Church Infiltration and Anti-Communist Resistance. Survey Evidence from Communist Poland. This version: February 2017.

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Abstract (123): Infiltration is one of the strategies pursued by authoritarian regimes to neutralize potential competitors, such as church organizations. To understand the differential effectiveness of these infiltration attempts we analyze seven surveys from late communist Poland, which highlight the uneven effects of Catholic Church attendance on anti-communist attitudes. We show that subnational variation in anti-regime attitudes is driven by the uneven degree of infiltration with so-called Red Priests, which in turn can be attributed to patterns of migration following WWII. We use mediation analysis to show that the communists' strategy of church infiltration was indeed more effective in areas with the greatest population resettlements and consequently, societal disarticulation. We test this theory against competing explanations, including modernization, selection mechanisms and endurance of imperial legacies.

1. Introduction

Authoritarian regimes rarely survive relying on repression alone. Therefore, autocrats strive to shape public opinion. The extent to which they succeed in doing so, varies however from one authoritarian incumbent to the next. The question of when and why authoritarian regimes successfully secure popular support has received growing attention in recent years. Some explanations have focused on regime strategies such as the distribution of selective benefits (Magaloni 2006) or cooptation into authoritarian institutions (Blaydes 2012). Others have emphasized the importance of societal resistance rooted in differential value systems (Inglehart 1997) or in pre-authoritarian developmental and ideational legacies transmitted through family ties (Charnysh and Finkel 2016, Darden and Grzymala-Busse 2006, Peisakhin 2014, Lupu and Peisakhin 2015).

There is no doubt that these accounts illuminate important aspects of the puzzle of authoritarian survival. However, another key ingredient of authoritarian success is winning the competition for the citizens' hearts and minds against potential challengers. Autocrats can be challenged by a variety of actors, including opposition parties in competitive authoritarian regimes (Gandhi and Reuter 2013, Howard and Roessler 2006, Levitsky and Way 2010) and labor unions in countries with stronger industrial traditions.[1] Perhaps the most widespread

[1] See, for example, the role of organized labor against South American military regimes in the 1960s and 1970s (Collier 1999).

challengers are religious communities, which represent “the most diverse and robust form of associational life outside of the state” in many authoritarian states (Koessel 2014:3) and thus pose some of the greatest challenges to authoritarian efforts to dominate public discourse. While this conflict was particularly visible in the case of communist regimes (Ramet 1987, Burgess 1997, Wiegel 2003, Wittenberg 2006) and in some Middle Eastern secular autocracies (Wickham 2005, Masoud 2014), its dynamics also matter in other regions, such as Latin America (Trejo 2012) or the Philippines (Youngblood 1990).

Even with respect to this narrower question about the competition between authoritarian regimes and religious communities, we observe dramatic differences in the extent to which authoritarian incumbents can maintain their control over public opinion against challenges from organized religion. Thus, 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 of Hungarian Catholics than of Hungarian Protestants. 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. Wittenberg (2006) explains variations in the transmission of pre-communist mass political loyalties through the communist period by focusing on the role of local Catholic organizations as intermediaries and contrasts them to the weaker role of such organizations among Protestants.

This research sheds light on how organized religion challenges authoritarian incumbents. Yet it offers few clues to tackling the empirical puzzle motivating this article: the uneven effectiveness of Catholic Church attendance in inducing anti-communist political attitudes across different parts of Poland during the late-communist period. Since these variations occurred within the same country and the same church, they cannot be

explained by historical differences in the relationship between church, nation and state, or in the organizational or doctrinal nature of the church. Therefore, our explanation in this article focuses on the uneven success of communist regime efforts to infiltrate the Catholic Church. We trace this uneven success to different degrees of disarticulation associated with migration patterns at a critical historical juncture: the first decade after the communist takeover of power in Poland. In particular, we show that in areas with higher migration rates the communist regime was able to infiltrate the Catholic Church with pro-communist "Red Priests" more effectively than in areas where migration was negligible. Although the bulk of these infiltration efforts took place in the 1950s, the anti-communist attitudinal effects of church attendance continued to be significantly weaker in the former than in the latter three decades later.

Our article makes three main contributions: first, in theoretical terms, we propose a novel causal mechanism for understanding strategies to legitimize authoritarian rule. Although strategies of repression and patronage politics have received a lot of attention in the scholarly literature, the differential ability of authoritarian regimes to infiltrate pre-authoritarian institutions has received less scrutiny (Nalepa 2010). Second, empirically, we overcome one of the main challenges for understanding public opinion formation in authoritarian regimes – the dearth of reliable information on political attitudes – by analyzing a unique combination of rarely used communist-era individual level survey data and a variety of original subnational data on pre-communist and communist developmental and institutional legacies. Finally, this article makes a systematic effort to shed light on the "black box" of historical legacy persistence following Ekiert and Ziblatt's (2013) and Kitschelt's (2003) advice about the need to specify and explicitly test the causal mechanisms underlying the link between "deep" historical factors and subsequent political outcomes.

The remainder of the article is organized as follows. The next section introduces the key contextual elements of the Polish case and discusses the advantages and scope conditions of our empirical setup. The third section presents the mechanism behind the uneven anti-authoritarian resistance effects of religious participation. Relying on survey and statistical data from Poland, the fourth section tests the mechanism against competing explanations. Section five concludes.

2. *The Empirical Setting: The Catholic Church in Communist Poland*

The case of the Catholic Church in Poland offers some important advantages for analyzing the dynamics of anti-authoritarian dissent. There is strong scholarly consensus that Catholicism contributed to the downfall of communism in Poland and led to the third wave of democratization more broadly (Huntington 1993).[2] Furthermore**,** Poland has the advantage of offering interesting sub-national variation rooted in the country's tumultuous history. Over a 123-year period, the country was divided into Prussian, Habsburg, and Russian "Partitions" (pl, *Zabory*), whose borders shifted over time and in some instances, gave rise to briefly independent "Polish republics." The last of these changes took place at the end of World War II when, as a result of the Yalta agreements, Poland lost a large part of its interwar Eastern territories to the Soviet Union, but gained large swaths of former Prussian territories, euphemistically termed "Recovered Territories" despite the fact that they had never belonged to Poland.

This territorial westward shift of the country following WWII makes Communist Poland a useful analytical case because the change in borders was accompanied by massive population movements, as 3.45 million Germans, who made up over 90% of the population in the newly acquired territories, were expelled between 1945 and 1949 and were replaced by mostly Polish and to a lesser extent Ukrainian/Lemka migrants (many of them from the Eastern territories lost to the Soviet Union). These massive upheavals have two important implications for our analysis. First, due to the differing social and political roles of the Catholic Church across these historical events, Polish Catholicism lends itself to a within-religion and within-country analysis, and thus gives us greater analytical leverage than cross-country studies because it allows us to control for confounding factors at both the country- and church-level. The second consequence of Poland's tumultuous history is that by 1945, for the first time in its history, Poland's population became homogenously Polish and

[2]See also Grzymała-Busse (2015), who attributes this success to the Catholic Church's history of defending Polish nationhood against Swedes, Turks, Tartars, Germans, and Russians.

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

This universal fusion between Polish nationalism and Catholic religion (Grzymala-Busse 2015) raised the costs of outright repression of the Catholic Church by the communist regime. Hence, the communist authorities' long-term plan for dealing with the Catholic Church focused on cooptation.[3] This approach involved an effort to recruit about 1,000 communist sympathizers among the clergy, or roughly 10% of all priests residing in Poland (Zurek 2003). However, as we document in detail below, the success of this infiltration strategy varied across different parts of Poland, because the Church was much more vulnerable in areas that had experienced high volumes of migration as a result of WWII.

Poland also offers some significant advantages for dealing with one of the hardest challenges for studying authoritarian politics: finding reliable public opinion data. The Polish case provides us with the unique opportunity to analyze a series of seven surveys carried out in 1985-1989 by the Center for Public Opinion Research (CBOS). CBOS was a polling company created in the aftermath of the rise 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 often affect surveys conducted in authoritarian settings.[4] 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 church-goers and non-church-goers differentially in different regions, which seems rather unlikely. Appendix E provides additional information and robustness tests for potential biases in these surveys.

