of this strategy. Recall that infiltration refers to placing agents of the authoritarian regime within non-state organizations that have the potential of becoming hostile to that regime.

Although strategies of repression and patronage politics have received a lot of attention in the scholarly literature (Tyson 2018, Tyson and Smith 2018, Dragu 2017, Dragu and Lupu 2018), the differential ability of authoritarian regimes to infiltrate pre-authoritarian institutions has received less scrutiny (Kaminski and Nalepa 2014, Nalepa 2010).

Intuitively, we would expect autocrats to target organizations that while maintaining moral authority (Grzymala-Busse 2017) with the public are relatively easy to penetrate. Their moral authority ensures that once captured from within these institutions can be used to influence the hearts and minds of citizens of the authoritarian state. Also, were these organizations not popular, an easier way of dealing with them than infiltration would be simply to eradicate them. Of course, in the case of organizations carrying such moral authority, eradication is often not an option. Underground conspiracies may be hard to penetrate because they are difficult to reach, and their lack of centralization may insulate their leadership from infiltration. Churches, on the other hand, may be easy to infiltrate especially following population shifts, when followers no longer know one another. Moreover, their vulnerability is exacerbated when leadership of the organization is weak or has recently been replaced. Hierarchical church organizations in places that have sustained population turmoil may hence be particularly vulnerable to infiltration. The first hypothesis we will test is:

H1 Institutional vulnerability increases the likelihood of successful authoritarian institutional infiltration.

The ease with which autocrats can infiltrate organizations may also be influenced by historical legacies. Whether or not an institution becomes vulnerable or not may have roots in long term trajectories set in place by previous regimes or extinct empires. Developmental economists (Acemoglu, Robinson, Johnson 2001) and historical institutionalists (Mahoney 2010) alike provide ample evidence of societies locked in suboptimal institutional equilibria in which

historically rooted institutions produce weak governance and a lack of political accountability. Consequently, historical legacies may shape the vulnerability of institutions to authoritarian infiltration efforts. Darden and Grzymala-Busse (2006) demonstrated that countries with universal schooling preceding the onset of communist rule were more resilient to communist indoctrination than countries that did not experience universal schooling until the onset of communism. Relatedly, socioeconomic development also can affect the penetrability of organizations. Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2017) document that countries with greater pre-communist development were more resilient to communist indoctrination than their less developed counterparts. Consequently, we propose that:

H2: Historical legacies shape the likelihood of successful authoritarian institutional infiltration.

H3: Greater socio-economic development reduces the likelihood of successful authoritarian institutional infiltration.

Next, we turn to theories explaining the effects of infiltration. These effects will vary with the effectiveness with which the infiltration efforts were kept secret. If an organization's participants learn the organization has been infiltrated, particularly if this organization had high moral authority, they may become less eager to participate in it. Thus, when it becomes known that a trade union has been infiltrated with informers and collaborators of the secret police, workers may attend trade union meetings less. When parishioners learn that the priests at their church or the members of the church hierarchy are in fact working for the authoritarian regime, it is likely their participation in church activities will decrease. Hence our first hypothesis about the effects of infiltration can be formulated as:

H4 Authoritarian institutional infiltration reduces popular involvement with the affected organization.

Similarly, upon learning that an organization of high moral authority was infiltrated with informers, its members may continue to participate in it ---because they have no other choice--- but they may stop trusting it as they used to. For instance, in the case of churches, failure to attend service may be considered a sin in light of scriptures. To avoid sinful behavior, parishioners' participation in religious services continues, but they exhibit less trust in the institution of the church as a whole. Based on this rationale our next hypothesis is:

H5 Authoritarian institutional infiltration reduces popular trust in the affected institution

If the infiltration of the organization does not get exposed and the agents of the authoritarian regime remain secret from other members of the organization, the infiltrators are in a better position to affect change within the organization and, for instance, to align its participants' preferences with the authoritarian regime. In this context the moral authority of the organization is not affected, because nobody knows it is infiltrated, yet its participants willingness to criticize the regime or oppose it decreases. Moreover, such effects are likely to outlive the period of infiltration itself. Thus, even when informers are no longer using their status to provide the secret police with information, or to engage in active manipulation efforts, the organizational dynamics produced during the infiltration period could have longer-term consequences. This is linked to our final hypothesis:

H6: Authoritarian institutional infiltration reduces the ability of the affected institution to foster anti-authoritarian resistance.

In the next section we discuss how these hypotheses can be translated to the specific context of communist Poland.

3. The Empirical Setting: The Catholic Church in Communist Poland

Of the several actors who compete with autocrats for citizens' hearts and minds religious organizations represent "the most diverse and robust form of associational life outside of the state" (Koessel 2014, p. 3). Religious organizations, alongside opposition parties in competitive authoritarian regimes and labor unions can undermine authoritarian efforts to dominate public discourse. Communist regimes are illustrative of the conflict between the authoritarian state and religious communities (Ramet 1987, Burgess 1997, Wiegel 2003, Wittenberg 2006).¹

There are, however, dramatic differences in the extent to which communist incumbents maintain their control over public opinion against challenges from organized religion. Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2017) show that communist exposure affects political attitudes of Catholics considerably less than their Eastern Orthodox counterparts. Wittenberg (2006) discovers weaker communist legacies in the voting behavior among Catholics than Protestants in Hungary. He attributes the difference to the intermediary role of local religious organizations. These findings echo the broader consensus about the greater anti-communist resilience of the Catholic Church compared to other religions (especially Eastern Orthodoxy) in Eastern Europe (Janos 2000). They also raise a new set of questions about the nature of this heterogeneity. Using the contrast between Poland and Romania, Ediger (2005) traces these differences to the patterns of interaction between the church and state in the pre-communist period. Grzymala-Busse (2015) highlights the importance of the fusion between Catholicism and Polish national identity in explaining the Catholic Church's powerful influence on Polish politics.

The case of the Catholic Church in Poland offers additional advantages for studying strategies of infiltration. There is strong scholarly consensus that Catholicism contributed to the downfall of

¹ As are Middle Eastern secular autocracies (Wickham 2005, Masoud 2014) and other regions, such as Latin America (Trejo 2012) or the Philippines (Youngblood 1990, Grzymala-Busse and Slater 2018). However, because these other autocrats had to weigh infiltration against the demands of coup-proofing, as outlined by Chesnut Greitens. Since the authoritarian status Eastern European communist states was "guaranteed" by the Soviet Union, coup proofing was less of a concern for them and thus the choice between infiltration and overt forms of repression sounder.

communism in Poland (Grzymała-Busse 2015) and led to the third wave of democratization more broadly (Huntington 1993). Hence the Catholic Church in Poland can definitely be regarded as a non-state organization of high moral authority with a significant potential to threaten the communist state in the competition for the hearts and minds of its citizens. Moreover, in 1945 Poland's population became homogeneously Polish and Catholic, rendering the eradication of this institution impossible.² The universal fusion between Polish nationalism and Catholic religion (Grzymała-Busse 2015) raised the costs of outright repression of the Catholic Church by the communist regime. Consequently, the Polish Communists launched a far-reaching infiltration campaign of the Catholic Church. The regime's long-term plan for dealing with the Catholic Church outlined infiltrating it with about 1,000 communist sympathizers among the clergy, roughly 10% of all priests residing in Poland (Zurek 2003).³

The 1946-1956 period represents the most sustained efforts to take control of the Catholic Church organization. The communist government's strategy for controlling the Church was a two-pronged approach focusing on the rank-and-file priests graduating from theological seminaries, on the one hand, and on the elite level of the Catholic hierarchy, on the other. On September 1, 1949, the communists created a special "Section for Priests within the Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy" (*Sekcja Księża przy ZBoWiD*). Informally, the section was referred to as the "Patriot" or "Progressive" Priests (*Księża Patriotów*). Its leaders were tasked with the mission of building the network of regional *Priest Councils*, associated with regional ZBoWiD cells. Once all regional ZBoWiD cells had their own Regional Councils of Priests, shortly after 1950, the executive framework of the Patriot Priest organization began to take shape.

² This fact facilitates our sub-national analysis by eliminating the large pre-communist differences in ethnic and religious compositions of inter-war Poland.

The Patriot Priests' Mission Statement asserted that "in terms of beliefs, they are in complete agreement with the Episcopate, but in terms of political and social outlooks, they represent the Polish people." This was an effort to stoke conflict between the left-leaning part of the clergy and the conservative Episcopate. The declaration also highlighted the necessity of reconciliation between the Church and the Polish state. The *Patriot Priests* used the organization's bi-weekly periodicals— "The Priest Smithy" (*Kuznica Kaplanska*), "The Citizen Priest" (*Ksiadz Obywatel*), and "The Priest's Voice" (*Glos Kaplana*) to spread their message.⁴ Their contents ranged from advising clergy on how to deal with the "tyrant" power of the Vatican and the Episcopate to guidelines on using religion to serve communist propaganda in their sermons:

Today's churches attract members of the working class in large numbers. (...) Illustrative examples should be sampled from contemporary life in a way that is clear and transparent for factory and steel mill workers. Alongside citations from the bible, they must include references to current history (...) Such matters as the 6-year plan, the battle for peace and for collectivization, physical labor, respect for collective property and respect for the Party all of which can be addressed in reference to current events such as competition in the workplace and the fight with the "Colorado bug." (*Kuźnica Kapłańska* 1953).

The influence of sermons given from the pulpit on political participation have been documented recently in the Kenyan context (McClendon and Riedl 2016) and we would expect such messages to be even more powerful in a context, such as communist Poland, where other non-state organizations were virtually absent.

The second part of the regime's strategy to control the Church was targeted at its leadership structures. The Recovered Territories had no bishops, because following the redrawing of Polish borders, the German bishops placed there by the Vatican had been forcefully expelled along with the rest of the German population. Since the Vatican refused to appoint

⁴ In terms of circulation, we know that for instance, 8 thousand copies of "The Priest's Voice" were distributed nationwide (Zurek, 2009, Zaryn 1997).

Polish bishops to the Recovered Territories, the communists appointed cherry-picked clerics as apostolic administrators in those areas (Potkaj 2002) and demanded that the Vatican recognize them as bishops (OSI, 1950).