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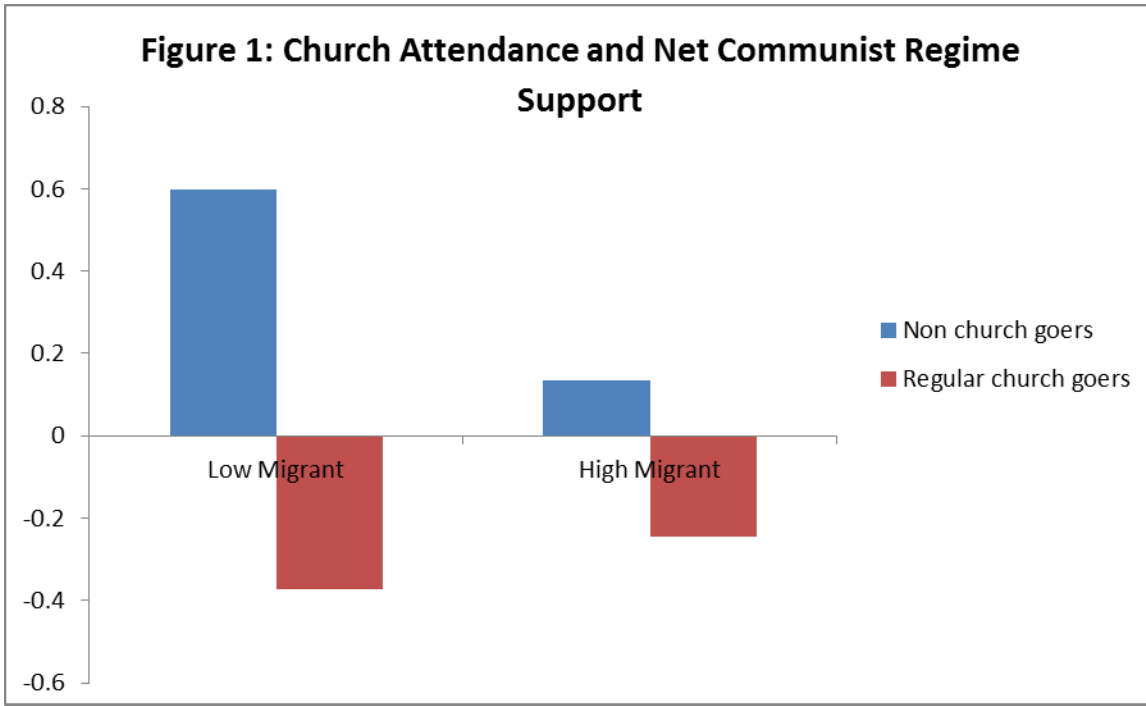
[3] However, this strategy was complemented by significant repression particularly in the late 1940s and 50s punctuated by the arrests of bishop Kaczmarek of Kielce and archbishop Wyszynski of Warsaw.

[4] See Appendix E and also Kaminski 1999, Sulek 1994, Jamal, Robbins and Tessler 2012, Tessler and Jamal 2008, Tessler 2002, Bellin 2012.

Figure 1 presents a snapshot of our data and highlights the puzzle motivating our analysis. It shows the average net support for the ruling party vs. the anti-communist opposition, comparing areas with low and high post-WWII migration.



Note: The survey questions are described in detail in section 3. The vertical axis measures the difference between respondents' support for the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR) and the anti-communist opposition, with higher values indicating greater support for the communist regime.

These data show not only significant sub-national differences in average levels of anti-authoritarian attitudes but also different effects of church attendance on communist regime support. Specifically, frequent religious practice is linked to a much greater reduction in net regime support in low-migration areas than in regions with extensive post-WWII migration. In the next section we discuss the causal mechanisms that could account for this pattern.

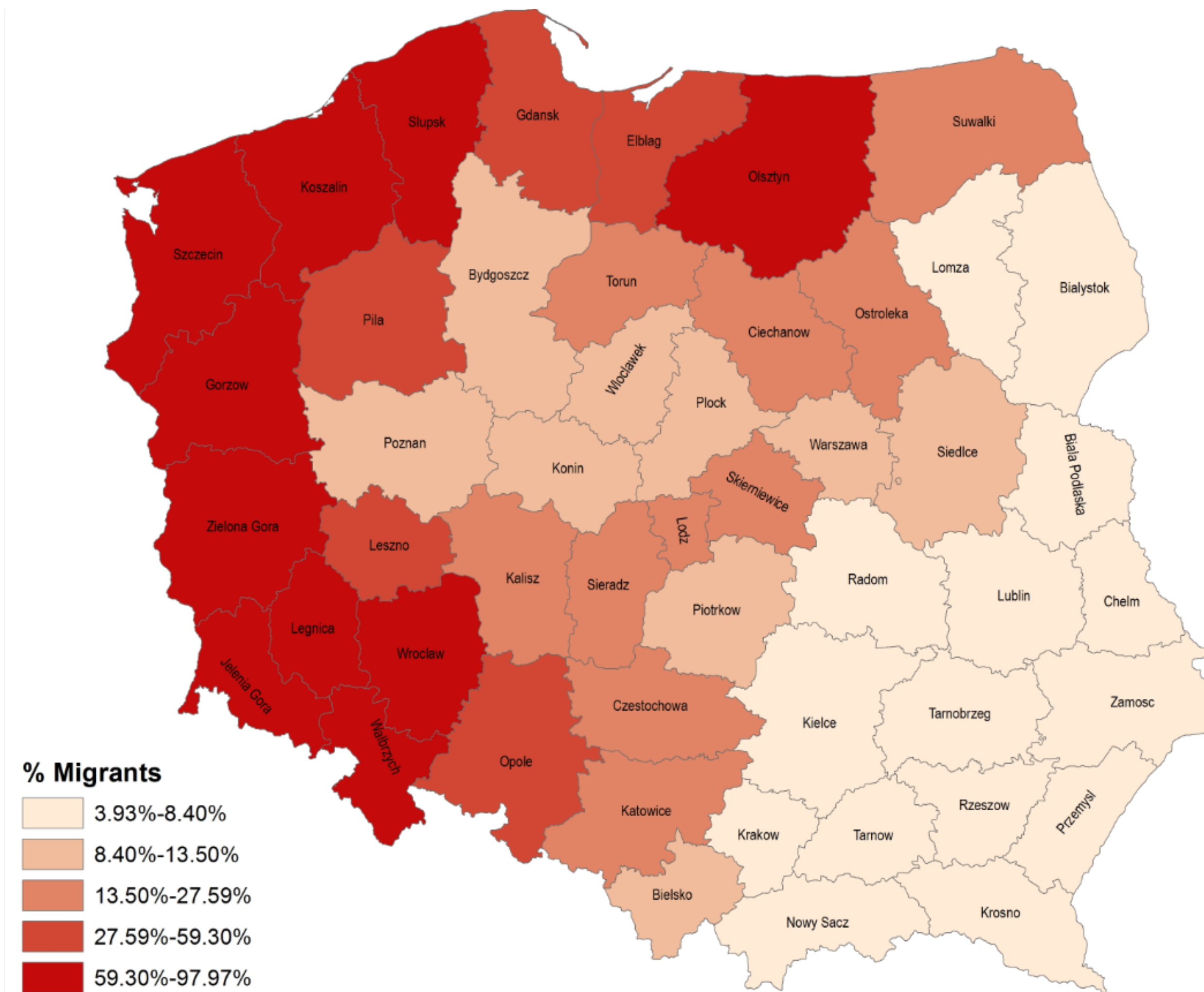
3. From Migration to Disarticulation to Infiltration

In this section we propose a theory for understanding the varying effectiveness of authoritarian strategies to control organizations that can undermine regime efforts to establish legitimacy and societal control. We first highlight the different migration patterns in the early communist period and argue that areas with the greatest

population shifts suffered from societal *disarticulation.* Second, we claim that this migration-driven social disarticulation allowed for greater communist infiltration of the Catholic Church in the early years of the communist regime. Third, we contend that higher infiltration with communist collaborators translated into lower church effectiveness in nurturing anti-communist attitudes.

3.1. Migration produces disarticulation

Following the annexation of the so-called “Recovered Territories” in 1945, the communist regime carried out a massive resettlement project during which German residents in these areas were given two days to leave (Curp 2006). Following the Germans’ 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 migrant displaced as a result of WWII destruction. Unsurprisingly, as illustrated by Map 1, 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.



Map 1: Map of migrant shares in post-WWII Poland by wojewodztwa (using administrative divisions from 1975.)

As a result of these large variations in migration patterns, Catholic parishes varied a great deal in how well-rooted their communities were. Krystyna Kersten's analysis of the communist take-over of Poland captures the far-reaching consequences 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). Following some earlier research by social anthropologists (Cernea 1997), we refer to this phenomenon as " social disarticulation."[5]

From this disarticulation perspective we would expect that in communities made up predominantly of migrants, churches would have functioned differently than in areas with greater settlement continuity. First, in migrant communities the participants in religious practices were less familiar with each other, which meant that engaging in anti-regime political discussions with other church-goers was riskier than in more established communities with stronger social bonds. Second, the priests themselves did not have long-established ties to the parishioners. Thus, preaching to them a message of anti-communist resistance was a risky endeavor, as secret police presence in such newly established churches was harder to detect than in parishes that had remained stable for generations. In anticipation of the likelihood of being spied on, even anti-communist priests in the Recovered Territories may have been more likely to self-censor their sermons. Our **first hypothesis** (**migration) is that church-going in high-migration areas has a weaker anti-communist attitudinal effect than churchgoing in low-migration areas**.

3.2. From disarticulation to infiltration

The communist authorities tried very hard to turn the Catholic Church organization into an ally in establishing their dominance over the country, and though they ultimately failed at the national level (Grzymala-Busse 2015), they nevertheless had 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. In this subsection we theorize the link between the communist regime's uneven success in infiltrating the Catholic Church and the differential effect of churchgoing on anti-regime attitudes.

1946-1956 marks the period of the most sustained efforts to establish communist rule in Poland. Taking control of the Catholic Church organization was an important step in that direction. On September 1, 1949 the

[5] Of course, for some Poles this disarticulation 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." But whatever the interpretation, this does not change our expectation that migration would reduce the ability of pre-communist institutions to provide a basis for anti-communist resistance.

communists created a special *Section for Priests* within the *Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy* ("Sekcja Księży przy ZBOWiD"). Informally, the section was referred to as the "Patriot" or "Progressive" Priests (*Księża Patrioci*), or, more colloquially, as "Red Priests." 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.

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." The declaration also highlighted the necessity of reconciliation between the Church and the Polish state, a direct reference to the communists' demands that the Vatican recognize communist-appointed apostolic administrators as bishops in the Recovered Territories. In doing so, the communist government was hoping to capitalize on the widespread dissatisfaction among the population and the clergy with the Vatican's failure to appoint new bishops in the Recovered Territories (OSI, 1950).[6] State radio as well as the bi-weekly periodicals of the *Patriots* – "Kuznica Kaplanska"(*The Priest Smithy*) ("Ksiadz Obywatel," (*The Citizen Priest)* and "Glos Kaplana" (*The Priest's Voice)* – tried to stoke the conflict by contrasting the outlooks of the progressive clergy with the backward politics of conservative Episcopate. For instance, "Glos Kaplana" [the Priest's Voice] with a circulation of 8 thousand copies nationwide (Zurek, 2009, Zaryn 1997) advised clergy on how to deal with the "tyrant" power of the Vatican and how to handle orders from the Episcopate. Periodicals that the Patriot Priests circulated among parish administrators also included exemplary sermons, which attempted to use religious text as a vehicle for communist propaganda. An example of such a directive comes from one of the first issues of the *Kuznica Kaplanska* of 1953:

> 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

[6] 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 Polish bishops to the Recovered Territories, temporary apostolic administrators, who had neither the charisma nor the authority of bishops consecrated through the traditional process, led the Catholic Church in those areas.

> mill workers. Alongside citations from the bible, they must include references to current history (…) In terms of substance, the key communication ought to be serving God, Humankind and our Homeland (…) [sermons] ought to touch upon current events in our country, of state and international importance. Not to analyze them, (…), but in order to make God's children worthy of their Homeland-the Polish People's Republic. 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).

An important step toward advancing the goals of the organization was the removal in 1951 of five apostolic administrators whom the communist regime deemed "unsympathetic" to the communist cause. They performed the role of acting bishops in Wroclaw, Opole, Gorzow, Gdansk and Olsztyn – all in the Recovered Territories. These administrators were then replaced with cherry-picked clerics whom the communists believed would cooperate with the regime. Archbishop Stefan Wyszynski tried to stop the communist infiltration efforts, but ultimately sanctioned the choice (Potkaj 2002).[7]

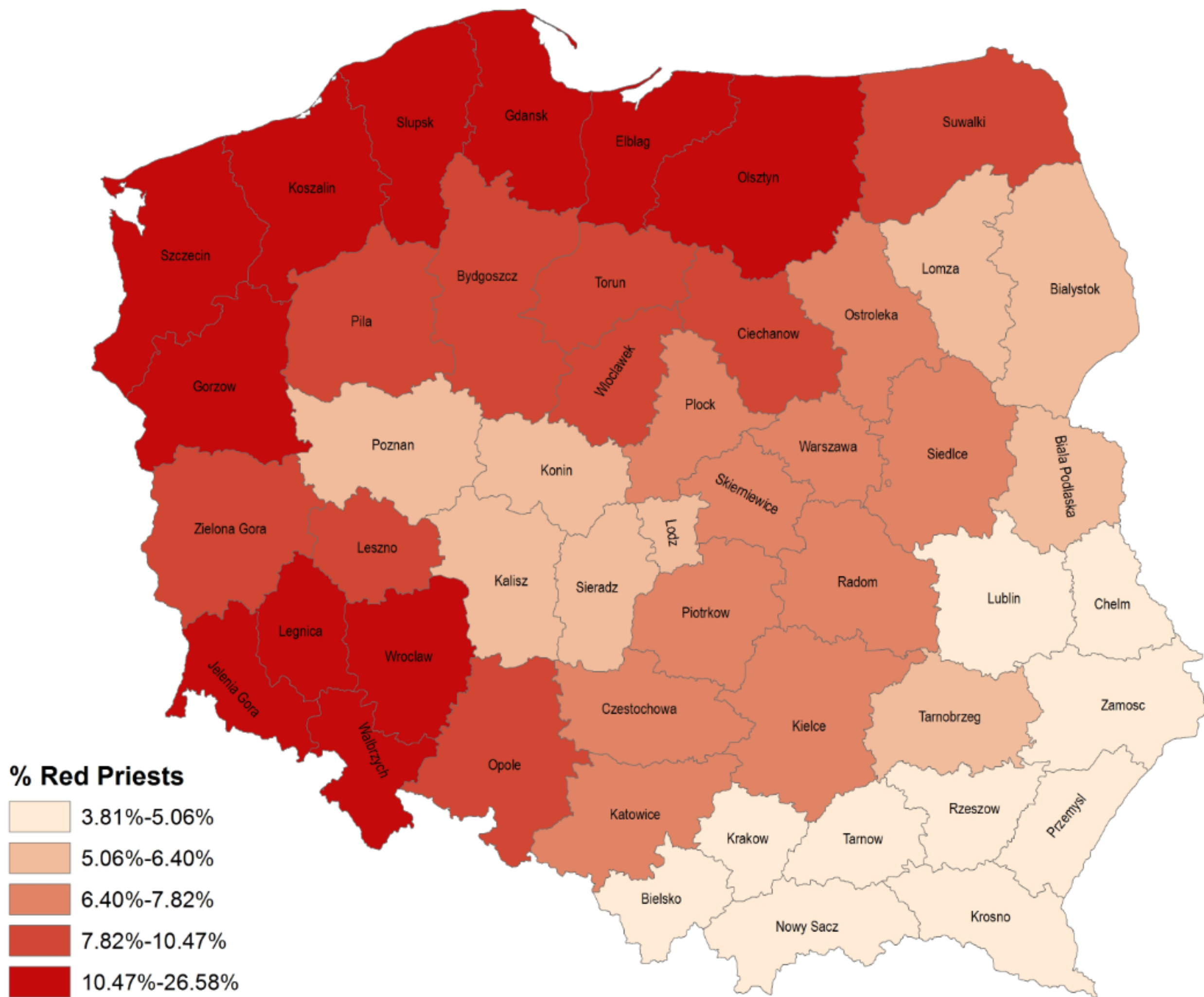
At this stage, the strategy of the communist government for controlling the Catholic Church could be interpreted as a two-pronged approach focusing on the rank-and-file priests graduating from theological seminaries, on the one hand, and on the elite level of the Catholic hierarchy, on the other. The attempt to staff positions vacated by German bishops with their own sympathizers was obviously an example of the latter.