While the Polish Episcopate treaded lightly in their reactions to the activities of the Patriot Priests, concerned about further possible repercussions from the communist authorities, the Vatican was much more decisive. According to an RFE document from November 1951, the Pope excommunicated two *Patriot Priest* leaders: Jan Czuj and Edmund Konarski (OSI 1951). The excommunications then extended to contributors of the *Patriot Priests'* periodicals causing their authors to write anonymously. The sanctions followed all the same: The Pope simply collectively excommunicated the entire editorial board. In response, the *Patriot Priests* created a new periodical, with a different title. Excommunications followed again. By the third periodical, the Vatican did not react, preferring to avoid the hassle and embarrassment of yet another excommunication being utterly inconsequential.

Patriots received “assignments” from three sources: The State Agency for Religious Beliefs and the Central Committee of the PZPR and the Ministry of Public Security (MBP), which was both the inspiration and the organizer of the *Councils of Priests* (Zurek 2009). MBP’s overarching plan was to recruit collaborators among the lower-ranking clergy, targeting those disgruntled by the upper echelons of the centralized church hierarchy. The MBP coordinated parish visits to pre-screen priests that were desirable recruitment targets, seeking out those known to be in open conflict with their bishops, or former concentration camp prisoners and priests who had survived Gestapo arrests. The regime’s secret police believed that such extreme

experiences with the Nazi occupation would predispose them to view the communist “liberators” with sympathy and gratitude (Żaryn, 1997).⁵

It is also important to explain what happened to the Patriot Priests after the initial infiltration period. In 1959, during the so-called “thaw”, the Episcopate took advantage of the lifting of restrictions on staffing decisions and tried to deal with the Patriot Priests. According to Dudek and Gryz, “since the Patriots lacked protection from the communist authorities, they often succumbed to their bishops’ authority” (Dudek and Gryz 2006, 180). Although one way of dealing with Patriots’ staffing centrally located parishes was to reassign them to nearby, smaller parishes, Dudek and Gryz point out that a “subset of the Patriots refused to follow their reassignment even after Archbishop Wyszyński threatened them with excommunication” (180). Nevertheless, even by 1961, two years into the thaw the Department for Religious Beliefs estimated that priests sympathetic to the communist cause made up about 8% of the clergy in Poland (AAN 1956), which is close to the 10% share of Patriot Priests at the height of the campaign. However, we do not have evidence about how these figures changed between 1961 and 1980, and therefore we do not know to what extent the infiltration persisted into the 1980s, when our surveys were conducted.

Thanks to a collection of Special Reports produced by Radio Free Europe between 1949 and 1956 which has allowed historians to document, at the aggregate level, the activities of the Patriot Priests (Zurek 2003, 2009) we were able to document that the success of this infiltration strategy varied across different parts of Poland. While the communist authorities tried very hard to change the Catholic Church organization from within, turning it into an ally in establishing

⁵ Using their historical accounts, we were able to create a map of the density of *Patriot Priest Share* in each of the 49 wojewodztwa (administrative units in Poland). This map, presented in section 4 indicates that the parishes in the areas receiving more migrants in the aftermath of WW 2 were more heavily infiltrated than the rest of Poland.

their dominance over the country. They ultimately failed at the national level (Grzymala-Busse 2015), but along the way they achieved greater success in some areas than in others both at the elite level of the church leadership and at the level of rank-and-file priests. Based on the theory expressed in section 2 as hypothesis 1, we expect that infiltration of the Catholic Church was more effective where parishes were institutionally weaker.

Poland's recent as well as more removed tumultuous history offers two sources of intra-state variation when it comes to the Catholic Church's resilience to infiltration.

The first source of this organizational vulnerability is associated with Poland's losing at the end of WWII a large part of its interwar Eastern territories to the Soviet Union, while gaining large swaths of former Prussia, euphemistically termed "Recovered Territories" despite the fact that they had never belonged to Poland. This territorial westward shift was accompanied by massive population movements between 1945 and 1949. Three and a half million Germans, who made up over 90% of the population in the newly acquired territories, were expelled and replaced by mostly Polish and to a lesser extent Ukrainian/Lemka migrants (many of them from the Eastern territories lost to the Soviet Union).

Following the annexation of the Recovered Territories in 1945, the communist regime carried out a vast resettlement project. Germans residing in these areas were given 48 hours to leave (Curp 2006). Following their departure, the territories were populated by Polish refugees from the Eastern parts of interwar Poland (lost to the Soviet Union), as well as by internal migrants displaced as a result of WWII destruction. Unsurprisingly, the extent of migration was uneven across different parts of post-WWII Poland, ranging from less than 10% in most of the East to over 90% in many areas of the Recovered Territories in Western and Northern Poland.⁶ Krystyna Kersten's analysis of the communist takeover of Poland captures the far-reaching consequences

⁶ Migration patterns are illustrated in Map A1 of Appendix B.

of this resettlement project: “Traditional structures and patterns of life were destroyed or badly eroded, social ties within the family, among neighbors, and in localities were weakened. The uprooting of millions of people from their environments and the necessity of adjusting to a new situation had an immeasurable effect on attitudes and behavior. This was an important cause in weakening resistance to the communist authorities” (1991, 165).

As a result of these large variations in migration patterns, Catholic parishes varied greatly in how well-rooted their communities were.⁷ For some Poles this rootedness may have been liberating, because it freed them of the traditional social constraints of their communities, or what Gellner (1994) calls “the tyranny of cousins.” However, this does not change our expectation that migration would reduce the resilience of parishes to become infiltrated with Red Priests.

In communities disrupted by the inflow of migrants, churches would have functioned differently than in areas with greater settlement continuity. Participants in religious practices would be less familiar with each other, making anti-regime political discussions with fellow churchgoers riskier than in more established communities with stronger social bonds. The priests themselves did not have long-established ties to the parishioners either. Preaching to them a message of anti-communist resistance was risky because detecting secret police collaborators in newly established churches was harder than in older more stable parishes. The anticipation of being spied upon alone may have led priests to self-censor their sermons. .

The second source of organizational vulnerability to infiltration---corresponding to hypothesis 2 in our theoretical section above is associated with “deep” pre-authoritarian historical legacies.⁸ In 1795, Poland was “Partinoned” (*Zaborzy*) by the Prussian, Habsburg, and

⁷ Social anthropologists (Cernea 1997), refer to this phenomennon of rootedness as “social disarticulation.”

⁸ A sizeable literature (Rykiel 2011, Bartkowski 2003, Zarycki 1999, 2000, 2007, Janicki and Wladyka 2005, Sleszynski 2007, Davies 2005, Wolff 2010, Jasiewicz 2009) has documented the continued political relevance of

Russian empires for a period extending over 123 years. The borders of the three empires shifted over time and in some instances, gave rise to briefly independent “republics.” The imperial legacies were .⁹ Each of the three empires had a different approaches for dealing with their Polish subjects. Catholic Habsburgs permitted extensive religious freedoms and tolerated greater cultural autonomy. The Russians restricted the use of Polish language (particularly in religious practice), and used a combination of carrots and sticks to “russify” Poles. The Prussians did not try to convert Poles into Germans, but persecuted the use of Polish language. Furthermore, the greater industrialization in the Prussian partition, combined with the impoverishment of the landowning Polish aristocracy and the resulting urbanization of Polish elites (Kieniewicz 1998) likely weakened the societal penetration of Catholic Church ideas.

Due to massive upheavals and differing social and political roles of the Catholic Church resulting from different historical trajectories, parishes in different former empires may have inherited different vulnerabilities to infiltration, in line with hypothesis 2.

A third reason affecting institutional vulnerability is related to modernization. Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya (2015) have made a related argument that industrialization differences may account for the different political dynamics often attributed to imperial legacies. In our case, the vulnerability of churches to succumb to infiltration could be higher in less traditional (i.e. more industrialized) areas, and unless we specifically account for such differences we may erroneously attribute the effects to other variables that are correlated with development. According to our third hypothesis (modernization), areas with more intensive industrialization would be more likely to suffer from infiltration.

such imperial legacies in the post-communist period, with respect to electoral behavior and attitudes towards EU integration.

⁹ Map A3 in Appendix B illustrates the borders of the imperial partitions overlaid on a contemporary map of Poland.

Poland also offers significant advantages for dealing addressing questions about the consequences of infiltration. Thanks to seven surveys carried out in 1985-1989 by the Center for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) we are able to overcome one of the greatest challenges for studying authoritarian politics: finding out what are the attitudes of citizens to the regime, how much they trust non-state organizations and how they participate in them. CBOS was created following the rise and fall of the dissident trade union Solidarity after the authorities realized that relying on reports from the secret police alone left them unprepared for outbreaks of popular dissidence. This motivation for the surveys, combined with Poland's greater tolerance for dissenting views and its long tradition of sociological surveys, makes these data less vulnerable to the biases and distortions that can plague surveys conducted in authoritarian settings.¹⁰ Moreover, since our analysis focuses on sub-national variations in the effects of church attendance, even if some preference falsification exists, it would only bias our findings if it affected churchgoers and non-churchgoers differentially in different regions, which is not the case.

Hypothesis 4 applied to the Polish case would lead us to expect lower participation in church services in parishes that were more heavily infiltrated by red priests, particularly if the identity of these red priests were to be revealed later. Hypothesis 5 would lead us to expect that trust in the Church organization as a whole would be lower in areas more heavily infiltrated by the red priests, again, especially once the identity of the priests was revealed. These effect ought to manifest themselves more heavily at the level of elite infiltration also. Hence we would expect trust to decrease especially in areas where it was revealed that a bishop had been collaborating with the Communist authorities. At the same time, if the identity of the infiltrators remained

¹⁰ For an elaborate discussion of how to deal with potential bias in surveys see Kaminski 1999, Sulek 1994, Jamal, Robbins and Tessler 2012, Tessler and Jamal 2008, Tessler 2002, Bellin 2012.

secret, there is no reason to expect either levels of trust to the church or participation in church services to change.