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 leaders of the *Patriot Priests*: Jan Czuj and Edmund Konarski (OSI 1951). More excommunications followed, particularly after the *Patriot Priests* started to issue their own periodicals. To avert excommunications, their authors wrote 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.

[7] Wyszynski's other attempts to resist the communist takeover of the Church organization led to his arrest and imprisonment in 1953.

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). Its 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 (Zaryn, 1997).

A collection of Special Reports produced by Radio Free Europe between 1949 and 1956 allowed historians to document, at the aggregate level, the activities of the Patriot Priests (Zurek 2003, 2009). Using their historical accounts, we were able to create a map of the density of *Red Priest Share* in each wojewodztwo (the term used to describe the 49 administrative units into which Poland was divided at the time our surveys were conducted). Map 2 confirms that the parishes in the Recovered Territories were indeed more heavily infiltrated than the rest of Poland.



The patterns in this map are consistent with the argument we present below that weaker anti-communist effects of church attendance in areas with higher migrant shares could be driven by the greater success of the regime in infiltrating the rank-and-file Catholic clergy with Red Priests.

To understand how the regime's differential ability to infiltrate the Catholic Church might shape the political impact of church attendance in the 1980s, we need to note briefly 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. Archbishop Wyszynski threatened them with

excommunication" (180). By 1961, according to the Department for Religious Beliefs, priests sympathetic to the communist cause made up about 8% of the clergy in Poland, while those openly hostile made up about 25%. 44% were classified as "neutral" and the remaining 23% were classified as "awaiting classification due to insufficient infiltration"(AAN 1956). We do not have evidence about how these figures changed between 1961 and 1980, but even in parishes where Patriot Priests were subsequently replaced it seems likely that parishioners would still be affected by the more pro-regime ideology to which they were exposed by their former pastors. For instance, shortly after the thaw, a form of bible study groups proliferated across Polish parishes, called Clubs of Catholic Intelligentsia (*Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej, KIK*). In the 1960s informal discussion groups within KIK, the so-called "cultural sections" of KIK became the incubators for Workers Defense Committees (*Komitet Obrony Robotnikow, KOR*), the predecessor of Solidarity. As one of the former founders of KOR indicated to us, it was unlikely for a cell of KIK to form in a former parish formerly infiltrated by a Patriot Priest.[8] A second reason why infiltration with Red Priests could have a lasting effect is that many of the organization's recruits were young. Thus, few of them retired when the organization was disbanded and most of them continued working in their parishes, or in nearby parishes if their bishops were successful at reassigning them. Based on the discussion above, we derive **our second hypothesis (infiltration): we expect infiltration with Red Priests to mediate the effect of migration on the way in which church-going affects anti-communist attitudes**. Formally, we will break this hypothesis into two parts: **(2a) focusing on the mediating effect of rank-and-file (parish priest) infiltration** and **(2b) focusing of the mediating effect of elite-level (bishop) infiltration.**

Alternative explanations

In addition to the main mechanisms outlined above, we also discuss three alternative explanations. The first alternative raises the possibility of a persistent legacy of social disarticulation in the high-migration areas. We argued above that the differential effects of churchgoing on anti-communist resistance were driven by the

[8] Henryk Wujec, personal communication on November 5, 2016.

fact that in the 1950s, the authoritarian regime exploited the greater disarticulation in the high-migration areas to penetrate church leadership and rank and file with its own collaborators. However, the weaker effect of church-going in high-migration areas is also compatible with a different possibility, namely that the greater societal disarticulation in these newly resettled areas persisted into the 1980s, and therefore undermined the trust and coordination necessary for church parishes to act as incubators of anti-communist attitudes. Thus, the **third hypothesis (persistent disarticulation) can be stated as: Persistently greater social disarticulation in areas with higher migrants in the 1940s reduces the likelihood that church attendance promotes dissident political views.**

A second alternative explanation for the uneven political consequences of church attendance in areas with different migration levels focuses on potential selection mechanisms that determine who participated in the post-WWII migration. For instance, persons eager to leave their birthplaces in search of a better life in Poland's "Wild West" may have exhibited more individualistic personalities. Thus, it is conceivable that the weaker effects of church attendance in the high-migration areas are driven by the psychological traits of migrants rather than the societal disarticulation of migrant communities or the communist infiltration of the church in high-migrant areas. This logic yields a **fourth hypothesis (selection): Higher migrant areas experience weaker anti-communist effects of church-going on anti-communist attitudes due to the personality differences between migrants and non-migrants**.

Third, in the tradition of explanations emphasizing "deep" pre-authoritarian historical legacies,[9] we consider an *imperial legacy* mechanism that traces the differential anti-communist impact of church attendance to differences in the nature of imperial occupation in different regions of Poland. To explain this mechanism requires providing some background in Polish history. In the last quarter of the 18th century Poland went from

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

being one of the largest states in Europe to being divided by the Habsburg, Prussian, and Russian empires, commencing a 123-year period of the so-called *Partitions*. Map 1 in Appendix A illustrates the borders of the imperial partitions overlaid on a contemporary map of Poland.

The three empires had different approaches for dealing with their Polish subjects. Since the Habsburgs were Catholic, they allowed Poles extensive religious freedoms and also tolerated greater cultural autonomy. Meanwhile, the Russians restricted the use of Polish language (particularly in religious practice), and used a combination of carrots and sticks to "russify" Poles (Kieniewicz 1998). 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. Therefore, our **fifth hypothesis (imperial legacies), predicts that the anti-communist effects of church attendance will be stronger in the former Habsburg areas than in the former Prussian and Russian territories.**

Just as we trace the impact of church attendance to differences in the nature of imperial occupation in different regions of Poland, we can also focus on the length of this occupation. Notably, borders resulting from the 18th century partition were far from stable. 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. These differences are illustrated in Map 2 in Appendix A, 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 (six years as part of the Duchy of Warsaw, 31 as part of the free Krakow Republic, and 21 years in interwar Poland).

The difference in years of independence could explain sub-national variations in the institutional resilience and anti-authoritarian role of the Catholic Church by affecting the extent to which Catholicism and national identity were fused in the different parts of Poland. According to Grzymała-Busse's (2015) argument the fusion between religious and ethnic identity allows churches to gain moral authority. Grzymała-Busse considers Poland as a case where beginning with 1949, the level of ethnic and religious homogeneity was unprecedented, but does not consider higher and lower degrees of fusion in different parts of Poland depending on how long the area in question experienced an overlap ethnicity and religion.[10] Were we to extend her theory to consider experiences of such historical fusion as consequential for the degree of moral authority the church enjoys, we would expect the anti-communist impact of church attendance to be stronger in areas with longer independent statehood. This alternative mechanism leads to our **sixth hypothesis (length of independence) according to which the effect of church attendance on anti-communist attitudes will be strongest in areas with the longest Polish independence, such as the Krakow area and weakest in the areas with the shortest history of independence, such as the Recovered Territories**.

Our final alternative explanation draws on Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya's (2013) argument that industrialization differences may account for the different political dynamics often attributed to imperial legacies. Similarly, in our case, one may worry that the political effects of church attendance may be weaker in less traditional (i.e. more industrialized) areas, and that unless we specifically account for such differences we may erroneously attribute the effects to other variables that are correlated with development. According to the **seventh hypothesis (modernization), we expect that areas with more intensive industrialization would exhibit weaker effects of church attendance on anti-communist attitudes**.

[10] Since Grzymała-Busse's dependent variable is direct policy influence at the national level, there is no need for her to disaggregate fusion in this way.

3. Data

To test the predictions of the seven hypotheses developed in the previous section, we take advantage of a unique set of surveys conducted in Poland between March 1985 and January 1989. [11] 1985 is just two years following the lifting of the Martial Law regime, while May 1989 is just one month prior to the historic parliamentary elections that ended with Solidarity's surprise victory, marking the beginning of the end of communism in the region. Therefore, even though conducted over the period of just four years, the surveys span a period raging from staunch authoritarian repression to relative liberalization. Appendix E provides more details about these surveys and the weights we created to ensure that the surveys were nationally representative.

The surveys asked respondents about their attitudes to the anti-communist opposition and their support for the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR). From these two survey 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. The variable ranges from -4 to 4, and has an almost exactly neutral mean (.05) and a standard deviation of 1.9 for the surveys analyzed in this article.

Among the independent variables, the most important individual-level variable was *religious attendance*, which was asked using a three-category question (0=never, 1=irregular, 2=regular). 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 (but are not reported in the main tables due to space constraints).

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 a range of województwo-level variables. Thus, we calculated the migrant shares at the województwo-level to test the effects of disarticulation

[11] The surveys were conducted in slightly irregular intervals, with more time between surveys closer to 1985 and more frequent surveys as the transition approached.

as predicted by hypothesis 1.[12] To test the plausibility of the selection-based based argument, whereby high-migration areas witness weaker church attendance effects due to the fact that migrants may be more individualistic, we also 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.

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 2.[13] We also calculated for each województwo the number of years that it had been incorporated in an independent Polish state between 1795 (the year of the Third Partition) and 1939.

Our research into the secret police's efforts to infiltrate the Catholic Church resulted in numbers of rank-and-file Red Priests per each 1950 województwo. Using similar GIS-coding techniques as for the migrant data, we were able to estimate for each contemporary województwo the percentage of Red Priests operating there in the 1950s.

We also constructed an original database of Polish bishops and apostolic administrators from 1946-1990. We code a województwo as having had a "Red Bishop" if during the peak period of Red Priest activity it belonged to a diocese that was either run by a bishop/apostolic administrator allied with the Red Priests, or if the bishop in the diocese was prevented by the regime from fulfilling his duties and the vicar general (*wikariusz kapitularny*) was a Red Priest. We corroborated our classification of Red Bishops with the work of Richard F. Staar (1956).

To account for the developmental differences between different regions (Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya 2014) we used statistical yearbooks published in Poland between 1985 and 1989 calculate the share of production in different economic sectors (heavy industry, light industry and agriculture). In addition, we used

[12] The coding of this variable was complicated by the fact that the number of administrative divisions changed from 17 in the 1950s to 49 in the 1980s. Therefore 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.

[13] Note that the territories coded as Russian in Map 2 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.

contemporary województwo-level macro-economic indicators of capital investments and fixed assets as control variables to capture the effects of economic conditions.

The next section presents our statistical analysis.

Analytical Approach

Below, we use seven surveys carried out on representative national samples in Poland between June 1985 and May 1989. Given that we are using multi-level data, and we have data at three levels (individual, województwo-survey, and województwo) we present hierarchical linear models with random intercepts.[14]

Since our theoretical interest in the first set of statistical tests is to establish whether and how migration shares and several pre-communist and communist legacies moderate the effects of church attendance, we test a series of interaction effects between religious attendance and indicators capturing the different explanations (as discussed above). Since such interaction effects are often not easily interpretable by simply looking at regression coefficients, we also present our key results graphically in Figures 2&3. The two figures show the predicted difference in the DV (along with 95% confidence intervals) between a regular church-goer and a non-church-goer at levels of the moderating variable corresponding to the 10th and 90th percentile in our sample.

While testing the moderating effects of migration (Hypothesis 1) against those of several alternative explanations (Hypotheses 4-7) is relatively straightforward, testing the mediating role of communist infiltration (Hypotheses 2a and 2b) is more complex. The main methodological challenge is that since we are trying to test whether communist infiltration can account for the uneven political impact of church attendance in high vs. low migration districts, we need to find out whether our causally more proximate factors (infiltration rates of Red Priests or Red Bishops) help us explain the uneven effects based on causally prior factor (post-war migration rates.) To address such questions, the standard approach would be to use one of a number of readily available

[14] In the electronic appendix we also present results from alternative modeling approaches, including random-slopes HLM models and OLS regressions with robust standard errors clustered at the województwo-level.

mediation software packages[15] to calculate the proportion of the total effect of a given treatment variable that is due to a particular mediating variable. However, for our particular analysis, we cannot use such an approach because we are interested in the mediation process for interaction terms (rather than in the mediation effects of the constitutive terms) and none of the packages allow for such tests.

Therefore, in the second part of our analysis (Tables 2&3) we adapt Barron and Kenny's (1986) method for mediation analysis and apply it to our analysis of interaction terms.[16] Having established the direct interaction effects between migration and church attendance in Table 1, we then turn to the question of whether migration is a significant predictor of our mediating variables – *Red Priest Share* and *Red Bishop Presence*. Since the data on both historical legacies and Red Priests is measured at the województwo-level, the unit of analysis for the tests in Table 2 is the district (województwo). Finally, in Table 3 we present results for our adaptation of the third step in the Barron and Kenny approach, which involves re-running the individual-level tests from the first model in Table 1 but adding the interaction between religious attendance and our mediator variables (*Red Priest Share* and *Red Bishop Presence*) to the model specification.[17] In line with Barron and Kenny's approach we can only confirm Hypotheses 2a & 2b if we can show that (1) there is a significant interaction between migration shares and church attendance in driving net communist support (Table 1); (2) migration shares predict communist infiltration levels (Table 2); and (3) adding an interaction between *Red Priest Share*/*Red Bishop Presence* and church attendance noticeably reduces the interaction effect between migration shares and church attendance in driving net communist support (Table 3).

The other hypothesis that calls for further elaboration is Hypothesis 3 about persistent disarticulation. For this hypothesis to be true, we would need to find support for Hypothesis 1 – that migration patterns moderate church attendance effects – as well as weak support for Hypotheses 2a&2b.[18] Furthermore, a convincing

[15] See for example the medeff function in Stata (Hicks and Tingley 2011) or the mediation package for R (Imai et al 2010)
[16] The use of more explicit mediation analysis techniques (e.g. Imai et al 2010) is complicated by the fact that in our analysis *both* the treatment and the mediator are interaction terms.
[17] Obviously, in line with the standard approach to running interaction effects (Golder et al 2006), we also include the constituent terms for all the interactions.
[18] Finding that elite and/or rank-and-file infiltration fully mediate the migration effects, would leave little of the original migration effect that could be explained by persistent disarticulation.

confirmation of this hypothesis would require showing evidence of persistent societal disarticulation in the high-migration areas at the time of the surveys. We conducted a series of tests along those lines but for space considerations we only discuss them in detail in appendix C.

Results

To test Hypothesis 1, in model 1 of Table 1 we analyze the moderating effects of migration on the political impact of church attendance, and we find strong support for our theoretical prediction: as illustrated in Figure 2, the anti-communist impact of church attendance was three times larger in areas that received relatively few migrants than in areas where the majority of post-war residents were migrants. Moreover, these effects were robust to including interactions based on alternative explanations (developmental differences and imperial legacies) in models 6-8.