Finally, hypothesis 5 would lead us to expect that greater attitudinal shifts in favor of the Communists in more infiltrated areas. If the secret collaborators were fulfilling the mission of the red priests---be it through sermons or through direct interactions with parishioners---if their persuasion was effective, these parishioners would have more pro-regime attitudes in areas more heavily infiltrated with red priests. Moreover, even if during the thaw following 1956, it was revealed that the ostensive goal of the “patriots” was to infiltrate Polish society, we would not expect the attitudes to revert to the pre-red priests patterns as easily, but would rather expect the attitudes to remain the same.

Alternative explanations

In addition to the main mechanisms through which infiltration operates outlined above, we test several alternative explanations. The first focuses on potential selection mechanisms that determine who participated in the post-WWII migration. Persons choosing to leave their birthplaces in search of a better life in Poland’s “Wild West” may have exhibited more individualistic personalities. Conceivably, psychological traits of migrants rather than the infiltration could be driving their low church attendance on low trust in traditional organizations such as the Catholic church in the high-migration areas. Since these psychological traits would also manifest themselves in educational attainment and urban rather than rural settlement, we control for these demographic characteristics in our regressions predicting infiltration effects.

Moreover, just as we trace the impact of infiltration on church trust, attendance differential attitudes to the regime, we also ought to rule out whether this is itself endogenous to the differential nature of imperial occupation in different regions of Poland and the length of this occupation. Notably, borders resulting from the 18th century partition were far from stable. These

differences are illustrated in Map A2 in Appendix B, which shows the *years of independence* between 1797 and 1939 experienced by different parts of post-WWII Poland. This variable captures the stark difference between the Recovered Territories, which were not part of Poland pre-1939, and the area surrounding Krakow, which experienced almost six decades of independence.

The difference in years of independence could explain sub-national variations in the institutional resilience as well as anti-authoritarian attitudes by affecting the extent to which Catholicism and national identity were *fused* in the different parts of Poland (Grzymała-Busse's 2015). According to Grzymała-Busse's argument, the historical fusion between religious and ethnic identity allows churches to gain moral authority. Extending this theory to the subnational level, we would expect the anti-communism and resilience to infiltration to be stronger in areas with longer independent statehood.

4. Data and methods

To test the theoretical predictions developed in Sections 2 and 3, we use a combination of individual-level survey data and aggregate-level historical data from Poland's subnational administrative districts (*województwo*).

For our key variables of interest – the extent of communist infiltration of the Catholic Church – we used a combination of historical sources. For the infiltration at the rank-and-file level, we used a collection of Special Reports produced by Radio Free Europe between 1949 and 1956, which allowed historians to document, at the aggregate level, the activities of the Patriot Priests (Zurek 2003, 2009). Using these historical accounts, we were able to calculate the density of *Patriot Priest Share* in each of the 49 Polish *województwa*. When mapping this infiltration patterns in Figure 1 below, we find significant subnational variation that suggests that the

parishes in the Recovered Territories were indeed more heavily infiltrated than the rest of Poland.

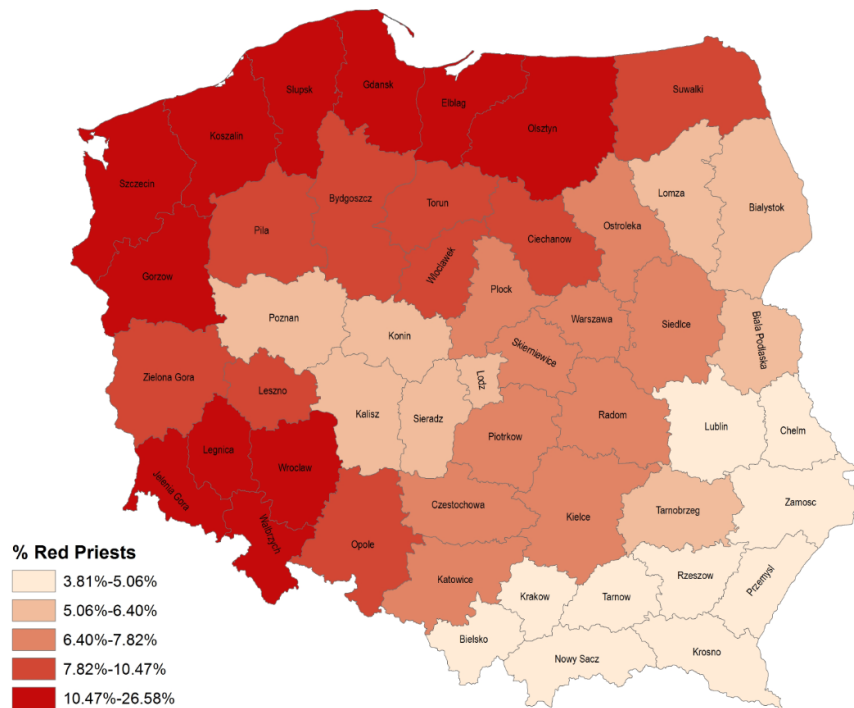


Figure 1: Map of Patriot Priests in post-WWII Poland by województwa according to materials collected by Zurek (2003). Note, the map uses administrative divisions from 1975.

To capture elite infiltration, we constructed an original database of Polish bishops and apostolic administrators from 1946-1990. We code a województwo as having had a “Patriot Bishop” if during the peak period of Patriot Priest activity it belonged to a diocese that was either run by a Patriot Priest ally or if the bishop in the diocese was prevented by the regime from fulfilling his duties and the vicar general (*wikariusz kapitularny*) was a Patriot Priest. We corroborated our classification of Patriot Bishops with the work of Richard Staar (1956).

Turning to our main independent variables, the most difficult challenge was measuring institutional vulnerability. Based on the theoretical and historical discussion in the preceding sections, we created three different proxies for institutional strength/weakness. The first proxy, which captures institutional weakness at the elite level, is a dichotomous indicator of whether or

not a województwo belonged to a parish, which in the immediate post-WWII period did not have a titular bishop due to the communist regime's expulsion of the previous German bishops, and the refusal of the Vatican to appoint new Polish replacements. These unfilled appointments at the top of the church hierarchy arguably facilitated communist infiltration efforts both by leaving a power vacuum that could be filled by patriot priests and by undermining the legitimacy of the Catholic Church. The second proxy is also rooted in the geopolitically motivated upheaval following the postwar border changes but focuses on the effects of large-scale migration: in particular, we argue that migrant shares (also measured at the województwo-level and illustrated in Map A1 in the appendix) capture the extent to which the Catholic Church was weakened at the parish level because it increased opportunities for Patriot Priests to be appointed to openings in new parishes and it undermined the links between priests and church-goers at the parish level.¹¹ The third proxy tries to capture the longer-term institutional strength of the Catholic Church and is based on the idea that the church would be more deeply embedded in Polish society in areas that had been part of an independent Polish state for a longer time period. Therefore we calculated for each województwo the number of years that it had been incorporated into an independent Polish state between 1795 (the year of the third and final Partition) and 1939. While these three proxies capture slightly different aspects of institutional strength, and it would've been interesting to study the relative importance of vulnerability at different levels of the institution, in practice the three indicators were very highly correlated, which meant that rather than drawing questionable conclusions from models with high degrees of multicollinearity, we

¹¹ As explained in the final paragraphs of section 3, it is possible that any effects of migration could be driven not just by this process of social and institutional upheaval but also by selection mechanisms among migrants, who may be more individualistic/less traditional than their counterparts who did not migrate. To address this concern, we calculated the share of international migrants in each województwo. Since international migrants were by-and-large evacuated by the Soviet army from the former Eastern Polish territories, their migration was arguably exogenous to their psychological traits or political preferences. In supplementary analyses reported in the electronic appendix, we show that our results are robust to using international rather than total migration shares.

instead created an *Institutional vulnerability index* based on the three measures¹², which we use in the main analysis.¹³

To capture the effects of imperial legacies, we assigned the administrative units to three regions defined by the historical boundaries of the Russian, Prussian and Habsburg empires, as illustrated in Map A2.¹⁴ Finally to capture subnational developmental differences we collected województwo-level data from the 1950 census on three proxies of socioeconomic development: the value of industrial production per capita, the proportion of people living in urban settlements over 10000 inhabitants, and the number of school classrooms per capita (as a proxy of education.)

For our analysis of the consequences of infiltration, we take advantage of a unique set of surveys conducted in Poland between June 1985 (less than two years after the lifting of Martial Law) and January 1989 (just prior to the Roundtable talks that paved the way for free elections and marked the beginning of the end of communism in the region). Therefore, even though conducted over the period of less than four years, the surveys span a period ranging from staunch authoritarian repression to relative liberalization. Appendices E and F provide more details about these surveys and the weights we created to ensure that the surveys were nationally representative. We also discuss ways in which we ensured that our results are not biased by uneven distribution of desirability bias.

In line with our theoretical discussion we focus on three different outcomes. As a first step to test H4 we measure participation through *religious attendance* based on a three-category

¹² The index, which is a standardized average of the three indicators, had a Cronbach's alpha statistic of .95.

¹³ However, in the electronic appendix we show that our results are robust to using any of the three proxies separately. In additional analyses using two or even three of the institutional vulnerability proxies in the same model specification, we find slightly stronger effects for migrant shares but the results are somewhat unstable due to high multicollinearity.

¹⁴ Note that the territories coded as Russian in Map A1 had initially belonged to the Prussian and Habsburg empires after 1792 but were incorporated into the Russian empire after 1815 and 1848. The original Russian partition is not part of post-WWII Poland.

survey question (0=never, 1=irregular, 2=regular). To capture institutional trust (for H5) we used a question (measured on a five-point scale) that asked respondents to what extent they thought the Catholic Church served the interests of society. Finally to capture the ability of the church to transmit anti-regime attitudes we used two questions about attitudes to the anti-communist opposition and their support for the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR). From these two questions (both of which were asked on a five-point scale) we created the dependent variable for our analysis, *Net Communist Support*, which we calculated as the difference between the expressed support for the PZPR and the support for the opposition and then normalized so that it ranges from 0 (complete opposition support) to 1 (complete regime support, and has an almost exactly neutral mean (.53) and a standard deviation of .24 for the surveys analyzed in this article.

The surveys also included questions for a host of demographic variables, such as gender, age, education (primary/vocational, secondary and higher education), a detailed set of occupational categories and locality size, which were all included as controls in the regressions.