Table 1 and Figure 2 here

Model 2 uses international migrant shares to test the proposition in Hypothesis 4 that migration effects could be driven by the self-selection of particular types of individuals into choosing to migrate in the post-WWII period. However, as illustrated in Figure 2, the magnitude of the interaction effect is almost identical for international migrant shares, and since international migrants did not have a choice over whether to migrate, this finding suggests that contrary to Hypothesis 3 the migration effects we observed in model 1 were unlikely to have been driven by migrant selection bias.

Model 3 reveals weak support for Hypothesis 5 that the differential political effects of church attendance could be rooted in imperial legacy differences. Not only are the effects in Figure 2 very similar across the three former imperial zones, but none of the interaction effects even come close to statistical significance in either model 3 or model 6.

In model 4, we find – in line with Hypothesis 6 – that the anti-communist effects of church attendance were roughly twice as large in areas with relatively long histories of Polish independent statehood as in

territories that were incorporated into Poland after WWII and the difference is statistically significant. However, once we simultaneously include interactions between church attendance and both migration and independence in model 7, we find that support for Hypothesis 1 (about the disarticulating role of migration) is more robust than support for the Catholicism-Polish statehood nexus articulated in Hypothesis 6.

To test whether, in line with Hypothesis 7, socio-economic development differences rooted in either pre-communist or communist developmental strategies were responsible for the uneven political effects among church-goers in model 5 we tested for interaction effects between industrial production shares and church attendance. As illustrated in Figure 2, there is some modest evidence that the anti-communist effects of church attendance are weaker in areas with more heavy industry, but these effects were substantively small and statistically inconclusive. Moreover, these differences get even weaker once we account for migration differences in model 8,

Overall, the analysis in Table 1 suggests that in line with the expectations of Hypotheses 1-3, post-WWII migration played an important moderating role in shaping the political effects of church attendance in Poland, and these effects are stronger and more robust than those of alternative explanations rooted in imperial legacies (Hypotheses 5-6) or modernization (Hypothesis 7). However, these findings can be criticized as favoring temporally proximate but causally shallow explanations over more meaningful deeper historical legacies (Kitschelt 2003). While we agree about the importance of carefully considering temporal sequence in making causal arguments, there are two reasons why we decided to interpret migration patterns as an alternative explanation to imperial legacies rather than as a mechanism through which the temporally more distant legacies worked. First, there are no compelling reasons for constructing a causal chain that leads from imperial legacies to post-war migration, which was largely the result of the exogenous geopolitical considerations that drove the Yalta agreement.[19] Second, given that the post-WWII migration episode is separated by four decades from the

[19] In theory, one could argue that mass migrations are more likely in newly acquired territories and to the extent that we accept this argument, then we could interpret migration as a mediator for differences in prior Polish statehood history. However, border changes are neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for ethnic cleansing and mass migration, and the particular dynamics of the Polish

period when the surveys we analyze were conducted, we are not particularly concerned about having excessive temporal proximity between migration – the primary driver of anti-communist church attendance effects – and anti-communist attitudes themselves. Nor do we think that the link between migration patterns and uneven church attendance effects runs the risk of tautology. In fact, as we have argued in the theory section and demonstrate in the following sub-section, we need at least one additional causal step to connect migration in the late 1940s with anti-communist effects of mass attendance in the 1980s: the politics of the of the communist regime's strategy to infiltrate the Catholic Church.

Communist Church Infiltration as a Mechanism

To test hypotheses 2a and 2b about the importance of communist infiltration we use województwo-level data on the background of Catholic bishops and on the relative frequency of Red Priests in different parts of communist Poland in the 1950s. Doing so allows us to test a mechanism that is causally sufficiently close to both the treatment (post-war migration) and the outcome (the anti-communist impact of church attendance in the 1980s) but without running the risk of tautology.[20] In line with our methodological discussion, following the initial tests in Table 1, which confirm the moderating effects of migration on the link between church attendance and anti-communist attitudes, the next step needed to show mediation in our adaptation of the Barron and Kenny framework is to establish that our treatment variable (migration) is a significant predictor of the mediators (communist infiltration). To do so, we use województwo-level data to test the extent to which we can explain the geographic patterns of Patriot Priest and Red Bishop infiltration based on migration shares. While we are not testing mediation effects for imperial legacies – both because that is not our main theoretical focus and because they did not emerge as robust mediators in the tests in Table 1 – in Table 2 we nevertheless

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resettlement campaign were shaped to a much greater extent by the atrocities of the Nazi period and the terms of the Yalta agreement that led to the exodus of Poles from Western Belarus and Ukraine.

[20] Of course, tautology (like beauty) is ultimately in the eye of the beholder and for some observers the link between the concentration of pro-communist priests and the pro/anti-communist effects of church attendance may seem obvious. Nevertheless, the fact that the two episodes are separated by about three decades of tumultuous history in Polish church-state relations should mitigate against such concerns.

present model specifications that include imperial legacy controls to test the robustness of the link between migration and communist infiltration.

Table 2 here

Judging by the first three models in Table 2, the regime's ability to infiltrate the Catholic Church with Red Priests was significantly higher in areas with higher migration shares in the immediate post-WWII period and this relationship was robust to controlling for imperial legacies.[21] Moreover, it is worth noting the high explanatory power of the first three models, which account for more than 75% of the województwo-level variation in red-priest shares. The last three models in Table 2 confirm that elite-level communist infiltration of the Catholic Church was also higher in high-migration areas, and the results were once again robust to controlling for imperial legacy differences in models 5-6. However, the explanatory power of the models was weaker for elite than for rank-and-file infiltration, a finding that suggests that in addition to the institutional disarticulation of the Catholic Church in the newly acquired Polish territories, communist infiltration efforts also benefitted from the parish-level societal disarticulation in high-migration areas.

Table 3 here

Finally, in Table 3, we turn to the third step involved in testing the mediating role of communist infiltration by adding the interactions between the infiltration variables and church attendance to the model specification in model 1 of Table 1 (which is included for reference purposes as model 1 in Table 3). The results in Table 3, which are graphically illustrated in Figure 3, suggest that there is stronger empirical support for Hypothesis 2a (rank-and-file infiltration) than for Hypothesis 2b (elite infiltration). Thus, in model 2, the interaction effect between church attendance and *Red Priest Share* is statistically significant in the expected direction, confirming that the anti-communist effects of church attendance were considerably weaker in areas

[21] Model 2 suggests that red priests were somewhat less widespread in the former Habsburg imperial areas but the effects only marginally significant and their inclusion does not significantly affect the migration effects.

with high shares of pro-communist priests.[22] Furthermore, and crucially from a mediation perspective, the interaction effect for the treatment variable (migration share) is reduced by about two thirds compared to model 1 and is no longer statistical insignificant (see Figure 3). Moreover, this lack of a significant migration effect once we account for Red Priest infiltration runs against the predictions of the persistent social disarticulation explanation in Hypothesis 3.

By contrast, including the interaction with the *Red Bishop Presence* variable in model 3, we find no evidence that communist infiltration of the church elite played a similar mediating role. While the interaction effects were in the expected direction – church attendance had a weaker anti-communist effect in areas with Red Bishops – these effects were substantively weak and statistically inconclusive (see Figure 2). Moreover, controlling for elite infiltration differences did not account for the church attendance effect differences in areas with high vs. low migration shares: as can be seen in Figure 3, the strength of the migration-church attendance interaction was very similar in models 1 and 3.

Taken together, the results in Tables 2&3 suggest that infiltration at the parish-level rather than the church leadership level accounts for the uneven political effects of church attendance. The weaker mediating role of elite infiltration is arguably due to the fact that bishops and other high church officials have more limited direct contact with church-goers than parish priests: thus, a typical Polish Catholic will directly meet their bishop once in his or her lifetime (at confirmation) and will indirectly hear from him twice a year (through the letters from the Council of Bishops that are read on the second day of Christmas and Easter.)

Interpreting the communist infiltration effects

[22] The magnitude of these effects, which incidentally was almost identical to the results we got from a model where we only included the migration-church attendance interaction without any pre-communist controls, was slightly larger than the effects of pre-communist interactions illustrated in Figure 2. Moreover, for the highest level of "Red Priests" in our dataset (23%) the effects of church attendance actually fell slightly below the standard levels of statistical significance.

While the analysis above has revealed strong support for the rank-and-file infiltration hypothesis, in this subsection we go one step farther to evaluate three possible mechanisms underlying the weaker anti-communist effects of church attendance in areas with greater communist infiltration at the parish level.

The first mechanism – parishioner political self-selection – is based on the idea that differences in the anti-communist effects of church attendance could be a largely artificial by-product of the fact that more pro-communist priests attract more pro-communist parishioners but drive away more anti-communist ones. To evaluate this mechanism, in the first three models in Table 4 we test whether the decision to attend church in areas with greater Red Priest infiltration was systematically affected by political allegiances/religiosity. To do so, we interacted the district-level *Red Priest Share* with variables indicating whether the respondent was a PZPR member (model 1), a member of Solidarity (model 2), and whether they considered themselves to be religious (model 3). While the main effects of the three variables were substantively large and statistically significant in the expected direction (i.e. PZPR member were less likely to attend church while Solidarity members and believers were more likely to do so), the interaction effects between these variables and communist infiltration were weak and statistically insignificant. In other words, our tests provide no evidence that the political logic of the decision to attend church varied as a function of the ability of the communist regime to infiltrate the Church during the 1950s.

The next two models test and reject the possibility that the political impact of infiltration with Red Priests was due to the legacy of diminished trust between church-goers and the Catholic Church. On the one hand, according to model 4 the trust among church-goers toward the Catholic Church is marginally lower in areas with high Red Priest infiltration (though the interaction term is not statistically significant.) More importantly, however, model 5 shows that higher trust towards the Catholic Church did not amplify its anti-communist political message (the interaction term even pointed in the wrong direction), while the interaction effect between church attendance and *Red Priest Share* was large and highly significant in the predicted direction even controlling for church trust.

Finally, we wanted to test whether the political dividends of infiltration were concentrated during the period of most intensive government interference (1950-56) or whether they persisted after the official end of the campaign. Since we do not have survey data from the 1950s to test this question directly, we instead divide our sample into 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. Comparing the results of models 6 and 7 confirms that the weaker anti-communist effects of church attendance in high *Red Priest Share* regions were indeed concentrated among the older cohorts: the positive interaction effect between church attendance and Red Priest shares is large and statistically significant for those born pre-1950, while for the younger cohorts the effects are substantively small and statistically insignificant.[23] Even though the interaction effect for the younger cohort was still positive in model 7, these findings suggest that the political impact of Red Priest infiltration were noticeably weaker after the communists reduced the push to infiltrate the Catholic Church.

5. Conclusion

This article has addressed a question at the core of the debates about authoritarian politics: what explains the differential ability of authoritarian regimes to control public opinion? Our theoretical focus in answering this question has been on authoritarian efforts to undermine competitors in the battle for the hearts and minds of their citizens by infiltrating civil society organizations. In particular we have argued that the ability of non-state actors to inculcate anti-regime attitudes in its members depends on the extent to which the authoritarian regime is able to infiltrate these organizations with their collaborators. We have further argued that infiltration is more likely to succeed in environments characterized by greater societal disarticulation during critical junctures such as periods of authoritarian takeovers.

We have tested our theory by analyzing subnational variations in the ability of the Catholic Church in Poland to inculcate anti-communist attitudes among Catholic churchgoers during the late communist period.

[23] Note that we find very similar results concentrating on smaller cohorts (1940-49 vs. 1950-59), which reduces concerns that our findings could be driven by broader changes in church-going.

Using a unique series of seven nationally representative public opinion surveys from June 1985-May 1989, we show that the anti-communist effects of church attendance were noticeably weaker where mass migration in the WWII aftermath was higher. Using mediation analysis, we show that the effects of migration were mediated by the extent to which the communist regime was able to infiltrate the Catholic Church with communist sympathizers (Red Priests) at the parish level. Furthermore, we show that this migration-infiltration mechanism is more effective in explaining variations in the anti-communist effects of church attendance than a variety of alternative explanations, including differences in modernization and imperial legacies.

Beyond being of interest to scholars of communist regimes and church-state relations, these findings make a number of contributions to our understanding of the politics of authoritarian regimes. First we highlight the importance of infiltration of non-state actors as a regime strategy in the competition over the hearts and minds of citizens. Understanding subnational and cross-national differences in the degree to which such infiltration is successful is crucial in understanding authoritarian resilience. Second, and relatedly, our findings suggest that rank-and-file infiltration was more effective than elite-level infiltration in undermining the effectiveness of the Catholic Church in Poland. This distinction suggests that future work needs to be attuned to the importance of analyzing different levels of infiltration. Third, we highlight societal disarticulation in facilitating authoritarian efforts to infiltrate civil society. In Poland, this disarticulation was produced by the massive – though uneven – migration following WWII. Yet, various other factors, including severe economic crises, natural disasters and massive government interventions (such as communist collectivization efforts) could have similar destabilizing effects. Finally, our empirical finding that variables from the early-communist period are more effective in explaining late-communist political dynamics than pre-communist legacies suggests that scholars of historical legacies should complement their emphasis on "deep" legacies (such as imperial legacies) with a greater focus on developments during the early period of authoritarian rule. Societal disarticulation tends to be higher during the turmoil that often accompanies authoritarian turnover, and therefore offers authoritarian leaders a (sometimes brief) window of opportunity during which they can infiltrate civil society organizations.

Given that the specifics of our hypotheses and empirical tests are rooted in a particular historical case – the Catholic Church in communist Poland – we are faced with the inevitable question about the scope conditions of our theory and findings. With respect to the overall role of infiltration in authoritarian regimes, the Polish regime was hardly unique among communist regimes or among authoritarian regimes more broadly (Nalepa 2010, Burgess 1997, Suk 2005). Furthermore, given its well-known anti-authoritarian resistance, the Catholic Church in Poland can actually be considered a hard case for finding successful infiltration evidence. The answer to the question about the relative effectiveness of rank-and-file vs. elite infiltration is of course dependent on the nature of the particular infiltration target, with elite infiltration presumably being more important in more hierarchical organizations. However, given that the Catholic Church is quite hierarchical, we would expect our finding to apply to a broad set of organizations (religious or otherwise.) Third, while the magnitude of migration in post-WWII Poland was indeed very high by historical standards, massive disruptions of the social fabric due to interstate and civil wars and various other natural and man-made calamities have unfortunately been quite frequent in the past century. Therefore, we would expect to find an ample supply of cases with sufficiently high societal disarticulation to create authoritarian infiltration opportunities. Finally, while the relative explanatory power of pre-authoritarian and early-authoritarian legacies is obviously context-specific, the role of imperial legacies in post-communist Polish politics is well-documented, and as such our findings about the greater importance of early-communist factors in this article suggest that the importance of the initial authoritarian takeover dynamics deserve greater attention in future historical legacy research.