Critically, the surveys identify respondents up to the level of województwo. Based on this geographic identifier we were able to complement the individual-level survey data with the województwo-level variables described above. However, rather than using the developmental indicators from the 1950 survey (as in the infiltration drivers tests discussed above) we used data from the 1985-1989 Polish Statistical Yearbooks to calculate the share of production in different economic sectors (heavy industry, light industry and agriculture). In addition, we used contemporary województwo-level macro-economic indicators of capital investments and fixed assets as control variables to capture the effects of economic conditions. Given the multi-level structure of our data (individual, województwo-survey, and województwo), we use hierarchical

linear models with random intercepts for our analysis of the attitudinal consequences of infiltration.¹⁵

5. Results

Figure 2 presents the main findings about the drivers of both rank-and-file and elite infiltration. To ensure comparability across different types of indicators, we present the predicted values of the two dependent variables along with 95% confidence intervals for low (10th percentile) and high (90th percentile) values of the key variables of interest while holding other variables constant (at the sample mean.)

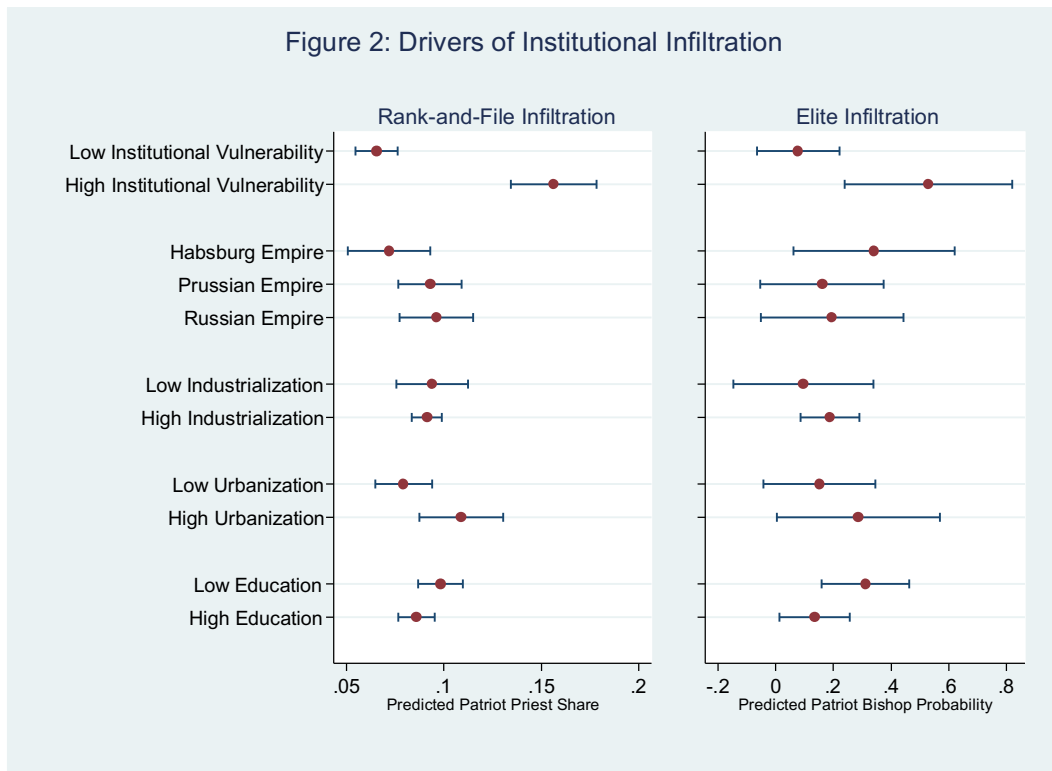
The results in Figure 2 provides strong support for the institutional vulnerability hypothesis (H1): at both the rank-and-file (left panel) and the elite level (right panel) the communist regime was significantly more likely to infiltrate the Catholic Church in parts of Poland where the church was institutionally weaker in the late 1940s, just prior to the launch of the Patriot Priest campaign. These results were not only statistically significant but substantively quite large: in the left panel predicted difference in Patriot Priest shares between low and high vulnerability districts was equivalent to roughly two standard deviations in the dependent variable, while in the right panel the corresponding difference in the likelihood of elite-level infiltration was slightly more than one standard deviation.

By comparison, support for the other two explanations of institutional infiltration was noticeably weaker. Whereas the left panel reveals some tentative evidence that rank-and-file infiltration was weaker in the areas of the former Habsburg Empire, these differences were substantively small and at best marginally significant. Imperial legacies played an even weaker

¹⁵ Appendix G contains results from alternative modeling approaches, including random-slopes HLM models and OLS regressions with robust standard errors clustered at the wojewodztwo-level.

role in explaining elite-level infiltration, for which predicted effects were statistically indistinguishable (and actually pointed in the wrong direction.)

The three sets of estimates in the lower part of Figure 2 reveal similarly modest support for the effects of socioeconomic development (H3). Thus, there was no evidence that greater industrial development with associated with different degrees of infiltration. Urbanization was marginally significant rank-and-file infiltration but the effect was the opposite of what we had predicted based on the greater anti-communist resistance in areas with stronger pre-communist development. Instead, it appears that the church was more resilient in rural areas. Finally, areas with weaker educational infrastructure was somewhat more likely to experience infiltration at both the rank-and-file and elite level but the effects were only marginally significant (at .1) and substantively fairly modest.



Turning to the attitudinal and behavioral consequences of institutional infiltration, in Figure 3 we present their predicted effects on the three types of outcomes discussed in the theoretical section.

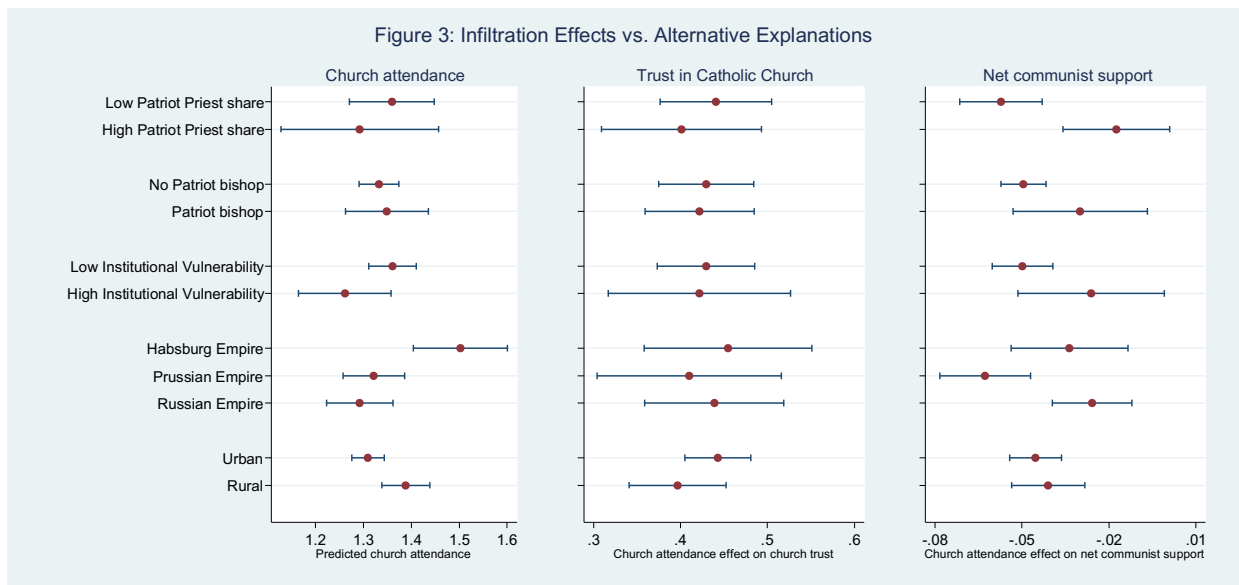
To test Hypothesis 4 about the impact of institutional infiltration vs. alternative explanations of participation, the left-hand panel in Figure 3 shows the predicted effects of low (10th percentile) vs. high (90th percentile) levels of the key variables on predicted church attendance. We found no evidence that either rank-and-file or elite infiltration affected church attendance. By contrast, the results in the left panel in Figure 3 provide some support for alternative explanations of church attendance which are in line with theoretical expectations: thus, church attendance in the 1980s was higher in areas where the church had been institutionally stronger in the 1940s, it was higher in the parts of Poland that had belonged to the Habsburg Empire, and it was lower among urban than rural respondents.

The middle panel in figure 3 reveals similarly weak support for the expectation that trust in the Catholic Church was affected by variations in communist infiltration at either the elite or the parish level.¹⁶ Even though the effects of church attendance on trust in the church were slightly higher in areas with lower Patriot Priest infiltration rates, the effects were substantively small and statistically insignificant. However, it should be noted then we found similarly weak support for alternative explanations of varying levels of institutional trust: thus, it appears that the relationship between church attendance and church trust was uniformly positive and fairly large across a variety of social and political contexts.

Finally in the right hand panel of Figure 3 we test whether institutional infiltration affects the impact of church attendance on political attitudes towards the communist regime and the anti-communist opposition. As the top set of estimates shows, we find fairly strong support that attending church in areas with greater rank-and-file communist infiltration resulted in a significantly weaker anti-communist attitudinal effect than church attendance in areas where the

¹⁶ Note, however, that our focus here is not on whether infiltration affects trust towards the church but whether it moderates the effects of church attendance on trust. The logic is that we are trying to establish whether the experience of attending church is different in areas with greater communist church infiltration,

communists had been less successful in infiltrating the church.¹⁷ By comparison, while the anti-communist effects of church attendance were also weakened by elite infiltration, these effects were substantively smaller and fell slightly short of statistical significance. Alternative explanations were also weaker in explaining the anti-communist impact of church attendance: institutional vulnerability pointed in the correct direction but was only marginally significant, imperial differences were partially significant (but not in the expected direction), and there were no differences along the urban-rural divide.



Overall, the patterns in Figure 3 reveal weak infiltration effects on participation (H4) and institutional trust (H5) but clear evidence that infiltration undermined the ability of the Catholic Church to promote anti-regime attitudes among his followers. As discussed in the theory section, these patterns suggest that the communist regime’s infiltration efforts were largely covert, i.e. most churchgoers were unaware of the identity of regime infiltrators in their midst. Recall, that we would expect deficits of trust and a fall in participation to follow the revelation of the

¹⁷ These effects were moderately sized: the predicted anti-communist effect of regular church attendance (vs. no attendance) was about one third of the standard deviation lower in areas with high Patriot Priest shares (90th percentile) than for low Patriot Priest shares (10th percentile). The magnitude increased to half a standard deviation when comparing the minimum vs. maximum Patriot Priest shares in our sample.

identities of patriot priests, as parishioners would become skeptical of their spiritual leaders. At the same time, to the extent that the covert activity of the patriots towards persuading parishioners to embrace communist ideology was effective, the differential effects of high and low infiltrated areas would continue to be visible even when the Patriots' organization ceased to exist. As a result, it appears that the Catholic Church as an institution was not weakened by infiltration (in the sense of lower membership or weaker trust) but the infiltration efforts succeeded in reducing its political effectiveness in challenging the communist regime.

It is important to note that the attitudinal imprint of communist infiltration we document in these surveys from 1985-89 is still visible more than three decades after the heyday of the Red Priest campaign in the early-to-mid 1950s. While such long-term persistence is in line with the patterns observed in previous studies of communist attitudinal legacies (Lupu and Peisakhin 2015, Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2017), it nevertheless raises important questions of how to interpret these results. In particular, we cannot tell whether the patterns in Figure 3 are due to the long-term persistence of a powerful but temporary "treatment" (the Red Priest campaign of the mid-1950s), or whether they reflect the continued (though possibly attenuated) effects of the continued presence of covert regime sympathizers within the Catholic Church.

As discussed in section 3, it is not entirely clear how influential the Patriot Priests were after the end of the official campaign and the thaw of 1956. On the one hand, as after the power vacuum in the church leadership was resolved with the Vatican's appointment of new bishops in 1956, there were no more communist infiltrators at the very top of the Catholic Church hierarchy in Poland. On the other hand, as discussed in section 3, such sympathizers continued to be part of the Catholic clergy past the official end of the Patriot Priest organization but it is less clear how active and effective they were in the absence of top-down directives and coordination.

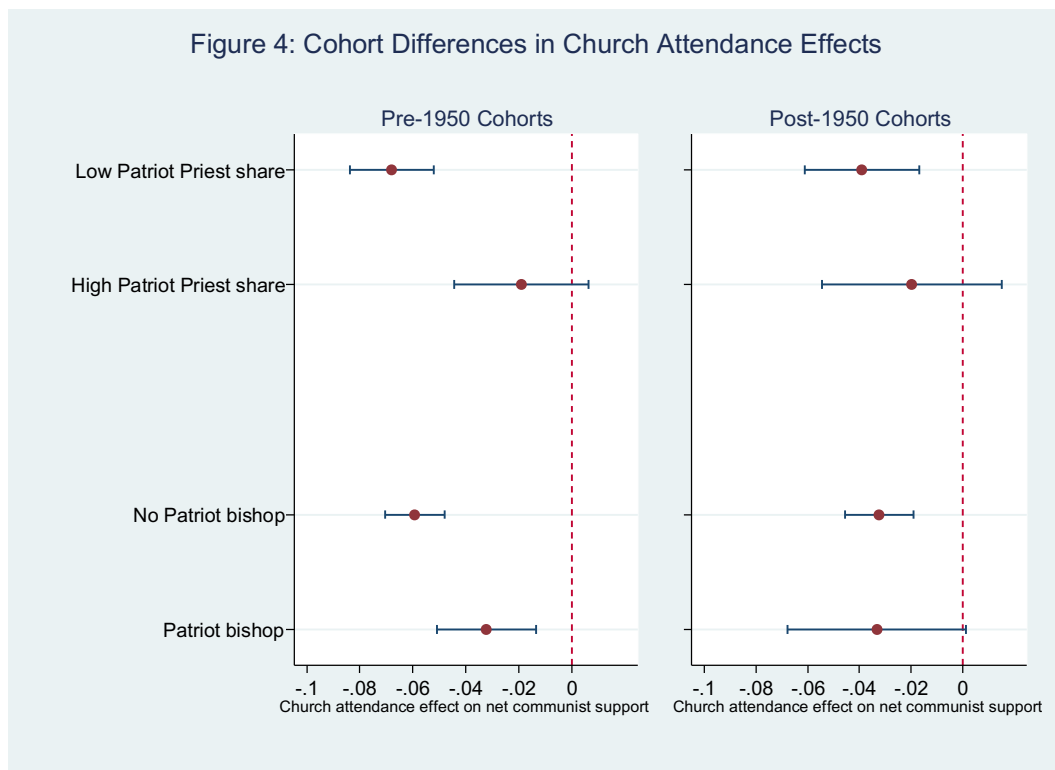
However, these two alternative explanations, have observable implications, which we will test below. If ex-Patriot Priests continued to disseminate communist propaganda, or at least refrained from preaching against the communist regime, then we should continue to observe weaker anti-communist church attendance effects in the areas with high Patriot Priest shares even among age cohorts who started participating in church activities after the end of the main infiltration period. Alternatively, if the Patriots' influence was largely neutralized after the late 1950s, either because most of them decided to get in line with the church hierarchy or because they were effectively sidelined by the church leadership and shunned by parishioners, then we should not expect to see differential church attendance effects as a function of Patriot Priest infiltration for the younger cohorts. However, cohorts of churchgoers who attended church in the 1950s may continue to exhibit lower levels of anticommunist opposition in areas of strong communist infiltration. In other words, even if the cause (communist infiltration) no longer persisted, its effect on political attitudes may have continued.

To test these predictions, in Figure 4 we present the predicted effects of church attendance and low versus high infiltration areas for two different age cohorts: respondents who were old enough to have received their first communion by 1956 (i.e. were born prior to 1950) and those who were not.¹⁸ The results in Figure 4 provide stronger support for the second explanation, which emphasizes the long-term consequences of a relatively short successful infiltration episode. The patterns are particularly clear for elite infiltration, which ended by the late 1950s: whereas the anti-communist effects of attending church in a diocese formerly run by a communist infiltrator were significantly weaker for the older cohort, who had attended church during the most intensive infiltration period, the effects disappear completely for the younger cohort. The latter finding can also be interpreted as a placebo test of sorts: we do not observe

¹⁸ The results are based on triple interactions between infiltration, church attendance and the dichotomous age cohort indicator. Full regression results are available in the electronic appendix.

attitudinal effects among a group of respondents who were not directly affected by elite infiltration.

The patterns for rank-and-file infiltration at the top of Figure 4 suggest a similar pattern: both the magnitude and the statistical significance of the moderating role of Red Priest infiltration on the political effects of church attendance is noticeably stronger for the older cohorts, who were likely to have attended church during the most intense infiltration period. By comparison, for the younger cohorts, the effects still pointed in the correct direction but they were substantively small and statistically inconclusive. This suggests that while Patriot Priests had a strong and lasting impact on political attitudes during the time when they were most active, their influence seems to have declined substantially in subsequent years. It is also worth noting that even among the older cohorts the magnitude of the infiltration effects was noticeably larger for rank-and-file than for elite infiltration.



6. Conclusion

The results presented in Figures 3 and 4 lead us to conclude that communist efforts to infiltrate the Catholic Church in Poland did not undermine either popular participation or trust in the regime's most consistent institutional adversary but it did succeed at least in part in blunting the church's anti-communist message. Furthermore, our findings suggest that the (largely covert) infiltration at the level of rank-and-file priests was much more effective than the overt efforts to place communist sympathizers in top leadership positions in the church hierarchy. However, despite its short-term effectiveness in shaping political attitudes, and the long-term persistence of these attitudinal effects among directly affected individuals, the regime's decision to abort/scale back the Patriot Priest contributed to its failure to control the Catholic Church. While this decision may have bought it a temporary truce in the context of the political turmoil of the late 1950s, it ultimately contributed to the fall of communism three decades later.

Our findings about the drivers and consequences of infiltration offer a unique opportunity to examine the effectiveness of covert forms of repression. First we have established that the infiltration is not available to all autocrats. As Greteins (2018) already pointed out, it is not a strategy autocrats concerned about coup proofing can engage in. However, we show that only institutions exhibiting a high level of vulnerability can be infiltrated, whether this vulnerability is the result of massive population movements, weak leadership or a short history of national independence (all captured in our index of institutional vulnerability). Such vulnerability matters more than socioeconomic differences and historical legacies when it comes to deciding where to infiltrate. The effectiveness of infiltration can have far reaching effects and are manifest especially in attitudinal changes. Since they are not accompanied by changes in trust and

participation, the infiltration's effectiveness is especially disturbing, because those who have succumbed to its influence, are unaware that they have been affected.

In the final paragraphs of the conclusion, we remark about the scope conditions of our findings. Although the ability to infiltrate non-state organizations is available to all autocrats, such infiltration is of course not limited to churches. Trade unions, universities and virtually any form of associational life could be a candidate for infiltration as long as it attracts a following from citizens. Similarly the drivers of institutional vulnerability can be multifaceted and not necessarily involve large scale migration and leadership weakness. Intuitively, however, organizations more likely to be infiltrated are those which have been uprooted, where participants are not familiar with each other and where the leadership is disconnected. For these reasons, the scope conditions of our study reach beyond Post-Communist Europe and certainly beyond Poland and its Catholic Church.