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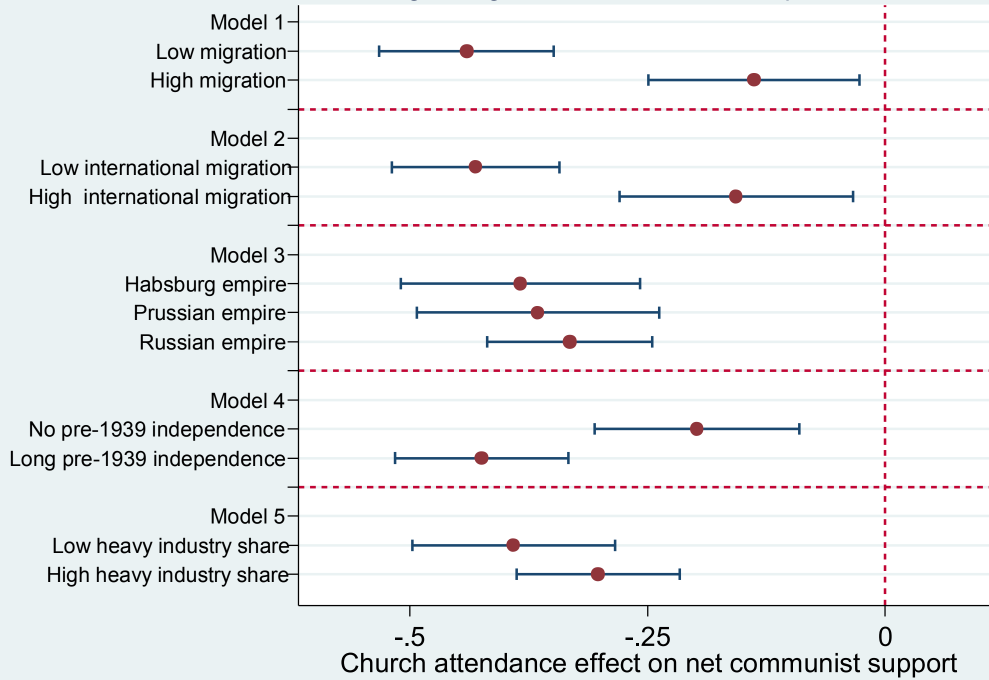
Fig.2: Migration vs. Alternative Explanations
Model 1
Low migration
High migration
Model 2
Low international migration
High international migration
Model 3
Habsburg empire
Prussian empire
Russian empire
Model 4
No pre-1939 independence
Long pre-1939 independence
Model 5
Low heavy industry share
High heavy industry share
-.5
-.25
0
Church attendance effect on net communist support

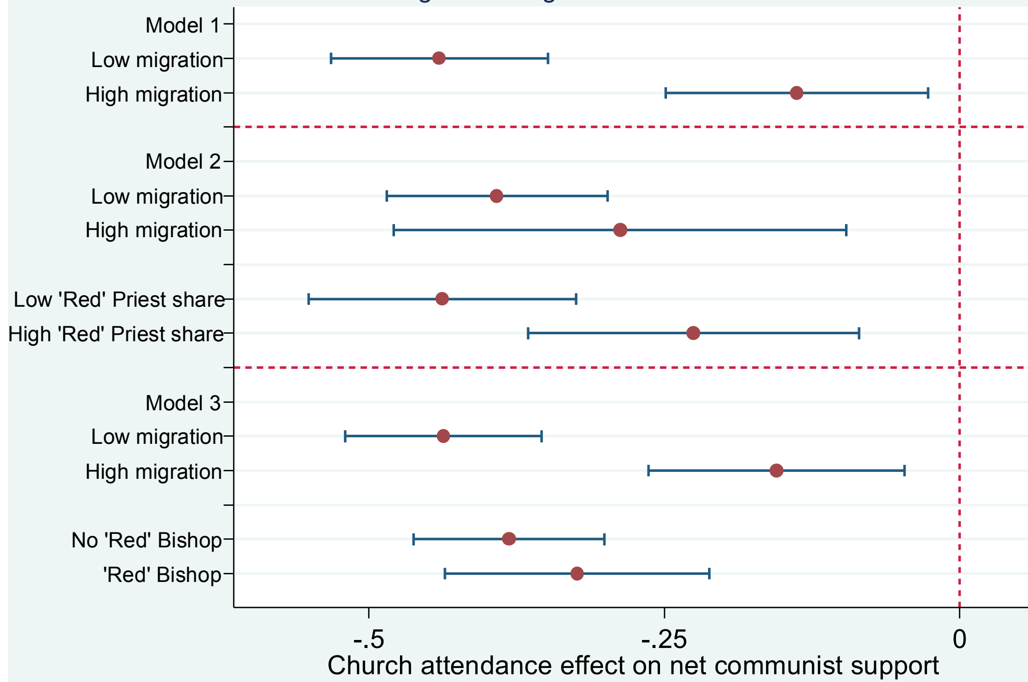
Fig.3: Testing the Infiltration
Model 1
Low migration
High migration
Model 2
Low migration
High migration
Low 'Red' Priest share
High 'Red' Priest share
Model 3
Low migration
High migration
No 'Red' Bishop
'Red' Bishop
-.5
-.25
0
Church attendance effect on net communist support

Table 1: Migration and alternative explanations of uneven church attendance effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Church attendance	-.463**	-.444**	-.384**	-.198**	-.444**	-.427**	-.408**	-.551**
	(.051)	(.048)	(.064)	(.055)	(.110)	(.062)	(.102)	(.140)
% Migrants # Church attendance	.350**					.552**	.289*	.356**
	(.093)					(.196)	(.135)	(.087)
% International Migrants # Church attendance		.799**						
		(.241)						
Prussian empire # Church attendance			.018			-.202		
			(.098)			(.159)		
Russian empire # Church attendance			.052			.031		
			(.072)			(.071)		
Years Indep 1797-1939 # Church attendance				-.008**			-.002	
				(.003)			(.003)	
Heavy industry production # Church attendance					.003			.003
					(.002)			(.003)
Light industry production # Church attendance					.001			.000
					(.004)			(.003)
% Migrants	-.507*					-1.164**	-.722#	-.514*
	(.248)					(.348)	(.386)	(.242)
% International Migrants		-1.185#						
		(.633)						
Prussian empire			.085			.638*		
			(.228)			(.282)		
Russian empire			-.042			-.008		
			(.219)			(.212)		
Years Indep 1797-1939				.009			-.006	
				(.006)			(.008)	
Heavy industry production	-.003	-.003	-.002	-.003	-.007	-.003	-.003	-.007
	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.008)	(.006)	(.006)	(.008)
Light industry production	-.001	-.001	-.000	-.001	-.003	.002	-.001	-.002
	(.007)	(.007)	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)	(.007)	(.006)	(.006)
Demographic & time controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District-level econ controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800

Table 2: Drivers of Church Infiltration by Communist Regime (Województwo level)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
VARIABLES	Red Priest Share			Red Bishop Presence		
Migrant share	.135**	.118**	.149**	.607**	.578*	.984**
	(.011)	(.016)	(.020)	(.155)	(.236)	(.275)
Prussian empire		.026#			-.162	
		(.013)			(.194)	
Russian empire		.017#			-.273#	
		(.010)			(.146)	
Years Independence 1797-1939			.0004			.011
			(.0005)			(.007)
Observations	49	49	49	49	49	49
R-squared	.768	.788	.772	.246	.302	.288

Standard errors in parentheses ** p<.01, * p<.05, # p<.1

Table 3: The Mediating Role of Communist Infiltration

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Church attendance	-.463**	-.541**	-.474**
	(.051)	(.071)	(.053)
Migrant share # Church attendance	.350**	.121	.327**
	(.093)	(.143)	(.085)
“Red priest” share # Church attendance		1.59*	
		(.820)	
“Red bishop” (1950-56) # Church attendance			.058
			(.071)
Migrant share	-.507*	-.200	-.441
	(.248)	(.497)	(.274)
“Red priest” share		-2.15	
		(2.77)	
“Red bishop” (1950-56)			-.140
			(.209)
Demographic & time controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
District-level econ controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	10,800	10,800	10,800

Table 4: Mechanisms of red priest infiltration effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
DV	Church attendance			Church trust	Net communist support		
%Red Priests	-1.55**	-1.54**	-.739	1.12*	-2.18#	-2.498	-2.273
	(.339)	(.436)	(.717)	(.569)	(1.257)	(1.520)	(1.624)
PZPR_member # Red Priests %	.216						
	(.419)						
Solidarity member # Red Priests %		.115					
		(.424)					
Religiosity # Red Priests %			.114				
			(.295)				
Church attendance				.471**	-.513**	-.591**	-.364**
				(.038)	(.087)	(.082)	(.108)
Red Priests % # Church attendance				-.467	1.48**	2.39**	.673
				(.288)	(.377)	(.890)	(1.087)
Church trust # Church attendance					.027		
					(.028)		
PZPR member	-.621**						
	(.050)						
Solidarity member		.128**					
		(.042)					
Religiosity			.573**				
			(.031)				
Church trust					-.145**		
					(.042)		
Demographic & time controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District-level econ controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	11,702	8,785	3,393	12,302	10,784	6,049	4,751