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Appendix A

Table A1: Summary Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Net Communist Support	10804	0.53	.24	0	1
Percent Migrants	10804	0.28	0.31	0.04	0.98
Percent International Migrants	10804	0.10	0.12	0.01	0.42
Russia	10804	0.38	0.49	0	1
Prussia	10804	0.47	0.50	0	1
Years Independent before 1939	10804	21.14	13.13	0	58
Patriot Priests (rank and file)	10804	0.09	0.05	0.04	0.27
Red Bishops	10804	0.28	0.45	0	1
Capital investments	10804	29.69	11.30	7.4	67.5
Heavy production	10804	25.51	11.50	3.9	51.8
Light production	10804	12.29	11.86	1.8	49.5
Agricultural production	10804	23.26	13.96	3.2	65.8
Church Attendance	10804	1.32	0.76	0	2
Primary Education	10804	0.53	0.50	0	1
Secondary Education	10804	0.27	0.45	0	1
Higher education	10804	0.13	0.33	0	1
Village	10804	0.33	0.47	0	1
Small town	10804	0.11	0.31	0	1
Medium town	10804	0.15	0.36	0	1
Large town	10804	0.15	0.36	0	1
City	10804	0.10	0.31	0	1
Occupation	10804	9.60	5.75	0	18
Gender	10804	0.47	0.50	0	1
Age	10800	43.26	15.72	17	92
Survey date (in months)	10804	47.02	16.13	24	67
Survey date (in months) squared	10804	2470.68	1462.67	576	4489

Table A2: Infiltration drivers

VARIABLES	(1) Patriot priest share	(2) Patriot priest share	(3) Patriot priest share	(4) Patriot priest share	(5) Patriot Bishop presence	(6) Patriot Bishop presence	(7) Patriot Bishop presence	(8) Patriot Bishop presence
Prussian empire		.090** (.015)		.024 (.016)		.150 (.155)		-.146 (.210)
Russian empire		.022 (.015)		.021# (.012)		-.250 (.154)		-.181 (.158)
Institutional	.044**			.039**	.193**			.194*

vulnerability								
	(.004)			(.006)	(.056)			(.081)
Industrialization 1950			-.023	-.004			.148	.133
			(.015)	(.010)			(.130)	(.135)
Urbanization 1950			.291**	.095#			.981	.432
			(.068)	(.053)			(.588)	(.695)
Education 1950			.010	-.008#			-.030	-.109#
			(.006)	(.004)			(.052)	(.059)
Observations	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
R-squared	.679	.541	.381	.784	.204	.208	.274	.407

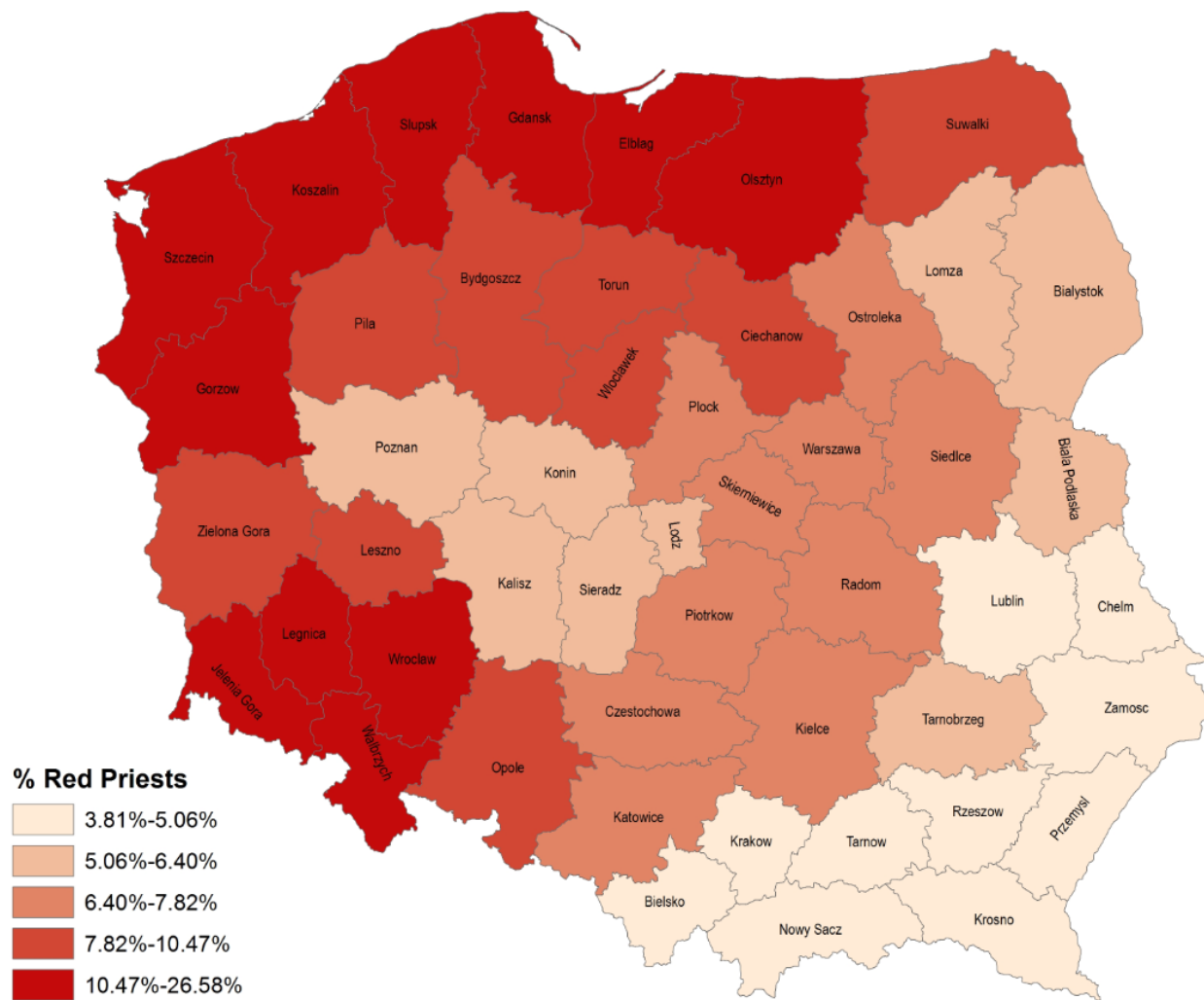
Standard errors in parentheses

** p<.01, * p<.05, # p<.1

Table A2: Infiltration effects

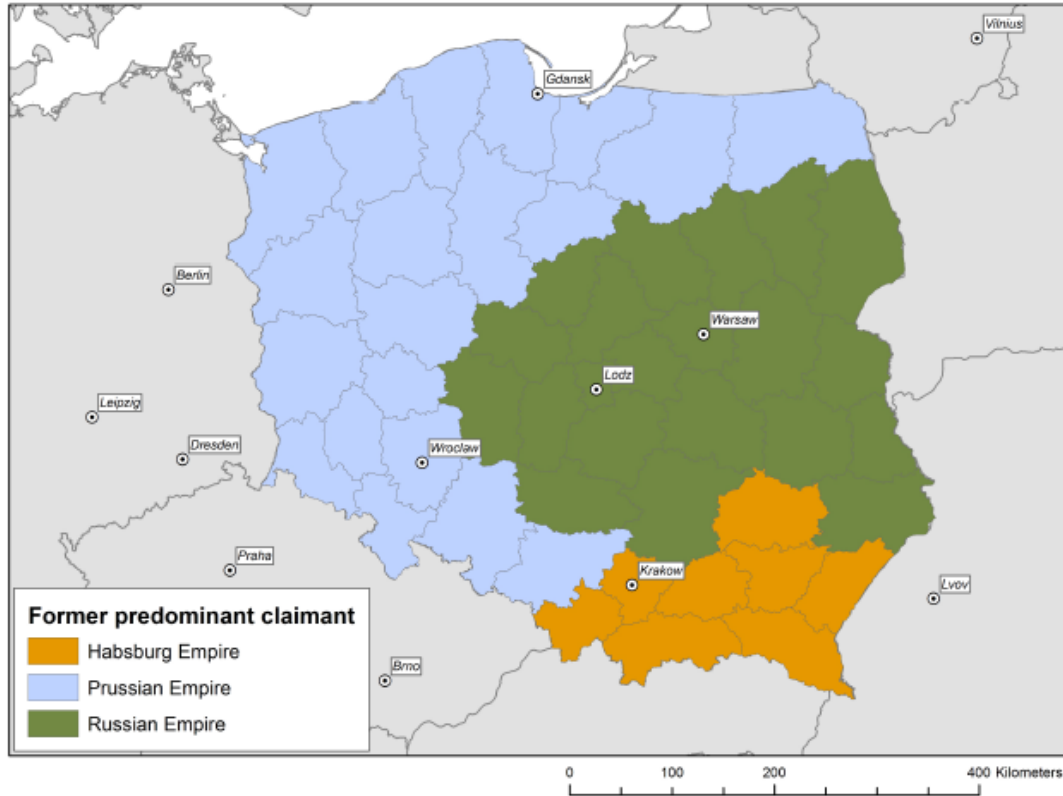
VARIABLES	(1) Church attendance	(2) Catholic church trust	(3) Net communist support	(4) Net communist support
%Patriot Priests	-0.448 (0.826)	0.735 (0.651)	-0.520* (0.218)	-0.379 (0.303)
Patriot bishop	0.017 (0.054)	0.060 (0.089)	-0.038 (0.028)	-0.028 (0.033)
Institutional vulnerability index	-0.043 (0.028)	-0.013 (0.047)	-0.018 (0.016)	-0.018 (0.015)
Prussian empire	-0.180* (0.071)	0.139 (0.131)	0.080* (0.032)	0.076* (0.030)
Russian empire	-0.210** (0.060)	0.104 (0.116)	-0.006 (0.030)	-0.005 (0.029)
Village	0.079** (0.024)	0.177** (0.059)	0.026 (0.020)	0.024 (0.020)
Church attendance		0.496** (0.059)	-0.063** (0.014)	-0.035# (0.019)
%Patriot Priests# Church attendance		-0.265 (0.474)	0.265** (0.101)	0.129 (0.171)
Patriot bishop# Church attendance		-0.008 (0.051)	0.020 (0.013)	-0.001 (0.019)
Institutional vulnerability index# Church attendance		-0.003 (0.032)	0.010 (0.007)	0.010 (0.006)
Prussian empire# Church attendance		-0.045 (0.086)	-0.029# (0.016)	-0.026# (0.015)
Russian empire #Church attendance		-0.016 (0.056)	0.008 (0.012)	0.008 (0.011)
Village# Church attendance		-0.046 (0.030)	0.004 (0.008)	0.004 (0.008)
Born pre-1950#%Patriot Priests				-0.204 (0.335)
Born pre-1950#Church attendance				-0.045* (0.020)
Born pre-1950# %Patriot Priests# Church attendance				0.197 (0.229)
Patriot bishop#Born pre-1950				-0.008 (0.029)
Patriot bishop#Born pre- 1950#Church attendance				0.028 (0.020)
Born pre-1950				0.070*

Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	(0.030) Yes
District economic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	14,016	12,302	10,800	10,800
Number of groups	49	49	49	49



Map A2: Map of Patriot Priests in post-WWII Poland by wojewodztwa according to materials collected by Zurek (2003). Note, the map uses administrative divisions from 1975.

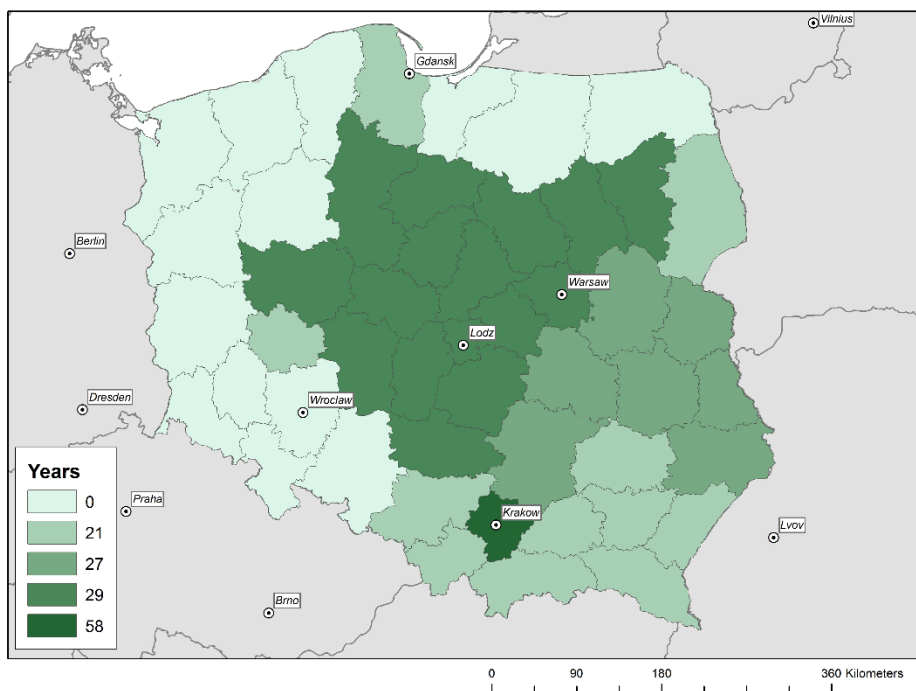
Map A3: Borders of the Imperial Partitions Overlaid on a Contemporary Map of Poland
Wojewodztwa according to predominant former claims by foreign empires



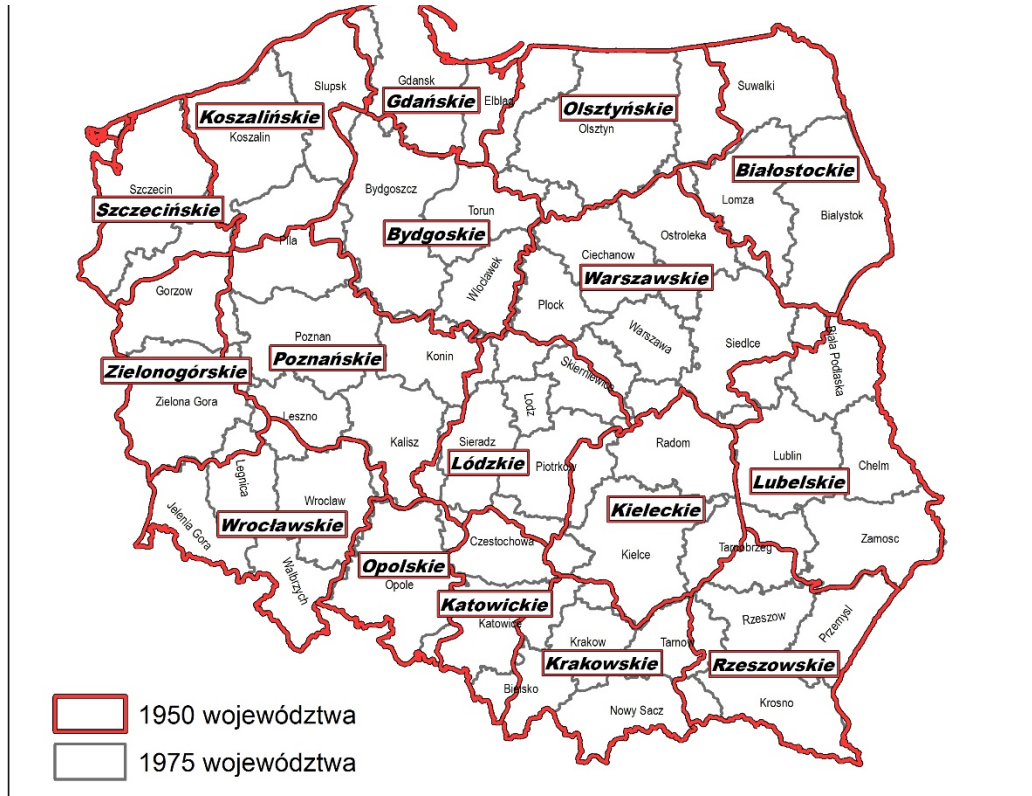
Map A4: Years of independence of the 49 wojewodztwa (current in the 1980s)

The country's borders changed with (1) the rise of Napoleon, which resulted in the creation of a fairly independent "Duchy of Warsaw," a small state erected in 1807 made up of six departments, expanded to ten in 1809; (2) Napoleon's downfall, which resulted in downscaling the Duchy to a small, but still autonomous "Krakow Republic" and the "Polish Kingdom," a euphemism for an extension of the Russian Partition; and (3) the Spring of Nations, which led to a major uprising in Małopolska that, after being crushed by the Habsburgs, put an end to the Krakow autonomy (Kieniewicz 1998). Finally, in 1918, Poland regained independence and recovered some of its territories subsumed by the partitions.

Number of years of independence between 1797 and 1939



Map A5: Administrative Division of Poland in 1950 and 1975 (current in the 1980s)



The coding of our key variables of interest, such as migrant shares and Patriot Priests was complicated by the fact that the number of administrative regions in Poland changed from 17 in the 1950s to 49 in the 1980s. Therefore, for migrant shares, we had to use geo-referenced maps to convert our data on the numbers of settlers arriving to each 1950 województwo to migrant shares in each 1980 województwo. We then conducted similar operations on the Patriot Priests Variable. The map above illustrates the administrative divisions of Poland at the time our migrant data was collected (in dark red) and at the time the CBOS surveys were conducted (in light grey). Converting the Percent Migrant variable into a variable matching the 1975 województwa required a calculation of the proportion of each old województwo in the new województwo and a reweighing of the data to match the CBOS survey.

Appendix C: Information about the CBOS Surveys

The Center for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) was created when Poland's communist authorities came to the realization that relying on reports from the secret police alone left them unprepared for outbreaks of popular dissidence. The Martial Law scenario could have been avoided altogether had the authorities been adequately informed of popular support for the Solidarity trade union. Relying exclusively on the reports from *Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa* (SB), the state secret police was no longer feasible, because this data had informed the decision to legalize Solidarity. "Intelligence" provided by SB led the authorities to believe that Solidarity would be a marginalized movement with no more than a few hundred thousand members. To the communists' surprise, Solidarity membership exceeded nine million members in a matter of months (Holzer 1990, Lopinski et.al. 1990). As it turned out, SB's estimates were based on an outdated informer network that failed to keep up with the rapidly growing dissident community. Critically, the secret police lacked agents in many dissident cells that ended up fueling Solidarity membership upon legalization. At the same time, in the Polish United Workers Party—*Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza* (PZPR), the official name of the Communist Party in Poland—membership was dwindling dramatically, as rank and file members surrendered their party IDs. By late 1981, PZPR's membership was barely a quarter of Solidarity's.

At that point, the communists responded in the only way they knew. In order to close the door on a foreign intervention to demobilize the dissident movement (resembling the Soviet and Warsaw Pact crackdowns in Hungary in 1956 and in Prague in 1968, respectively), on December 12th, 1981, the Polish communist military commanders introduced Martial Law and arrested over 10,000 members of the Solidarity leadership. In the winter of 1981, 18 months after the legalization of the independent trade union, not only the Polish communists, but also leaders from the Warsaw Pact countries were worried about the future of communism in Poland. The trade union itself was outlawed alongside smaller independent organizations. A curfew hour was introduced; all telephone conversations became closely monitored and national borders were sealed. The military reinstated a six-day working week and placed mass media, public administration, health services, power stations, coal mines, and key industrial plants as well as the transportation network under its management (Paczkowski 2008).

The provisions of Martial Law stayed in place until July 22, 1983. Even before the restrictions of the military regime began to be lifted (which happened gradually throughout 1982), the lesson learned was clear: the regime needed alternative sources of information to SB reports about the political views of Polish citizens. A set of 17 nationally representative public opinion surveys between 1985-90, ten of which are analyzed here, is the by-product of this realization of the communist regime (Kwiatkowski, 2004).

While the political consequences of this recognition are beyond the scope of this paper,¹⁹ the byproduct of the regime's realization is. The polling company CBOS was given a fair amount of autonomy in running the surveys, which allays potential concerns that the poll design may have been biased to produce results favorable to the communist regime (Kwiatkowski 2004). Among other strategies, the managerial positions of CBOS were staffed by sociologists from Warsaw University's IFiS, the relatively independent social science department, whose team of sociologists under the leadership of Stefan Nowak and Wojciech Adamski started conducting public opinion poll surveys during the 18 month period when Solidarity was a legal trade union. These surveys provide us with a unique insight into one of the most fascinating episodes of 20th century political history and more broadly into the temporal dynamics of regime and opposition

support in a country undergoing the transition from a relatively consolidated authoritarianism in late 1985 to a fledgling democracy by early 1990 (Adamski 1982).

While we address the important question of response bias to surveys conducted in authoritarian setting in greater detail below, we may wonder how representative they are of the general Polish population at the time of the surveys. Through documents obtained from CBOS and interviews with current CBOS staff who are still working at the polling company or have recently retired, we were able to reconstruct many details of the sampling procedure used in the early 1980s. The stratification was done by dividing the country into 49 layers, corresponding to the 49 regions (województwa). This was followed by classifying the localities in each region into one of three categories: wojewodztwo capital, other towns/cities, and villages. In addition, the layer with the nation's capital, Warsaw, was divided into "Center" and "Periphery." This resulted in 150 primary sampling units accounting for the (1) administrative division of the country in 1985-1989; (2) the type of locale (województwo capital, non-capital city, village); (3) historical/geographical divisions. The secondary sampling units were addresses sampled using random number generators with uniform distributions. The sampling units in the third stage were adults permanently living at the addresses sampled in the second sampling stage. Enumerators used the Kish selection grid to choose the adult who would participate in the face-to-face survey. The number of addresses sampled in each of the primary sampling units was matched to reflect data from the Central Statistical Office.

Although, this procedure should result in a nationally representative sample, to ensure that the final sample was also representative of Poles across wojewodztwa in 1985-1989, we compared it with regard to basic demographics to data from statistical yearbooks, published annually in Poland. This yearbook provided three types of information disaggregated across wojewodztwa: the proportion of females, the proportions of urban, as opposed to village dwellers, and the proportion of the population below 18 and of "production age" (between 18 and retirement). This allowed us to create matching categories in our survey data, using the age of respondents, their gender and the size of their locality. In the case of "production age" we had to account for the fact that Polish women were able to retire earlier than men (at age 59 as opposed to 64). We also had to account for the fact that the survey was not conducted with Poles under 18. Thus, in order to make the census share of retirees comparable to the survey share of retirees, we expressed the census percentage of retirees as a proportion of the percentage of (1-% under 18-year olds) in a given wojewodztwo. In order to compare the mean values of respondents in each wojewodztwo in our surveys to the yearbook data, we created 7 (for 7 surveys)*3 (for three demographic variables) paired vectors: $(s_1, s_2, s_3, \dots, s_{49})$; $(c_1, c_2, c_3, \dots, c_{49})$, where s_i represents the survey mean in wojewodztwo i and c_i represents the census mean in wojewodztwo i . We then calculated the standard deviation around the mean for each wojewodztwo in each survey and used those standard errors to compare the vectors of means in a Hausman test, in R using the following formula:

```
Haus<-function (c,s,sd,n) {  
  se <- sd/sqrt(n)  
  t(c-s) %*% diag(se**2) %*% (c-s)  
},
```

where c is the census mean, s is the survey mean, sd is the standard deviation around the mean in a given wojewodztwo and n is the number of observations per wojewodztwo. The function Haus follows a chi-square distribution with 48 (49-1 wojewodztwa) degrees of freedom and is used to test the joint hypothesis that the vector of sample means does not differ from the Census values. Using this test, we were able to reject this hypothesis in the case of all city means, all retirement means, and one female mean (in the June 1985 survey). This meant that the surveys were not

representative of the wojewodztwo population as far as the numbers of retirees and city dwellers were concerned, although they were ---with one exception---representative of the number of females per wojewodztwo. To remedy this problem, we created and applied to our data the following sets of weights. c_{it}^f/s_{ij}^f , c_{it}^m/s_{ij}^m , c_{it}^c/s_{ij}^c , c_{it}^v/s_{ij}^v , c_{it}^r/s_{ij}^r , c_{it}^p/s_{ij}^p . And thus, c_{it}^f/s_{ij}^f is the weight applied to females in wojewodztwo i in survey j , where c_{it}^f is the average proportion of females in wojewodztwo i in year t and s_{ij}^f is the percentage of female respondents in wojewodztwo i in survey j . c_{it}^m/s_{ij}^m is the weight applied to males in wojewodztwo i , survey j , and c_{it}^c/s_{ij}^c , c_{it}^v/s_{ij}^v are weights applied to respondents living in cities and villages, respectively. Finally, c_{it}^r/s_{ij}^r and c_{it}^p/s_{ij}^p are the weights applied retired respondents, and respondents of productive age, respectively. Here again, instead of using the raw percentage of retirees from the census, we used the proportion of retirees divided by 1-%(18 and younger), to account for the fact that our survey does not include any respondents below 18 years of age. These weights were applied to all situations where our Hausman tests rejected the null hypothesis that the means from the census and survey come from the same population, testing each hypothesis jointly for all the wojewodztwa in the survey.

Appendix F – Assessing bias in authoritarian surveys

A potentially serious concern in interpreting surveys conducted in authoritarian regimes is that respondents may not answer political questions truthfully out of fear of the possible consequences of airing anti-regime attitudes in a semi-public setting.²⁰ While the Polish regime was arguably considerably more tolerant of dissenting political views than most other East European communist regimes,²¹ it is nevertheless likely that some respondents expected that survey results would not be kept confidential and that revealing anti-regime views could have negative consequences for them and their families. Such potential biases can be addressed at the survey design stage through a variety recent methodological innovations meant to elicit truthful responses to sensitive questions (Adida et. al. 2016, Blades and Gillum 2013, Jiang and Yang 2016), such techniques were not used in the CBOS surveys from three decades ago.

Therefore, we had to take a different approach to testing whether our main statistical findings are affected by biased survey responses. In particular, we chose to focus on two types of indicators. The first indicator is based on the idea that if a respondent fears that the interviewer could be a state agent/secret police informer, then the safe response strategy would be to offer consistently pro-regime and anti-opposition responses to all sensitive survey questions. In such a world, even a single “unorthodox” answer could trigger negative political consequences; therefore, we would expect such respondents to be very consistent in their answers. To capture this idea, we created a dichotomous indicator of unafraid respondents, who gave at least one officially undesirable political answer i.e. by either stating that one of the key regime institutions (ruling party, government, Parliament, army or police) did not serve the interests of society, or by stating that the opposition served the interests of society. Even though our coding procedure was quite conservative – we did not include the Catholic Church among the anti-regime institutions and coded non-committal “hard to say answers” as compatible with fear-based compliance – this approach suggests that over 90% of our respondents gave at least one politically risky answer. Since the remaining 10% of respondents presumably included at least some proportion of “true believers”, who trusted the regime and distrusted the opposition, this suggests that based on this measure the magnitude of political bias in our surveys is likely to be quite limited.

The second approach to estimating bias is based on a survey question, which asked respondents: “Were you between August 1980 and December 1981 a member of the Solidarity trade union.” This was a politically sensitive question, since Solidarity was outlawed with the introduction of Martial Law in December 1981, when its members were imprisoned, and was not re-legalized until 1989. Quite remarkably, throughout the period covered by our surveys (late 1985-late 1989), the proportion of survey respondents who identified as former Solidarity members was quite consistent (ranging from 21-26%) and did not exhibit a clear time trend, which suggests that responses were not depressed by before 1989 and or inflated by social desirability after Solidarity was re-legalized in 1989.

²⁰ We characterize the interview process as a semi-public setting because even though the interviews took place at the respondent's home and respondents were assured of the anonymity and privacy of the responses, the interviewers were nevertheless strangers for (most of) the respondents, and could have possibly been viewed as being agents of the state.

²¹ An East European joke from the 1980s nicely illustrates this point: A Polish and a Czech dog meet at the border, each intending to cross the border into the other country. The Czech dog asks the Polish one why he's trying to go to Czechoslovakia, and the Polish dog replies that he would like to eat sausage for once. The Czech dog replies that he's crossing into Poland because he would like be able to bark for once!

But while the discussion so far suggests that response bias was not a serious problem in the CBOS surveys, for the purpose of our analysis the key question is whether any such bias could account for the empirical patterns in our statistical analysis. Thus, given that our key finding is that the political responses of church attendance vary across different parts of Poland (as a function of migration rates and church infiltration), the most important inferential concern for the purposes of the current analysis is that our findings could be driven by geographic variations in response bias. To test this possibility, in Table F1 below we ran two sets of models, in which we regress the two potential indicators of response bias on the two main explanatory variables in our main statistical analysis: migrant shares and church infiltration (% Patriot Priests.) All models include the same demographic and district level control variables used in the rest of the analysis, and were run using multi-level mixed effects probit models. In addition, in the first two models, we included controls for Solidarity membership density at the district level, which we calculated using data extracted from the Encyclopedia of Solidarity, which reports in separate chapters for each Solidarity district the membership count before the introduction of Martial Law that disbanded Solidarity.²²

The results in Table F1 provide no evidence that respondents from areas with high migrant shares or high “Patriot priest” shares were more likely to express falsified preferences, i.e. to under-report their Solidarity membership or to over-report their political support for regime institutions. Thus, according to model 1, respondents from high-migration areas were actually somewhat more likely to report being Solidarity members, while judging by model 3 there was no effect on their likelihood to provide “politically incorrect” answers about the regime vs. the opposition. The patterns are very similar for our church infiltration indicator: respondents from areas with higher shares of Patriot Priests were slightly more likely to report being Solidarity members (though the effect was statistically insignificant), while there was once again no effect using the “Unafraid” indicator. Given that these models account for demographic and developmental differences across districts, the results in Table F1 suggest that our statistical findings about the differential political effects of church attendance are not driven by difference in preference falsification in communist-era surveys.

Table F1: Response bias diagnostic tests

	(1) Solidarity member	(2) Solidarity Member	(3) Unafraid	(4) Unafraid
% Migrants	.183* (.092)		-.000 (.104)	
%Patriot Priests		.743 (.628)		.067 (.666)
Official Solidarity membership rate	.538* (.243)	.597* (.262)		
Church attendance	.169** (.023)	.168** (.023)	.221** (.024)	.222** (.024)
District-level economic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	10,331	10,331	11,623	11,623
Number of groups	49	49	49	49

²² It is reassuring to note that these district-level official membership rates have a positive and significant effect on survey-based Solidarity membership answers (even once we control for demographic and developmental differences), which further increases our confidence in the validity of our survey responses.

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